

Working Remotely: Tip of the Week March 22, 2021

Spring into a New Frame of Mind: Brain Breaks and Focused-Attention Practices

As we adjust to daylight savings time and ready ourselves for Spring, consider making a conscious effort to evaluate your work schedule and incorporate intentional breaks and focused-attention practices throughout your day. Not only will this exercise help reduce Zoom fatigue, but it will help you refocus and reboot your brain, boosting your productivity and minimizing workplace stress.

As you evaluate your work schedule, consider using research to inform your daily routine—for example, ideas like the [Pomodoro Technique](#) promote a schedule designed to maximize productivity by building in intentional brain breaks that afford you the opportunity to:

- [Meditate](#) to achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm, and stable state.
- [Walk or exercise](#) to boost energy and improve your mood.
- [Read for pleasure](#) to reduce stress, fight depression, and prevent cognitive decline.
- [Doodle](#) to help concentrate, spur creativity, and process emotions.
- [Go outside](#) to reconnect your body and mind with nature.
- [Laugh](#) to relax, lower stress, and boost your immunity.

In between intentional breaks, it is also good to employ focused-attention practices to refocus your attention if you become distracted by your thoughts or competing priorities. Consider [breathing exercises](#) or [stretching](#) for 60 to 90 seconds to refocus your energies and relieve stress.

A consistent schedule, frequent brain breaks, and focused-attention practices can have a powerful impact. Studies have shown that they can improve our ability to concentrate (Lee et al., 2015), change our attitude towards our jobs (Kim, Park, Headrick, 2018), help reduce the stress on our bodies associated with sitting at our desk all day (Coleman et al., 2017), and boost our overall work productivity (Bradberry, 2017).

If you are ready to take a critical look at your schedule and explore brain breaks and focused-attention practices, you might want to participate in “Getting Things Done,” an eight-hour class delivered live online as four two-hour classes or “Teaching with the Brain in Mind,” a six-hour Academy Series delivered live online as three two-hour sessions. Look for future offerings of these and other classes at <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/ELITE>.

For more Tips on working remotely, please visit <https://bit.ly/mc-remote-working-e> and watch for the next tip on April 5, 2021.

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