



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Refresh, Renew, Recharge

Do you remember the wise old saying "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"? Some of us tried using it to get out of chores when we were young. It never worked. But like other wise sayings, it relates truth worth noting. While most of us understand "all work and no play", the word "dull" can mislead us. "All work" doesn't necessarily make Jack (and us) less intelligent or less insightful. It does, however, leave us less energetic, less focused, and less capable of undertaking our life tasks in an efficient and effective manner. Just as a knife needs regular honing to maintain a sharp edge, so we need to break from our daily work and indulge in renewal ("play") to regain our ability to function at our best.

Sadly, we too often consider this renewal a luxury rather than a necessity. Why? Let's consider a few reasons.

1) We overestimate our own strength, believing that if we are "really good", we can keep going without maintenance.

2) We overestimate the importance of our work, and underestimate our own value. We become acceptable (even admirable) sacrifices for the cause of our work.

3) We overestimate our importance to our work, believing that we alone can adequately accomplish what needs to be done.

4) We mistakenly believe that our work must be completed (as if *that* ever happens) before "play" is allowed. We fail to recognize that play is necessary for effective engagement in our work.

5) We passively depend on others to take care of us and protect us from our chronic self neglect.

Whatever the reason, we fail to refresh, and our performance in all areas of our life suffers for it. Indeed, we become "dull"!

How, then, can we renew our self and maintain the health and strength of our various systems? Consider the following:

1) Physically

- Get adequate sleep. Don't underestimate this! Lack of sleep will rob us of our edge quicker than anything else.

- Fuel the body with good food throughout the day.

- Exercise. Intentionally move your body to release tension and stress, and build endurance. Do something *you* enjoy.

2) Emotionally/Relationally

- Spend time with friends, giving and receiving.

- Talk, laugh, and share with those you trust and love.

- Engage in a hobby of your choosing where you can smile, release your creativity, and feel productive.

3) Intellectually

- Read. Benefit from other's gifts.

- Stay aware of current events.

Find someone to discuss them with.

- Learn something new. Study history, develop a new skill, explore something that has always interested you. Whatever you do, exercise your brain. Challenge it to stretch. Learn by yourself or join others in a class.

4) Spiritually

- Take time for devotions, Bible study, and prayer.

- Join with others in worship.

- Spend time in nature, where ever you can find it. Acquaint your self with both its intricate beauty and its bold grandeur.

- Be intentionally thankful.

- Remember God's promises, and trust them.

How much time will this renewal take? Well, how much time will you give it?

Some of our "refreshments" are best consumed in small "bites" throughout the day. These really don't take much time at all and produce great benefits. Regular renewal "meals" and even "banquets" are still important. Making them part of your daily/weekly/monthly routine helps to develop them as healthy habits supporting a vibrant life.

So refresh, renew, recharge, and see what a difference "staying sharp" makes.

Playtime - it's not just for kids anymore!



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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Passive Renewal - The Big Lie

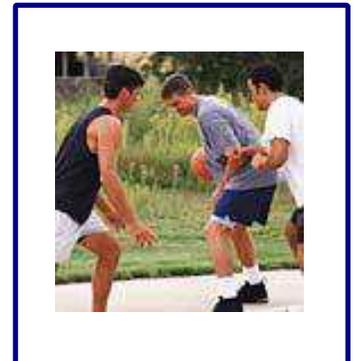
Human life is full of seeming contradictions. In serving others, we are blessed. When giving to others, we are enriched. In humility, we receive honor. Patience accomplishes what frantic effort only complicates.

And so it is with personal renewal. It might seem logical that the best way to refresh ourself and renew our strength is to stop and do nothing. After all, wasn't it overuse and active busyness that dulled our gifted edge in the first place?

Indeed, there is a place for quiet rest in the world of renewal. But the irony of renewal is that rest on its own does not fully refresh. In fact, it can actually weaken us and limit our ability to recover. That's why escapism such as "couch potato" television watching, abuse of drugs and alcohol, and excessive sleep fail to renew us.

True renewal comes through active participation in activities that awaken our senses, recharge our spirits, and replace the exhaustion of performance with the joy of involvement.

So what fuels you? What makes you come alive? Find your spheres of renewal and discover once again the joyful energy that comes from active playtime.



"Genius is the ability to renew one's emotions in daily experience."

- Paul Cezanne