



Seeing tomorrow's ideas...Today

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Focus on Innovation

Focus on Innovation is a monthly electronic newsletter designed to provoke thoughts and ideas on how to bring innovation to life within the organizations in which we work.

For Those on the Run

Read this month's newsletter to learn about how using just five good minutes of mindfulness, relaxation or imagery techniques can help fuel your creativity.

Five Good Minutes is All it Takes

"Five minutes can seem so short - or so long. Yet, in a breath, or a moment, everything can change."

- Brantley & Millstine

With everything going on in the world these days, staying creative can be a challenge. Many of us are faced with distractions and challenging times that can be draining, disorienting and demoralizing - not really a stimulant to our creativity. Unfortunately, there have been misconceptions that in order to come up with creative ideas you need to commit to a big chunk of time; time that many of us don't have. When all we really need to do is to pause periodically and step away from what is draining, disorienting or demoralizing to engage in something that re-energizes or reorients us.

A series of small books entitled, 'Five Good Minutes' - all based on the principles of mindfulness based stress reduction - suggest that when you are more mindfully and deliberately attuned to what's going on inside your mind and body, that five good minutes is all it takes to create focus, presence, and reset intention in your life. This principle of five good minutes can be easily applied to creating focus, presence and resetting intention to creativity in your life. Here are some suggestions on how to generate five good minutes that will not only fuel your creativity but most likely contribute to reducing stress in your life.

How to Generate Five Good Minutes to Fuel Your Creativity

- **Push your temporary button.** A reminder in the midst of that little voice in your head that all the things you are worried about aren't permanent. Put these thoughts on hold, i.e. visually put them aside, breath and relax.
- **Break out of your normal routine.** Whatever you normally do at break, lunch or dinner, make a different choice and see where it takes you.

- **Five fingered peace.** Touch your thumb to each of your four fingers in rotation recalling, in turn: a time when you felt most creative; a time when you felt jazzed and excited about something; all the creative people in your life and what you enjoy most about them.
- **Sing your favorite song.** Out loud, at the top of your lungs. Solo road trips and showers were invented for this. This is guaranteed to relax you and lead to creative thoughts.
- **Take a creative walk.** Take a five minute walk around your neighborhood or workplace. Observe the faces, places and spaces that surround you as you walk.
- **Stop and Stare.** Wherever you are, just stop and stare at something, ideally something that is pleasant such as a beautiful picture, a scene outdoors, or a child playing.
- **Don't jump out of bed so quickly.** Lie in bed an extra five minutes listening to yourself breathe before rushing off to school or work.
- **Turn off the radio while driving.** Instead of filling the car with noise, fill it with silence.
- **Practice visualization.** Find a quiet place to sit. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Imagine that you enter in to a room and paint a wall of white completely. Then proceed to imaging your desired goals, people, places and what you would like to be doing while achieving those goals.

Once you have taken your good five minutes, take a few minutes to think about a problem or situation you have been struggling with that requires your imagination or just grab a pen and paper and write down whatever comes to your mind once the five minutes are up.

What's the Bottom line

Taking a good five minutes in the crazy, nonstop course of a sixteen-hour day will make a huge difference towards fuelling your creativity and reducing stress in your life.

Source: Adapted from "The Five Good Minutes series" by Brantley & Millstine is published by New Harbinger Publications. You can preview excerpts of the exercises from several of the books at: <http://www.fivegoodminutes.com/excerptfivegood.htm>



Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to others.

If you would like more information about the ideas and topics listed in this issue, contact Judy Laws, Ph.D. at jlaws@foursightconsulting.com.

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