

Five Ways to Give Yourself More Time to Think!

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Your Mind on Media

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Are you overwhelmed with stuff to do, but with no time to process everything that happens to you in a day? If so, you're not alone. In this economy especially, people are expected to do more and more with no increase in resources. And although our digital devices can make some things more convenient, their constant presence in our lives leaves us little time to work through all the ideas that we're barraged with.

Research tells us two important things:

- Our brains can't handle lots of information at once.
- Taking breaks from information input is necessary for consolidating learning and having creative insights.

The problem is, we're so attached to our digital devices that we fill every pause with more input. Businesses expect people to work nonstop, but we're just not as effective that way.

It seems as though we don't have time to think anymore, but we really do. Here are a few suggestions for making better use of your brain for work:

(1) **Anticipate.** On your way to work or an important meeting, think about what's in store for you and how you might express any ideas you have rather than listening to the radio.

(2) **Reconsider.** When you leave a meeting or a presentation, give yourself a few minutes to mull over what you've just learned or what just happened rather than immediately checking messages.

(3) **Review.** On your way home from work, before turning on that self-help tape, give yourself a few minutes to mentally review your day; then give yourself a moment for an attitude-adjustment for what's expected of you at home.

(4) **Refresh.** When you get stuck on a project due to information-overload or brain exhaustion, take a break that doesn't involve more information. In an office, move around or find a way look at nature. Working at home? Take a shower or wash the dishes!

(5) **Reconnoiter.** When confronting an unexpected delay, use that time to observe what the people around you are doing; you may learn something useful. Or talk to someone else about what's going on rather than retreating into a different world on your smartphone.

Breaks from digital input don't have to last long to be effective. You'll be amazed at the insights that can occur in a minute or two.