

# The benefits of doing nothing



**Multitasking  
comes at a cost.  
It makes us  
40%  
less productive.<sup>1</sup>**

## When was the last time you did absolutely nothing?

If you're like most people, you can't remember a time when you weren't doing at least two things. We listen to books or podcasts while commuting to work. We watch TV or our phones while we eat. We're working, and on the phone, and probably trying to figure out how to cram a third activity into that moment.

In some cases, multitasking puts us and others in danger. It causes fatigue, agitation and high stress. This can lead to strained personal relations and difficulty in prioritizing healthy living.<sup>1</sup> We're always waiting for life to slow down, but it never does. **How do you change your habits from doing everything, all at once, to doing nothing at all?**

## Take a timeout

Young children are taught to take a “timeout” when they act up or need some time to reflect on something that happened. The forced time to do nothing has been used successfully for decades.<sup>2</sup> You could follow suit and sit in a chair or try:<sup>3</sup>

- Sitting and watching the people around you
- Walking indoors or outside and noticing what you see, feel and smell
- Playing with your pet
- Observing your surroundings

## Quality versus quantity

There are real benefits to learning to be present and to focus on one thing at a time. Your tasks will be finished faster and more accurately. Slowing down the pace of life will help make you better at putting ideas together and problem-solving. Plus, you'll experience:<sup>3,4</sup>

- Less stress and worry
- A more positive mindset
- Better sleep and relaxation
- More enjoyment of life
- Deeper and better focus



## Slow down

If you can't take an official timeout but need a quick reset, practice this box breathing exercise to slow down and refocus:<sup>4</sup>

- Sit in a comfortable chair
- Put your hand on your stomach
- Breathe in for three counts
- Hold your breath for three counts
- Exhale through your nose for three counts

**All of these activities offer an opportunity for your brain to turn off and for you to be mindful in the moment.**

**In this case, the concept of less is more is true.**

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To sign up or learn more, go to  
[TeladocHealth.com/Smile/HEALTHYCOUNTRY](https://TeladocHealth.com/Smile/HEALTHYCOUNTRY)

<sup>1</sup><https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/brain-wise/201209/the-true-cost-of-multi-tasking>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/all-grown/201910/how-do-effective-time-out>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/enhance-your-vintage-years/202207/doing-absolutely-nothing-has-mental-health-benefits>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9873947/>

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