Rest – More Important Now

Amidst the scores of memories from my time served, two things stand out related to a much-discussed topic today. Stress, burnout, and resilience are all popular right now, with the evidence presented that specifically burnout appears to be rising.

I recall events, even during the first months of training, where long hours were expected with intense physical activity. I recall being asked (yes, asked) if I would be willing to stay awake through the night to support my unit's on-duty captain. What I also remember, however, is how well my sleep was on most nights and how valuable a day's rest was whenever it occurred.

This makes the following points on rest, with the headline "more important than ever before, right on target for transitioning veterans. Actually, important for everyone!

The Roman poet Ovid passed along his words of wisdom in the first century BCE. He understood the importance of resting the body and mind. It can heal and grow nature as well as people.

>*"Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop."*

That was his take on how important it is for us to rest from time to time. Rest is essential to function at our highest levels, physically and mentally. Roughly 1,500 years after Ovid, sculptor, and painter Leonardo da Vinci was also expounding on the benefits of rest.

>*"Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation,*
>*for when you come back to your work your judgment will be surer."*

Religions worldwide preach about the importance of taking a day of rest, sometimes several days. Athletes understand their bodies need to rest and repair if they're going to be at their best. It seems everyone agrees that rest is essential for high levels of productivity.

Then why isn't anyone resting?

Ask anyone, and they'll likely tell you they have little free time. An argument can be made that we are at a point in human history where we have never been busier and more frantic than ever before. And while some people do make it a point to schedule a break or two during their workdays, taking an entire day to rest and relax is almost unheard of.

Schedule an Entire Rest Day Each Week

After reading that sentence, you may have concluded that we have lost our minds. How can you take an entire day out of your life to rest, relax and do pretty much nothing? And we want you to do this once every week? That's insanity.

No, what is insane is continually beating down your mind and body without giving it significant time to rest.

We understand that you sleep at night. But do you get really restful, fulfilling sleep? Or do you toss and turn and worry about tomorrow and next week, your bills, your responsibilities, and everything else?

Rest is as essential to your well-being as the oxygen you breathe and the water you drink. It's absolutely required regularly for you to build up the strength both mentally and physically to make it through your busy schedule.

Schedule an off day every week. If you can't afford an entire day, give yourself 12 hours of rest and relaxation. Be lazy. Enjoy some time with your friends. Read a book, listen to your favorite music, or relax in a hammock and drift asleep.

Add a day of rest to your weekly schedule, and you'll appreciate your life much more. You'll also have much more energy and focus for the rest of the week.

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