

**STOP! TAKE A BREAK!  
YOU'LL WORK SMARTER AND LIVE HEALTHIER**

***This month's newsletter is packed with proof that taking a break helps us work smarter, live longer and enjoy healthier lives!***

Whether it's a short walk outside, a no-work weekend, or a family meal with no cell phones, science is showing us why taking a break is good for our lives *and* good for our workplaces.

***Join us next Thursday*** ... Happiness expert - **Christine Carter** - from UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center, will draw on the latest scientific research on positivity, productivity, and performance. She'll demonstrate why by doing less, we actually accomplish more.

***Watch these two inspirational videos*** ... The first is about Treehouse. A successful technology company with 100+ employees where everyone works a 4 day work week. The second, by our friend **John de Graaf**, shows the importance of vacations – for individuals, families, business and society - and the troubling trend of the U.S. becoming a "no vacation nation."

***Enjoy this month's newsletter*** ... Read on to discover the 8 simple breaks you can plan for to work smarter and feel better

Try one of these great ideas today, we think you'll thank us later!  
/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

***PS - Want to learn how to set better boundaries at work and have more time and energy for life? [Click here](#) to find out more about our spring OMG! - Overwhelm Mitigation Groups!***

**Take a pause to reduce stress ...  
and increase happiness and effectiveness!**

***Read on for the 8 great reasons Joe Robinson suggests we take a pause!***

**1. Big Picture Pause.**

Set aside a chunk of time, say, 30 minutes this week and then once a month, to think about where you're going at work and life this year and why you're going there. What are your work goals? Life priorities? What's missing from the picture? What do you need to change? How can you do that?

**2. Work Effectiveness Pause.**

Review tasks and identify ones that are frequent bottlenecks and time-wasters. How could they be adjusted for less stress and more effectiveness?

**3. Priorities Pause.**

Set aside 10 minutes at the end of the workday or at the beginning to map out the top five tasks on your list for today or tomorrow.

**4. Balance Pause.**

Each Friday, take a few minutes to assess the state of your work-life balance. Are you out of whack? What needs to happen to have a better work-life fit?

**5. Recharge Pauses.**

Fatigued brains look like ones that are sound asleep. Pause when the pressure peaks, you're stuck, concentration fades, the daydreaming begins. Take a walk, listen to music, or plan your weekend to build up energy and cognitive resources again.

**6. Free Time Pause.**

Take time to put together a free-time log for a week of all your time outside work. Where are the time sinks? Where are the free-time slots you could schedule a new hobby or activity? What would you like to do? Salsa dancing? Cycling?

**7. Vacation Pause.**

Figure out at the beginning of the year where you want to go on vacation and when you want to go. This makes it easier for coworkers and managers and locks them and you into making the holiday happen at the most opportune time, with plenty of notice to make workflow adjustments.

**8. Life List Pause.**

Take some time to think about what you'd like to do on this planet for the experience of it. What's on your Life List? Sail the South Seas? Learn guitar? Keep a rotating list of five experiences and start jotting down steps to make them happen."

Joe Robinson concludes: "Satisfying work and a well-lived life are the result of thinking, assessing, and having the attention to create a better pathway forward. Something no one else can do for us. What you want doesn't happen on its own. You have to make it happen."

**Our OMG! - Overwhelm Mitigation Groups - are a great place to learn these skills. Want to learn more? [Here's our OMG! PDF with more information.](#)**

## The science of happiness

*Christine Carter will join our next Thursday with ThirdPath webinar. She's got a PhD in happiness. Here's a sneak preview of what we'll learn.*

**Our bodies and minds are tightly linked.** In a stress response, our heart rate elevates and our blood vessels constrict - this is our fight or flight response. In a challenge response, our heart rate elevates, but the blood vessels don't constrict. Instead our bodies meet the challenge by pumping more blood sugar and oxygen to help our muscles and brain respond more quickly.

**Certain emotions counter stress.** Laughter, gratitude, meditation, and dance can all counter the physiological responses our bodies experience from stress. Even imaging a future success, or researching things that energize us has the same positive impact.

**We can also amplify positive emotions.** When we share a positive emotion with another person, our biochemistry and body language synchronize and we both positively impact each others' well being. Even a pleasant conversation with the person selling us coffee can have this impact.

*Want to learn more about how to put these ideas into practice?  
[Register now](#) for this **FREE** webinar.*