



# This December take time to Rest

**2 December 2024**

Life is a series of ups and downs, of good and bad. One month work is going well, the next it is full of stress. One year our closest relationships are all good, and the next they are full of strife. The financial markets are up and down. So is our health. Nothing stays the same. Even in nature the seasons change. If things are good, at some stage something will go wrong. If things are awful, they will most likely be better at another time. Everything is cyclical. And so is our year. Typically, for those of us in the Southern Hemisphere, December is a time to refresh and unwind in preparation for the year ahead. So, take the time this December to really rest and relax. We all need it after the last year.

How do you relax and unwind? One way you don't, is to schedule your holidays full of activities. That just mimics a typical workday. You can of course also just lay in bed the whole time, however, the chances are unless you are ill, or severely burnt out, that is not going to be satisfying either or result in your feeling rested. Below are some better ways that you can rest and relax.

1. Get out in nature. Most of us don't work in nature. We work inside buildings. So, getting outside is a nice change of environment and something different and relaxing.
2. Get active. Go dancing, cycling, play squash, or any other sport you enjoy. While most of us would like to do exercise during the year, heavy workloads usually mean we cannot do as much as we want to. Participate in exercise activities with a group of friends or as a way to make new friends, and benefit from the social interaction as well as the exercise.
3. Have a technology free day. No laptops or computers. Stay off social media. You may need to text or phone, but keep it to the bare minimum. Most of us have tech overload every day. If you can, make it a few tech-free days.
4. Throw away the schedules, and while you are at it, the clocks. We are so driven by time during our workday that it can be refreshing to just do activities when you feel like doing them, rather than because they have been scheduled for a certain time. Not being run by time is also a change for most of us.
5. Take a road trip. Anywhere. Just drive and see where you go to. Stay wherever you end up. Being totally spontaneous is not everyone's cup of tea, but it can be a great way of freeing yourself from all the rules that govern our days. Don't set a goal for the day. Just go where you feel like going in the moment.

6. Take up a new hobby or craft. You don't have to be good at it. At work we strive to excel, but sometimes we just want to do something without having to focus on being excellent at it. Just do it and clown around if you want to. The main aim is to have fun.
7. Get creative. See a musical, play a musical instrument, write music, sing, write a story or poem, draw, and paint. For the pure pleasure of it.
8. Consider a massage. Or practice progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). If you don't know how to do PMR, there is plenty of information on the internet on how to do so.
9. Go on a picnic. Try out a new eating place. Try out some new food. Cook and try cuisine from other countries.
10. Laugh. A lot. Laughter is therapy. See a comedy, watch comedies on YouTube or other channels. Read a humorous book.

For many, many people, the past several years have been exhausting. This December is the culmination of a tough year, and tough years even before this one. Living in a perpetual state of exhaustion is not really living. And as human beings, if we are exhausted, we need some time to recover. So, try and not make this December crazy busy. You don't have to conform to all the usual social conventions. You don't have to do something because you have done it every year. And, the absolutely last thing you want, is to make more work for yourself. Before you say yes to all the activities of the festive season, and before you go ahead and do as you have always done in the past, think about how you are going to free up time for yourself to rest and relax. Your body and mind will thank you for it.

Wishing you all a very Happy Holidays, however you celebrate them. If you are travelling take care. Make this a time of gratitude and giving as well as rest. Spend time with your loved ones; with people who make you feel loved and safe and cared about. Try and forget about all the troubles and strife that accompany us in our daily lives and decide to enjoy yourselves. A lot.

Thank you for your support. Wishing you a great Christmas for those celebrating and the best for 2025.