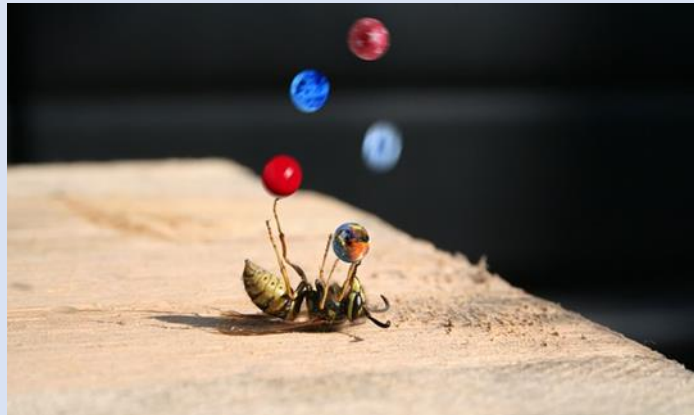




### Mid-day Crash

Don't fool yourself to thinking that what you do during the break does not matter. Especially, when working from home. Going from your computer to phone will do little for restoring brain function. Completely and quite literally unplugging from work is ideal. When decided on what to do please consider these three elements: change of scenery to include nature, movement, and/or healthy socializing. If you cannot have all of them, go for one or two. Look for green spaces with plants and trees or at least where you can see the sky, yes this even if it is cold outside. Think about it. We will step outside to fill other desires (smoke, grab a coffee) so why does it become a chore when the reason has to do with self-care.

If your job already consists of you to be outside and moving most of the day then your self-care break will look different. Switch it and do something more restorative, perhaps sit down and listen to calming music of your choice, instead of going through various desk/chair yoga postures try holding just one pose and breathing deeply in the pose. Experimenting with visualization is also highly recommended.



If you are working from home and have young children with you consider including them in your routine. This can serve as healthy socializing as you know children are full of surprises. Even though you may have to turn self-care moments into play time for them being creative can allow you to still have a healthy break. The juggle of spending time with your children and still getting work done is a sophisticated one. For idea's of mindful games you can do with your young children please visit <https://www.nurturingourwellbeing.com/mindfulness>

**The Breath-** The rate of approximately 6 breaths per minute is ideal for someone at rest as this synchronizes with cardiac rhythms and enhances heart rate variability and blood flow, relaxes muscles, and reduces sweating -- all measures of how balanced the nervous system is. Observe yawns and sighs as they can be signs that you have been holding or shallow breathing that can be signs you are tired or stressed. Take a break to breathe and increase oxygen flow to your brain and muscles. Avoid forcing the breath. Return to low, slow abdominal breathing, allowing a soft, relaxed exhale and gentle, natural inhale (1)

### **Reference**

1. Khazan, I. (2018). Breathing, overbreathing and mindfulness. *Biofeedback*, 46(1): 2-8.