



# Boosting Your Energy in the Workplace

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Energy. Wish you had more of it? Many of us do. A sad truth of our lives is that our days are often filled with a multitude of professional and personal demands, and yet our lives are more sedentary than ever before. It is easy to feel zapped at the end of a workday or even before that day has ended.

Incorporating a few small, new strategies can invite a powerful shift to this dilemma. It really is possible to find your energy and channel it by paying daily attention to creating new, healthier habits. Here are a few great ideas:

## **Breathe.**

Think of your energy as an ever revolving inner bank account, a place that is yours, where you can always make a deposit or withdrawal. A few soft breaths will bring you in touch with that inner balance. It is always there to restore you.

Taking ten soft, complete breaths can change your body chemistry. Use this simple technique to soften moments throughout your day. Breathe in through your nose and direct the breath to your solar plexus. Exhale through your mouth. These breaths will trigger a relaxation response within you that will ease all of your internal systems and give you access to more of your energy. This is a simple, powerful strategy for before or after a stressful meeting, event or presentation. Prepare yourself, connect with yourself, through breathing.

## **Sit up straight.**

Simple adjustments to how you live in and use your body every day can have a huge impact on your sense of feeling energized. If you slump over at your desk for hours, you will actually feel more tired than if you sit up straight. Your mind and body are in constant conversation in a system called “embodied cognition”, wherein each system affects the other. This means that slumping will trigger feelings of low energy and depletion, and feeling low will invite the tendency to slump. A simple way to encourage sitting up straight at your desk is to put small books, about 1” thick, under the back legs of your office chair. This will create a slight tip to your seat, which will in turn invite your spine to flow upwards. You won’t even have to think about making it happen. It will simply happen. And you will find you have more energy throughout your day by making this simple change.

## **Look Up. Look Out.**

While working at the computer, don’t wait for things to open or download. Use that time to look up, out and away from the screen. Healthy vision depends on eyes that can shift from convergence, or moving towards one another to divergence, moving away from one another, with ease. But a very modern problem is that when we stare at a screen for long periods of time, our eyes get stuck in convergence. Counteract this tendency by looking far away as often as possible. Look out the window. Locate something outside and then look beyond it. If a bird flies by, follow that bird! Keeping your eyes and visual system lively and fluid will help keep your energy up.

## **Weave Movement into Your Day. Every Day.**

The importance of staying in motion cannot be overstated. While going to the gym or taking a great fitness class has winning effects on your system, those activities are only one way to keep active. For many of us, we simply don’t have the time. However, think of the people who live in the Blue Zones of the world. They are known to live the longest, healthiest lives on earth and they usually don’t belong to a gym. They walk and work in their gardens. They get to their shopping areas on foot and carry their groceries home by hand. These and other daily actions add up to significant activity and we can look to them as cues to inspire us.

Consider weaving gentle activity into and throughout your day so that it becomes a new pattern of habit. Call on many of the tried and true ideas: park far away from your destination and then walk briskly to where you are going. Take the stairs, not the elevator. Walk a few fresh laps around your office to get your blood moving and refresh your perspective. And by all means, get outside. Even a ten minute outdoor walk at lunchtime, five minutes out, five minutes back will

add up to significant activity. Staying active is so important that recently, in a British newspaper, the University of Cambridge lecturer Dr. James Rudd stated: “If a drug company came up with a medicine as effective as exercise, they would have a billion-dollar blockbuster on their hands and a Nobel prize in the post.”

### **Grab Moments of Stillness.**

Being sedentary is different than being still. Grab a couple of moments during the day when you sit comfortably and let your mind empty. Close your office door or find a quiet place and just be. It doesn't take long – even in five brief minutes you can connect with yourself in a way that is hugely restorative. Double the power of this idea with the soft breaths mentioned above. It is possible to renew yourself in very short periods of time.

Use these ideas to reconnect with the energy you have so you can recapture your sense of vitality from within. Be well!

