

# Setting Healthy Boundaries

## *Giving and Getting Permission to Switch Off*

### **Allostatic Load**

refers to the cumulative effect of stress from the many different avenues of our lifestyle. Essentially it means wear and tear, and the heavy cost on our body from long periods of exposure to stress. This is a huge burden to bear, and unfortunately in the modern world, that load has become bigger. With the combination of smart phones, increasing pressures and work and blurred lines between work and home it is difficult for people to switch off at the end of the working day. But at what cost? The ability to switch off is a contributing factor to mental health.

According to a study by Staples...



**66% OF EMPLOYEES**  
spend more than 8 hours  
a day at work



**25% OF EMPLOYEES**  
do not take breaks  
other than lunch



**20% OF EMPLOYEES**  
cite guilt as the reason  
for not taking breaks

*"Idleness is not just a vacation, an indulgence or a vice; it is as indispensable to the brain as vitamin D is to the body, and deprived of it we suffer a mental affliction as disfiguring as rickets...It is, paradoxically, necessary to getting any work done."*



## WHY DO WE NEED TO SWITCH OFF AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO SWITCH OFF?

### People who can't switch off...

- Have sleeping problems
- Concentration problems
- Are more tense and irritable
- Have higher blood pressure and heart rate putting pressure on the cardiovascular system
- Tend to eat more fatty and sugary foods

### Taking regular breaks and learning to switch off...

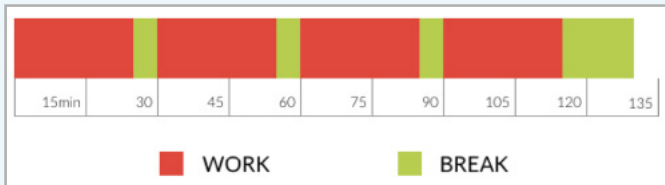
- Helps you process and retain information
- Boosts creativity
- Helps you cultivate healthier habits
- Helps you be more productive



## HOW TO SWITCH OFF AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME?

- Draft your emails in the evening if you must...but wait until the morning to send them out.
- Include a line in your email signature letting people know that you are sending this email at your convenience and you do not expect them to respond after hours.
- Set the expectation – give people permission to not respond to email before and after working hours.
- Develop a ritual at the end of the day – completely shut down your computer instead of putting it in sleep.
- Set an out-of-office email at the end of the day.
- When you are finished work for the day – put anything that reminds you of work away. Change your clothes, put your work phone on silent.
- Spend 15 – 20 minutes relaxing after work. Don't problem solve, just unwind.
- Develop a hobby – stress relief often comes in the form of an all-consuming activity that forces your mind away from work.
- Lead by example!! People will follow what you do, not what you say.

# When it comes to breaks, the science says...

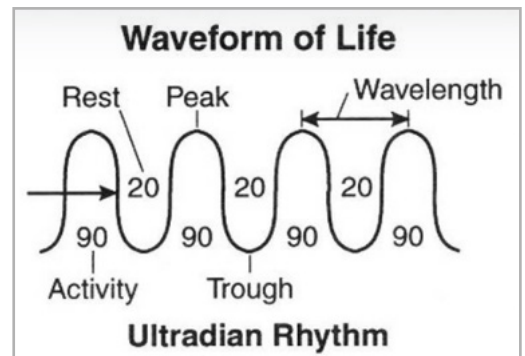


## THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

Work for 25 minutes then take a 5 minute break.

## 90-MINUTE WORK BLOCKS

According to Nathan Kleitman, this maximizes productivity by tapping into our bodies' natural rhythms.



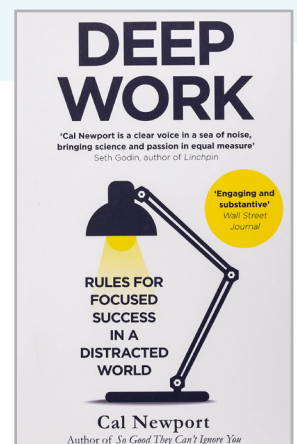
## 52 MINUTES

DeskTime and the Draugiem Group used time-tracking and productivity apps to study the habits of the most productive people. They found that the most productive people work for 52 minutes at a time and then break for 17 minutes. This is working with purpose.

## DEEP WORK BY CAL NEWPORT

for more tips on higher productivity, try *Deep Work* by Cal Newport, or Caspar's latest book *Be More Human* – in particular Chapter 18, *Swerving Distractions*, where he shares his techniques building on Cal Newport's work and that of others.

If you or your managers needs any development or support in this area please let us know. It is the most important thing you can engage in right now.



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