

## 6 Ways to Keep Your Mental Batteries Charged

By Charlotte R. Farrior

When you leave your car headlights on overnight, what happens? No power. You can't get to work. You can't even get out of the driveway. Your brain is like a car battery. If you let all the juice run down, you can't function very well. Your brain tells your body that it just can't handle anything else. Keeping your mental batteries charged allows you to be more productive—both personally and professionally. When your mental batteries are revved up, you feel more energetic and able to handle whatever comes your way.

Take a minute and look at your calendar. Are you busy every second of the day? Try one or more of these recharging exercises and see if you don't feel better and ultimately get more accomplished.

**Take a physical break—** If you sit at a desk most of the day, get up. Walk around the block. Go to the gym after work. Exercise releases endorphins into the bloodstream. The physical activity allows you to change the focus of your thought process. Breathe in the air. Feel the breeze on your face. When you return to your desk, not only will your body be refreshed, you will be able to return your attention more clearly to your work.

**Clear your space—** Nothing bogs you down more than sifting through endless stacks of papers and files to find the sticky note you wrote a phone

number on. Wherever you spend a lot of time, take a minute and clean it up. Throw away old newspapers and magazines you will never read. Organize your office so that you have a place for everything. You won't get frustrated and break your concentration when you need something. You'll know exactly where it is at all times.

**Call a friend—**work is a never-ending activity. Getting together with a friend for lunch or coffee gives your mind a rest. You don't have to worry about office politics and saying the wrong thing. If you're dealing with a stressful situation, talking to a friend can help you work through the issue logically and objectively. Sometimes the answer is right in front of you, but you are too close to see it. A lighthearted half-hour will make your day much more enjoyable.

**Give yourself to others—** We get so consumed with our lives that we sometimes forget that there are others not so fortunate. Donating your time at a charity gives you a sense of having really affected another person. Selfless acts of kindness many times are rewarded in the most unexpected ways.

Volunteer at a children's hospital or deliver lunch to a homebound neighbor. You don't even need a special occasion to do something nice for co-workers. When you go to the breakroom, fix them a cup of coffee just the way they like it. Whatever is bothering you quickly seems less significant when you help someone else.

**Listen to music—**When was the last time you just sat and listened to music. Whether it's Beethoven or Puff Daddy, spending time focusing on the sound and the lyrics helps you

regain your focus. Let yourself get completely absorbed in the music. Close your eyes and really hear the song. When you get overloaded, put your headphones on and take a fifteen-minute break with your favorite artist. You can also make your own mix of special songs. When things get too hectic to deal with, you can plug in, regain your focus, and return to the task at hand.

**Be thankful—**Everyone has something to be thankful for. It could be your family, your home, your job. Step back a moment when the clouds start coming around you. Nothing is ever as bad as it seems. Consider all the things you have that millions of people around the world will never get to experience. Putting your life in perspective can be a great way to balance all the things your life requires.

When your brain tells you it can't handle anything else, don't give up. Take thirty minutes and re-focus. Letting your brain fizzle out with stress and frustration only leads to other problems. If you can't afford to run your mental batteries down, charge them up every once in a while with any one of these simple exercises.

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