



to punching-clock time.

The monster was given life.

Neither created nor destroyed

Our reliance on mechanical time has deceived us into living by a regimented workweek followed by a “free-time” weekend. These days, everyone has a watch, but no one has the time.

Yet the subjective nature of time is non-mechanical and non-clock. Clocks are mere signaling devices. We are the true timekeepers.

Therefore, there’s no such thing as “wasting time.” Time can neither be created nor destroyed. Time can only be experienced.

If you find yourself racing through your days and feeling mentally winded, you’re a bonafide workaholic, whether you have a job or not.

Researcher Carl McDaniels has observed that it is through play that we first discover our talents. Author Dick Bolles has written: “Leisure, then, is a mirror where our inner nature stands most revealed.”

The benefits of attending to your leisure will pay off in your professional life. People in surveys say they use only two or three talents at work.

Workaholics, however, approach leisure with equal zeal, applying the principles of “productivity” to their play time.

Leisure, however, means not feeling guilty about doing “nothing.” Leisure means not filling every free moment with activity.

The art of doing nothing

Our busy culture finds the art of doing nothing terrifying.

Getting home early means more time for chores. Finishing one project means racing off to complete another. To-do lists are insatiable and infinite.

The French have a natural talent for doing nothing, much like Americans do for ordering at drive-through windows.

In Paris, sitting in a café and doing nothing are art forms.

Here are seven tips for perfecting your own art of doing nothing:

Meditate every day, even if it’s just for five minutes.

Always give yourself time to think, whether it’s a big decision or a small one.

“Coast” when you need to.

Know your limits and respect them.

Also accept the limitations of others.

If you find yourself thinking about work at home, train yourself to change the subject.

If you’re not enjoying it, and you don’t have to do it, don’t do it.

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Helpful readings

The Art of Time by Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber

Breathing Space: Living and Working at a Comfortable Pace in a Sped-Up

Society by Jeff Davidson

Slowing Down In A Speeded Up World by Adair Lara