

THE ART OF CONSTANT REFUELLING

Some years ago I had a three week holiday planned to visit Italy. I was operating a hectic financial practice at the time and worked very long days in the lead up to the time away, ensuring all would run smoothly in my absence. Once arriving in Rome (after a very long flight with little sleep) it was an action packed two days of sightseeing. The following day, boarding a train to Naples, my body started to shut down and subsequently spent the next 10 days convalescing in my hotel room. Not the ideal way to spend a dream holiday.



Many business owners and executives experience this annual *physical and mental shut down* when they stop. Perhaps you have experienced similar. We burn the candle at both ends (and in the middle when required) only to hit the wall at various points throughout the year. We're dragged from pillar to post by our own ambitions and good intentions along with the demands of the organisation - often running the physical and emotional tanks close to empty. When the fuel in these tanks diminish we start running on adrenaline to keep momentum. This adrenaline fuelled activity often results in adrenal fatigue affecting both mind and body. Our fuse becomes shorter, sleep becomes fitful, emotions are on edge, the people closest to us are negatively impacted and our organisations suffer from our ongoing weariness. We then work longer to make up for our inefficiencies and so it progresses in an ever increasing downward spiral. We then hang on till our annual break in the hope of replenishing the tanks.

One of the practices I would suggest to counter this mental and physical exhaustion is the constant refuelling through regular refreshment breaks.

Regular Refreshment Breaks

- Daily. This might be time at the gym, a walk in the park at lunch time, playing with your kids when you get home. Whatever the activity find something you look forward to, helps you unwind and refreshes you on a daily basis.
- Weekly. This can include something you love to do on your own or that involves family and friends. The key is planning something that helps keep you out of monotonous living and provide something fresh into your world on a constant basis.
- Monthly. Try scheduling a weekend (or long weekend) once a month to get away or a lazy few days around home.
- Schedule a longer break every quarter.

Flight attendants direct us to put our own oxygen masks on first prior to helping others. No oxygen and we're useless to anyone. And as it is for life in the air, so for life on the ground. When we understand ourselves and what is required to keep us fuelled; when we build these things into our lives on a regular basis and plan our time around them, then, when we do go on annual leave we'll hit the ground running with vitality rather than hitting the bed in sickness.

Happy holidays !