A PRACTICAL GUIDE

The Unhurried Life

Nine simple ways to do less, notice more and make room for rest, starting with one small change.



www.forwardstepsblog.com

Life isn't a race.
So stop sprinting through it.

Slowing down isn't about moving slower. It's about giving your mind less to carry.



WHERE YOUR MIND REALLY IS

46.9%

of waking hours, people's minds were off somewhere else, not on the task at hand. They were less happy then.

Killingsworth & Gilbert, Science, 2010



WE AVOID DOING NOTHING

11

studies found most people didn't enjoy 6 to 15 minutes alone with their thoughts. Many chose a mild shock.

Wilson et al., Science, 2014



THE GOOD NEWS

120 min

a week in nature went with better reported health and wellbeing. Long or short visits both counted.

White et al., Scientific Reports, 2019



HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Three parts, nine ideas

PART 1

1

Do less

Trim the list, clear a space, fewer choices.

PART 2

2

Be here now

Walk slower, use your senses, unplug.

PART 3

3

Rest on purpose

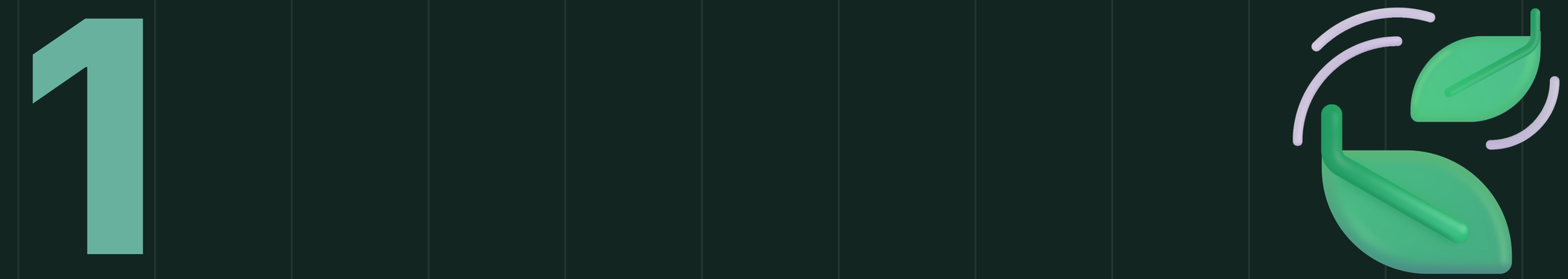
Time outside, time to think, time to rest.



1

Do less

Give your mind fewer things to juggle.





IDEA 1 · DO LESS

Trim your list

Slowing down starts on paper. Stop trying to do everything at once. Keep what truly matters and let the rest go.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Ask of each task: what happens if I skip it?
- ✓ Schedule rest like any other appointment.

1. List everything on your plate
2. Cross off what doesn't truly matter
3. Add rest to the list on purpose



10

minutes, one drawer



Keep what you use.
Let the rest go.

IDEA 2 · DO LESS

Clear one space

Clutter keeps asking for your attention. Pick one drawer or shelf and give it ten minutes. Notice how the cleared space feels.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Donate or toss anything you don't use.
- ✓ Do one small area a day, not the whole house.



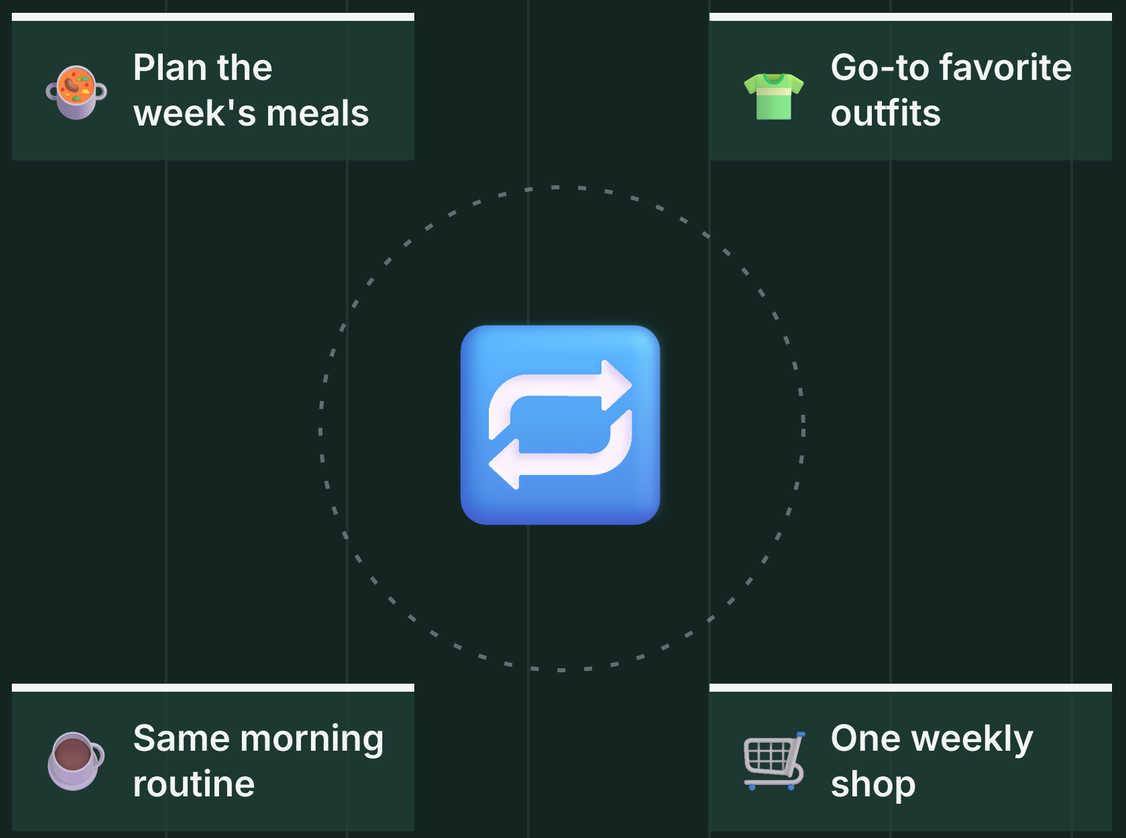
IDEA 3 · DO LESS

Make fewer choices

Every small decision takes a little energy. Simple routines for meals, outfits and mornings free your mind for what matters.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Plan the week's meals in one sitting.
- ✓ Keep a few go-to outfits you love.



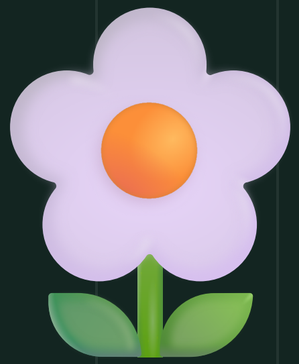
Fewer small decisions, a calmer mind.



2

Be here now

Notice the moment you're actually in.





IDEA 4 · BE HERE NOW

Walk, don't run

Think of a slow walk with no destination. You saw far more than when you raced somewhere. Life works the same way.

RUSHING



Racing to the next thing while the day goes by in a blur

→

STROLLING



Noticing the light, the sounds and the people around you

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Take one walk this week with no goal at all.
- ✓ Leave five minutes early so you never have to rush.



IDEA 5 · BE HERE NOW

Wake up your senses

Pause and check in: what can you see, hear, smell, feel and taste right now? Your senses pull you back into the present.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Savor your first sip of coffee with no screen.
- ✓ Try it while you wait in line.

👀 See

👂 Hear

🌸 Smell

🖐️ Touch

🍓 Taste





Put screens away. Be where you are.

IDEA 6 · BE HERE NOW

Unplug on purpose

Constant pings pull you out of the moment. Set aside time each day to unplug and be fully with your people and your surroundings.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Keep phones off the table at meals.
- ✓ Try 30 unplugged minutes today: read, draw or walk.



WHY IT WORKS

300+

people shared a meal with friends or family. Those with phones on the table enjoyed it less.

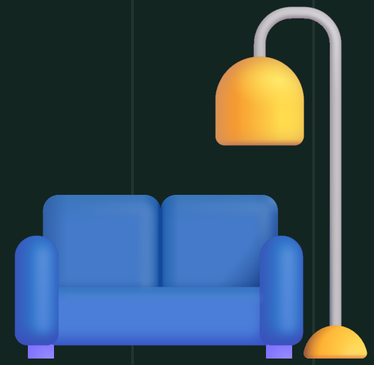
Dwyer, Kushlev & Dunn, JESP, 2018



3

Rest on purpose

Make room for quiet, nature and doing nothing.





IDEA 7 · REST ON PURPOSE

Step outside

Nature invites you to slow down. Spend a few minutes outside each day and notice the details: leaves, birdsong, clouds.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
🌳	🌼	🐦	☁️	🌊	🥾	🌞
Park	Garden	Birds	Clouds	Water	Hike	Sunshine

A few minutes outside, every day.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Drink your morning coffee outdoors.
- ✓ Take calls on a walk when you can.





A few still minutes turn it down.

IDEA 8 · REST ON PURPOSE

Sit with your thoughts

When you have nothing to do, don't grab your phone. Sit for a few minutes and let your mind wander. It gets easier with practice.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Start with two minutes and build up.
- ✓ You don't have to think anything at all.



IDEA 9 · REST ON PURPOSE

Schedule downtime

Downtime rarely happens by accident. Put it on the calendar, guard it, and enjoy it. You'll come back with more to give.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Block it in your calendar like a meeting.
- ✓ Tell the people you live with it's your quiet time.

WHEN		DO NOTHING FOR
After lunch	→	10 minutes
Sunday morning	→	One hour
Before bed	→	5 minutes



YOUR PLAN

Pick two to start today

- ✂️ Cross three things off your list
- 🍲 Plan this week's meals
- 👀 Do a five-senses check-in
- 🌳 Spend a few minutes outside
- 📅 Book do-nothing time this week
- 🧺 Clear one drawer in 10 minutes
- 🚶 Take one walk with no destination
- 📱 Keep phones off the table at meals
- 🪑 Sit for two minutes, no phone



BONUS

Your 7-day slow-down log

Print this page and fill it in each evening. Small pauses count.

DAY	WHAT I DROPPED	TIME OUTSIDE	QUIET MINUTES	HOW I FELT (1-5)
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

When slowing down feels hard

🐢 Start tiny. Two quiet minutes count, and stillness gets easier with practice.

🗓️ Put rest in your calendar so it doesn't get squeezed out.

🤝 Ask family or coworkers to share the load. You don't have to carry it all.

💬 If stress or low mood won't lift, talk to your doctor or a counselor.

Slowing down is a practice, not a test. Every pause counts.

This guide is general information, not medical advice.



YOUR NEXT STEP

Start today with one slow moment.

Pick the idea that feels easiest, put it in your day, and notice how it feels.

Choose your first idea now



SOURCES

The research behind this guide

Killingsworth MA, Gilbert DT. A wandering mind is an unhappy mind. Science, 2010.

Wilson TD et al. Just think: The challenges of the disengaged mind. Science, 2014.

White MP et al. Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing. Scientific Reports, 2019.

Dwyer RJ, Kushlev K, Dunn EW. Smartphone use undermines enjoyment of face-to-face social interactions. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 2018.

