



WORK WELL UPDATE

## A Peek Inside

### MIND

An app that will help you catch some zzzs

### BODY

How mindful eating can shape your day

### FOOD

A meal that fills you up and cools you down

### RESEARCH

How to take an intentional break during the day

### MYTHS DEBUNKED

Multitaskers are more productive

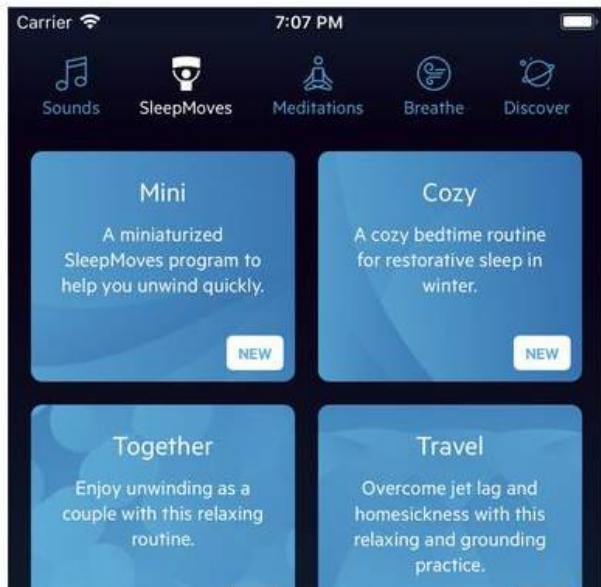
# September *Cool-Down*

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The end of summer can be a bittersweet whirlwind. This month, we are talking about practical strategies for how to slow down before we embark on an entirely new season. By taking advantage of our downtime, we can enhance our productivity, health, and happiness. So go ahead: take a little brain break and dive into this month's issue on 'cooling down.'

On the Goga is a workplace wellness company guided by one, simple principle: Happy People Do Great Things.

**Learn More About Mindful Wellness Programs**  
[www.onthegoga.com](http://www.onthegoga.com)



# healthy tech

## Relax Melodies app

Sometimes we just need a little help when it comes to rest. Relax Melodies is a soothing app that makes sleep easy. Through soothing sounds, sleep meditations, bedtime stories, and breathing techniques you can personalize your own rhythm to fall in a deep slumber. Relax Melodies is designed to help you get to sleep quickly and wake up refreshed.

Relax Melodies is easy to use, with many different soothing combinations you can explore. Take control of how you can cool down and create your own relaxing escape.

*Cost: Free + In App Purchases*

## office holidays

THE OFFICIAL SEPTEMBER LIST

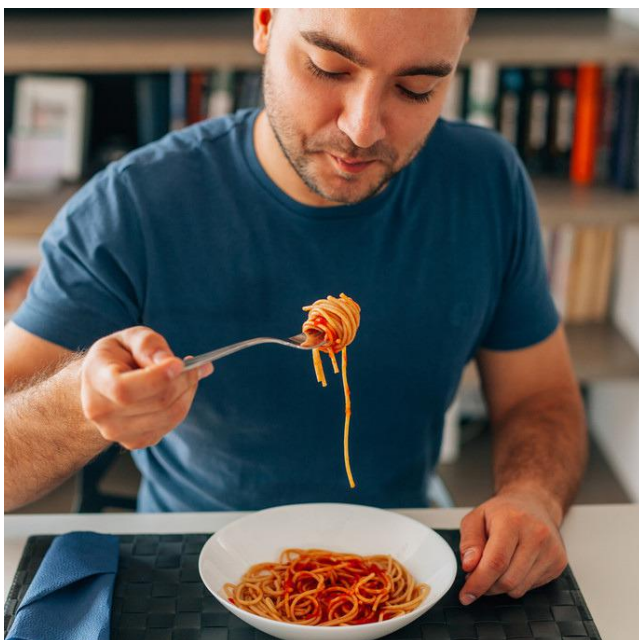
4th: National Wildlife Day

5th: National Cheese Pizza Day

6th: National Read a Book Day

**14th: National Coloring Day**

28th: National Neighbor Day



## wellness in 2

### Eating Your Lunch Mindfully

Have you ever grabbed lunch at your desk, responded to your wall of emails, and then looked down and your lunch is magically gone? Don't worry, we've all been there. This phenomenon, called distracted eating, is all too common, but it actually has a host of undesirable side effects (weight gain, lack of satisfaction, binge eating, etc). On the flip side, being fully present while you eat your lunch can help you enjoy your food more, and boost happiness.

Next time you're eating lunch, even if you're swamped with work, take two minutes to look away from your screen and chew a few full bites. Try to pick out the tastes and smells. You may even notice you're enjoying your lunch more and feeling satisfied!

*Source: Harvard Health*



# THIS MONTH'S health myth debunked

Myth:  
Multitaskers are extremely  
productive

## FACTS:

We're not actually accomplishing what we think we are when we're multitasking. Multitasking for most of us becomes a default when we have so many tasks on our to-do lists. We do the quick mental math and come to the conclusion that there simply isn't enough time in the day to accomplish everything unless we tackle multiple things at once. The problem is, while we think we're being more productive, our brains can't handle too many things at once.

According to Earl Miller, a Professor of Neuroscience at MIT, we can't simply do more than one task at a time. In fact, research says 40% of productivity could be lost to "task-switching." In fact, it takes more time to complete the tasks when you switch in between them to work. A Stanford study shows how our brain takes four times longer to process something new. The process of interrupting a task and starting a new one has shown how long it takes us to absorb new information.

Don't be fooled by the pleasure of tackling multiple tasks at a time. Focus on one task at hand and resist the urge to interrupt to start something new. Remember, although counter intuitive, multitasking does not equal being more productive!

Source: INC



## COOL AS A CUCUMBER Cucumber Salad

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 long English cucumbers
- 1 medium onion
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 Tbsp sugar (or coconut sugar or sweetener of choice)
- 1/3 cup fresh dill, chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Slice the cucumber in half and then in slices. Slice the onion in thin strips.
- Mix cucumber and onions in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper.
- Mix white wine vinegar, water, sugar in a small bowl. Pour over the cucumbers and onions, and stir well.
- Sprinkle some fresh chopped dill and stir.

8 Servings | 24 Calories Per Serving  
Prep Time: 15 Min | Cooking Time: 0 Min

Source: Delicious Meals Healthy







## Matthew Shaw

YOGA + MINDFULNESS COACH

### “ USING MINDFULNESS TO COOL DOWN

Sometimes, heat can be a good thing. I teach power yoga at a hot yoga studio, and spending several hours each day in a 98-101° room with added humidity makes me super aware of how my physical body reacts to heat. In yoga, added heat enhances my experience. It allows me and my students to go deeper in the postures. In fact, at this point I even find it difficult to practice yoga in a “cool” room.

On the other hand, I’m also aware of body temperature rising in not-so-positive ways. For example: when I am feeling stressed outside the yoga studio. Through my mindfulness practice, I’ve discovered that this is one major aspect of my stress response – a warming sensation throughout my body and a sudden need to turn up the A/C!

So how do I cool down in those moments where the heat seems too intense?

Step One: Mindfulness - I simply become aware that I’m experiencing stress, and notice how it feels physically in my body.

Step Two: A Short Meditation - going inward for about 2-5 minutes to simply observe my breath helps bring me back to my default state and “cool down” to my normal temperature.

The physical stress response is a physiological reaction that is often triggered by negative thoughts. When we become aware of it, notice where and how we feel it in our bodies, we can begin to stop the cycle of stressful thoughts. You don’t even need to touch the AC knob, all you need are a few intentional inhales and exhales.

# the scientific benefits of taking breaks

Source: Psychology Today

We’ve all experienced the feeling: You’re stumped on a problem at work. No matter how long you work on it, you can’t seem to figure it out. Then, the minute you walk away from the task, the solution comes to you.

This is not a coincidence. The thinking part of our brain known as the prefrontal cortex (PFC), is responsible for decision making, analytical thinking, and executive functioning. It works hard all day and just like any other body part that is working at maximum capacity, giving it time to rest actually helps increase productivity and keep our goals in the spotlight. Research shows that there are benefits to many different kinds of breaks.

## MOVEMENT BREAKS

A meta study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine suggests that prolonged periods of sitting increase our risk of dying young (yikes!). The good news is that even a short break to get up for water or stretch can be helpful in mitigating some of the negative effects.

## EMPATHY BREAKS

Taking breaks can help you make more empathetic decisions. In a famous study of Israeli judges, judges were more likely to grant parole to prisoners after their two daily breaks than after they had been working for a while.

## MOTIVATION BREAKS

Breaks can restore motivation, especially for long term goals. Author Nir Eyal explains, ...for challenging tasks that require our sustained attention, research shows briefly taking our minds off the goal can renew and strengthen motivation later on.

## CREATIVITY BREAKS

Breaks have also been shown to increase creativity. A Stanford University study showed that “Aha Moments” came more often to those who got up to walk.

Want to ignite some of the benefits of breaks? Try these few ways below:

## CHANGE ENVIRONMENTS

Briefly leaving your work environment and going to another area to rest your brain and switch gears can ignite inspiration.

## TAKE A POWER NAP

Studies suggest that short naps can reduce stress and improve cognitive functioning.

## GET CREATIVE

If you’re constantly using your logical, linguistic left brain, deliberately choose a break activity that will activate your creative and visual right brain, like drawing or doodling.



# Create Space in Your Morning Routine

## NIGHT PREP

Spend a few minutes at night getting organized for the day to come. Pick out what you will wear, pack lunch or even make a preliminary to-do list. These tasks also tend to feel easier and take less time at night than first thing in the morning.

## DON'T HIT SNOOZE

Although it is extremely tempting to hit the snooze button, it actually disrupts our body's natural rhythm and makes us feel more lethargic. It will be tough, but once you kick the habit, you will notice the difference and feel more energized!

## MOVE YOUR BODY

This doesn't have to be a full class or an hour-long workout. Simply doing a few at-home exercises and stretches can be what our bodies need to wake up.



## How To:

### PLANT AN HERB GARDEN

1

#### Select Your Space

Whether you own a house or rent an apartment, herbs grow well anywhere as long as there are at least 6 hours of sunlight. Pro Tip: keeping the plant in sight will help you remember to water!

2

#### Choose Your Planting Style

There are many planting styles to choose from, the traditional herbaceous border, a prairie look, or a romantic cottage garden look. Get creative!

3

#### Plant!

The fun part. Make a list of flavors you enjoy, as well as what you'd like to do with your herbs.

4

#### Tend to your Plants

Each herb has different needs and will respond well and grow with unique care. Another tip: try to not to harvest more than 1/3 of the plant at once.



#### THIS MONTH'S

### Your Question, Answered.

Have a health- or wellness-related question you want answered?

Email us at [info@onthegoga.com](mailto:info@onthegoga.com) use the subject line

MY QUESTION ANSWERED

#### "What are the best places in the US to see fall foliage?"

*Justin Gregory, Belmar, NJ*

Thanks for the great question, Justin! The cooler weather signals a perfect time for a little weekend getaway. We're a bit biased, but if you are near PA, look no further than Valley Forge. Known for its importance during the Revolutionary War, Valley Forge is not only an amazing Historical Park, but it's incredibly beautiful. You can explore the grounds with front row seats to the changing seasons.

Other famous foliage destinations include: Beacon NY, Aspen CO, The Smokey Mountains NC/KY, and Columbia River Gorge OR.

