

# Small Ways to Refresh, Renew & Recharge



Some days you know exactly why you feel tired: maybe a curfew-breaking teen kept you up past your bedtime or you're coughing and afraid you're coming down with something. Other days it's a mystery. But no matter what has you dragging your heels, use these recommendations to put pep back in your step.

## Create a can-do to-do list.

The pressure of trying to accomplish lots of things before lunch is so enormous that we often feel overwhelmed, paralyzed and, ultimately, bad about ourselves when we (inevitably) don't get it all done. Instead, try switching to a "5 before 11 list" of five tasks you want to complete before 11 a.m. The chores can be as simple as whipping up a healthy meal, picking up poster board for your child's science project or even making the list. When your list is realistic, you'll have a better chance of crossing tasks off, which is invigorating.

## Move more.

Spending a Sunday on the couch while your husband takes the kids out may seem like a good way to recharge, but being sedentary can actually sap your spirit. Often, the more physically active you are, the more vitality you have. Activity seems to beget the urge to do more activity.

## Listen to your body clock.

You probably have times of the day when you feel more energetic and alert (without a cup of coffee) and then times when you feel less focused. Play to your strengths: If you're more of an afternoon person, for example, try to set end-of-day or 9 a.m. work deadlines. You may be better able to put in your best effort and deliver a project on

time. This strategy can help in your household too. If your teen, for example, isn't all there in the morning, schedule appointments or important discussions for later in the day.

## Pick a realistic wake-up time.

Although you gain a few extra minutes in bed when you hit the snooze button, your body probably won't actually get back into deep sleep, so that extra time probably isn't as restful as you might think. Don't set your alarm for when you hope you can roll out of bed. Punch in the time you truly must get up.

## Get centered.

A two- to three-minute mini-mindfulness meditation—simply focusing on your breathing as you inhale and exhale, keeping thoughts to a minimum—can help release body tension, stop stress in its tracks and make you more alert.

## Have fun.

We all know that laughing—about anything—is a great way to feel better quickly. If you don't have time to plan something fun with family or friends, at least indulge in a few minutes with a silly video, app or favorite sitcom for an emotional jump-start any time of day.