

THREE WAYS TO END THE CYCLE OF UNPRODUCTIVITY



As women we pride ourselves on being multitaskers

Working on 2, 3 even 5 things at the same time? No problem.

Except it is a problem. A big one.

That's what sociologist and author Christine Carter, Ph.D, asserted at the recent Pennsylvania Women's Conference in Philadelphia.

In the quest for success in all aspects of our life, women are finding themselves just plain exhausted and often unfulfilled. Much of that comes from three myths about busyness we've been taught all our lives.

Read on to discover what these myths are, along with an exercise you can do today to combat each.



Myth #1: *Busyness = Significance*

How many times have you responded to the question “How are you?” with this answer: “Busy.”

We often wear our busyness like a badge of honor. However, it’s really a type of humble brag, says Carter. It’s a way of saying we’re valued.

When we work like this we wind up in **cognitive overload**, which never lets you fully focus on any task ahead. And that can quickly undermine your effectiveness as a leader.



Mythbuster exercise: *Let yourself focus on a single task*

Our brains weren't meant to do multiple things at the same time - try giving it the chance to work as it was supposed to.

Force yourself to focus on one responsibility at a time. No distractions. Carter constructs what she refers to as a "fortress against interruptions" for herself when she does this.

Don't just put your phone on silent; put it in a drawer. Close your email and block your calendar as unavailable. Then set a timer for 30 minutes and commit to a single task. You'll be amazed at how much more efficiently and effectively you'll work.



Find you struggle stay on task? Try this trick from the folks at [Peacefuldumpling.com](https://www.peacedumpling.com):

Choose a random object and place it on your workspace in your line of sight. It can be anything: a paperweight, a trinket, even a souvenir from a trip.

That object serves as your reminder to stay focused.



Myth #2: *Doing nothing is a waste of your time*

The thought of doing just nothing at all may seem laughable -- who has the time for that? What a waste when there's so much to get done.

But it might be the best thing you can do for yourself (in small doses, of course).

Did you ever wonder why so many “light bulb moments” happen in the shower? It's because that's the one time we're still free of all the distractions that swirl around us all day.



Mythbuster exercise: *Sit and stare into space*

Carter encourages women to become “strategic slackers.” That mental downtime is when all creative thought arises.

A few minutes a day - every day - simply sit and stare. Allow yourself to **space out**.

Be prepared: It will be uncomfortable.

Take the advice yoga teachers give their students: Sit in the discomfort. That’s when you get stronger. And you’ll be amazed how those problems you just couldn’t find a solution to suddenly bubble up.

If you need a little help sitting in stillness, try **this**.



Myth #3: *More is always better*

No denying we live in a **culture of excess**.
If some is good, more is certainly better.

But that perception causes us to push ourselves further and further and still often end up feeling restless and dissatisfied.

We take on more and more at work and home, and suddenly we're busier than ever but no happier.



Mythbuster exercise: *Acknowledge the abundance in your life*

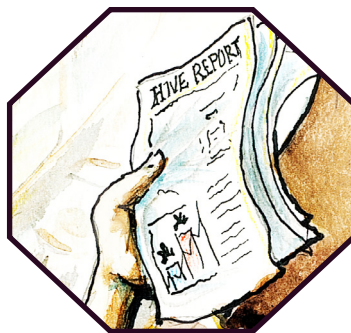
There's an actual **science to gratitude**. Practicing it will do everything from helping you sleep better to making you mentally stronger.

You have a variety of tools at your disposal to develop an attitude of gratitude -- choose the one (of more) that works for you:

- Keep a gratitude journal
- Offer at least one compliment each day
- Vow not to complain for 10 days

Need a jumpstart? Try watching this **video** that will get you in the right frame of mind.





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