Five-Minute Power Break!

By Dr. Phil Maffetone, Health, Lifestyle & Stress

Rejuvenate with this powerful technique for reducing stress and getting the most from your day.

It's a long day, often filled with stress. Whether you're in an office, working at home or on the road, here's an easy way to revitalize.

The Five-Minute Power Break can reduce stress and energize you — in just five minutes! And it's free.

The brain produces powerful alpha waves that can reduce cortisol, our key stress hormone, and balance the autonomic nervous system. Here's how to turn on these powerful brain waves:

The 5-Minute Power Break

1.   Sit or lie down, and get comfortable.

2.   Close your eyes.

3.   Hands or crossed arms relaxed on your upper abdomen.

4.   Breathe slowly: Inhale 5-7 seconds and exhale for the same (deeply but don't force it).

5.   Listen to Rosemary or other alpha-generating music you enjoy. Headphones or earbuds are even better.

Do this for five minutes. You can do it anywhere, even in your car – just pull over to a safe location. Using a song or two to measure duration is a good alternative to using a timer.

The best music to use for a Power Break are songs with the most alpha-wave potential. This is the music you love, the songs you remember most from your youth, the ones you fell in love with, and the new ones that just make you feel good.

Warning: If you start falling asleep it means you're no longer in an alpha-wave state but drifting into delta (the sleep wave), which may be indicative of a sleep disorder. In this case, five minutes is too long – stop before drifting off.

Even one or two minutes of alpha is a healthy break. You can gradually work up to five minutes as your brain learns to stay in alpha. Do it twice daily as needed, or more, as you can't overdo it.

I developed The 5-Minute Power Break, many years ago, first calling it respiratory biofeedback. It refreshes and energizes by balancing your physical, chemical and mental/emotional body and brain – especially by controlling stress. Give it a try today