



5 HABITS OF GENUINELY RELAXED PEOPLE

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Imagine getting up in the morning and feeling deeply grateful and relaxed. You wake up full of energy, know exactly what to do, and feel confident about the day ahead.

During your lunch break, you enjoy a delicious meal and you do only that — you don't multitask to get more done. Instead, you enjoy each bite and look forward to the second part of your day. In the evening, you think about your accomplishments, cross things off your to-do list, nurture your relationships, take care of yourself, and go to bed with a calm and relaxed mind.

The sad reality is that, for most people, this scenario doesn't even sound realistic because they're so used to being stressed and overwhelmed all the time. According to a Gallup study, a fourth of employees report feeling burned out at work very often or always. Another 45% report feeling burned out sometimes. And even though the pandemic changed the way we live and work, it didn't lower the amount of stress we experience. The contrary happened: We're experiencing a mental health crisis on top of a medical and economic disaster. However, I genuinely believe that we deserve the contrary.

You aren't here to feel stressed all the time. You're here to live your best life and enjoy your time as much as possible. Sure, we all face challenges, and the truth is that it's not possible to eliminate stressful times. But that's not the goal anyway. It's more about feeling relaxed and at ease most of the time. However, the problem is that nobody teaches us how to relax and enjoy ourselves. Instead, we're being taught how to do, be, and work more to satisfy others' expectations. Yet, some people always manage to break out of that circle and live genuinely relaxed lives. Here's what they do differently compared to the majority:

They ask for help.

To feel more relaxed, you need to let go of the desire to do everything by yourself. The media often paints a false picture of reality and makes us believe that successful people win by outworking others.

Now, your definition of success might be different than mine, but if you want to

accomplish your goals with ease and feel relaxed instead of overworked, you'll need to eliminate your desire to do and being everything. Instead, you should learn how to ask for support whenever you feel stuck, or ideally even before you hit a roadblock.

As Alisa Vitti writes in her book *In the Flo*: "Anything that costs you your health, relationships, or happiness isn't really success."

**Stop asking yourself "How can I solve this?" and start thinking:
"Who might be able to help me with this?"**

This subtle change helped me go from being overworked and stressed to feeling genuinely relaxed. Additionally, this question helps you rethink your social circle and makes it easier to validate whether you want to grow or shrink the number of people you're surrounded by.

How to do it:

Let's say you're about to start an online business because you want to make money from home and quit your annoying job. However, you realize that there are so many things you need to figure out in order to replace your full-time income.

In such a case, you have two options:

Try to figure out everything yourself (and potentially waste endless hours by consuming wrong, outdated, or useless information).

Talk to people who've been there and done that. And if you realize that you don't know anyone who can help you, that's a sign to change or expand your network. You can do so by joining relevant Facebook groups, going to events, or reaching out to experts in your niche. Relaxed people feel comfortable when asking others for help. That's how they solve problems with ease instead of fighting their way through challenges.

Asking for advice is no shame. It's a sign of greatness.

"Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. I do that every day. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength.

It shows you have the courage to admit when you don't know something, and to learn something new." Barack Obama

They create boundaries (and respect others')

You can't be relaxed if you constantly try to satisfy other people's expectations. And yes, that's true even if "other people" are important people such as your parents or your spouse. You don't owe anything to anyone, and the bitter truth is that nobody will respect your boundaries if you don't do so. To feel more balanced, you need to learn how to say no. And you need to use this skill frequently.

Know and name your limits. That's how you make more time for your priorities instead of trying to be everybody's darling. If you feel uncomfortable saying no to others, you likely struggle to respect other people's boundaries too. Genuinely relaxed people can guard their boundaries and deal with the limits of other people.

How to do it:

Stop beating around the bush (*) and be direct in telling people what you want and expect. And if your answer is no, let it be a confident no.

(*) to talk about lots of unimportant things because you want to avoid talking about what is really important.

You should never feel bad for prioritizing your own goals and sanity over others' wishes. Similarly, train yourself to accept other people's boundaries without being offended. Don't take it personally if your friend cancels the night out because she's not feeling well. Be proud of her for taking care of herself and do the same. They prioritize their mental and physical health. You can't feel relaxed if you're not feeling fit, healthy, and energized.

We all know how precious our mental and physical health are, yet we often ignore both to achieve more or satisfy others' expectations. But here's the truth: There's no finish line to your accomplishments. There's always one more step you can take and improvements you can make.

- Made your first million? Start working on the second.
- Just finished your first marathon? Run faster next time.

- Lost 10 pounds? Work on the next 20.

And, accomplishing your goals is a great feeling, so is a sense of genuine relaxation. You're not here to chase goals all the time. Instead, your goals should be to an end to create a life you genuinely enjoy. So, stop neglecting your health for your goals and start prioritizing yourself over numbers on the or your bank account.

How to do it:

Take a few minutes and validate whether you're currently investing enough time into your mental and physical health. If your answer is yes, congratulations!

If your answer is no, ask yourself one more question: Which small habits can you implement into your daily life to support your health?

A daily walk around the park? Drinking more water? A meditation routine? Reading more uplifting books instead of watching the news?

These are just some ideas, but the truth is that you need to figure out what makes you feel better, more energized, and aligned.

According to Harvard Medical School, almost any type of exercise can help you reduce stress and feel more relaxed. The key is starting somewhere and gradually increasing the time and effort you spend on your wellbeing.

"We have never been taught how to relax, how to take care of ourselves in a positive way (not just going on a vacation or out for an expensive dinner). Twenty minutes of deep relaxation a day will aid your mental growth, improve your physical health and emotional stability, and possibly even increase your spiritual awareness."

They avoid overstimulation.

According to Jim Kwik, compared to the 15th century, we now consume as much data in a single day as an average person from the world have absorbed in an entire lifetime. That's mainly caused by our hyper-connected daily lives with smartphones and a massive overstimulation through information and

advertisement. To be and stay relaxed, you need to set boundaries with your digital devices and your connectivity with the outside world.

As Anne Lamott once said: “Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes. Including you.”

Being relaxed means being centered and grounded instead of flooded with stimuli. It’s no surprise that routines like yoga and meditation are gaining popularity in our western world. Most of us are exposed to unhealthy amounts of information in our daily lives and try to find a way out.

However, the real problem is that we often struggle to let go of stressful moments even when we’re lying in bed late at night. That’s why it’s so important to control the information we’re exposed to.

How to do it:

Reducing our constant overstimulation is about setting up two rules:

- First, limit the information you receive. Do you really need to receive all these newsletters and follow those toxic Instagram profiles that make you feel bad about yourself? Sometimes, you need to declutter your life to gain mental clarity — this includes physical but also digital decluttering.
- Second, create rules and routines that allow you to be disconnected. If you’ve ever watched someone looking for their phone in their bag unable to find it, you know how addicted we are to our devices.

That’s the result of using our phones all the time instead of just leaving them in our bags if we don’t need them. In a recent article, my friend Niklas Göke mentioned that your toothbrush is the greatest tool of all time: You only use it when you’re supposed to, for as long as you need to, and then, you let it go. Our phones, however, do the contrary: They call for our attention 24/7.

Even though our devices can be great companions, they can quickly turn into our enemies if we’re not careful about how we use them. That’s why you should schedule at least a few minutes of digital per day to connect with yourself instead of your devices.

Put your phone away during breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Sip your cup of coffee without scrolling through social media feeds. Try different mindful routines such as journaling or meditation to connect with your inner wisdom. Do whatever makes you feel connected to you.

They stay true to themselves.

To be genuinely relaxed, you need to stay authentic and show your true self without doubts. It's impossible to feel relaxed if you're always putting on a mask and trying to behave in a way that isn't aligned with your inner world. Relaxation and mindfulness require authenticity. You can't live with ease instead of feeling tense and overwhelmed. If you feel like you could need some more relaxation in your life, ask yourself whether you're the person you want to be or if you're pretending to be someone else. Staying true to yourself and your values won't only lead to relaxation, but it'll make your whole life easier for you to make the right choices.

How to do it:

Sometimes, all we need to do to feel more relaxed is taking some time for honest self-reflection. Quite often, we allow others to how we should live and behave instead of listening to our deepest desires. If you feel like you're in such a situation right now, grab a piece of paper or your journal, take a few minutes and answer the following questions:

- Who am I when I don't follow others' expectations?
- Am I something I need to let go of?
- What matters most in my life?
- How do I want to live, knowing I will die?
- Does it matter what others think about me?
- What would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?

Answering these types of questions will help you get closer to the person you want to be. However, don't expect one journaling session to change your life. Just like anything else, finding your true, authentic self is a process and can take time.

Final thoughts

Being relaxed doesn't only feel better in the short run, but it also enables you to create a future you genuinely enjoy. High levels of stress don't only harm your mental and physical health but also hold you back from being your best self.

To feel more relaxed throughout your days, keep the following rules in mind:

- Stop trying to figure everything out on your own and ask for help.
- Create boundaries and make sure others' respect them as much as you do.
- Prioritize your mental and physical health.
- Avoid overstimulation and schedule some no-phone time.
- Stay true to yourself.