



Cultivating RE-CREATION

Five-Minute Spiritual Recreation Activities

Although a week-long vacation in the mountains, a trip to Holden Village, or a pilgrimage to the Camino de Santiago sounds nice, the reality is that most of us don't have the luxury of that during the summer. Our summer is filled with VBS, ball games, family events, and work commitments. We tend to adopt an "all or nothing" attitude. "I'm just too busy. I can't take time away from everything." However, recreation has no rules. There's no reason it can't be a five-minute activity when it works in your schedule. So, for those of us who "just can't," here are some suggestions for simple recreational activities.

Coffee (or tea) break

Make yourself a cup of your favorite coffee or tea and sit in your favorite rocking chair in the quietest space possible. As you sip your beverage, pray for and about the things that keep you busy. Name them, thank them, ask for help with them, and pray about what keeps your brain busy with worry and what gives your heart joy. As you finish your beverage, get up, stretch, and say Amen.

Walk around the block

Take a short walk around the block or down the driveway. Think about making your steps as rhythmic as possible. As you walk, count one, two, one, two to establish a slow and steady rhythm. (If you have a metronome on your phone, you can walk to that until you establish a rhythm). Once you have a steady rhythm, begin to say "thank you...God...thank you...God....thank you...God" as you walk, matching the words to the rhythm of your walk. You can then switch to "Help me....Jesus....help me....Jesus" or "grant me....peace.....grant me....peace.....grant me...peace" or any other two-phrase prayer that matches your thoughts and your rhythm. Modify the activity if you cannot walk by raising alternate arms in rhythm while sitting.

Scripture Self Time

You may already share in devotion with family members, but make time for five minutes of quiet, alone time with scripture each day. I like to leave my Bible on the headboard of my bed, and each night, before I go to bed when the house is quiet, and everything is done, I take five minutes to read and pray. Personally, I love the Psalms, so I read Psalms, but you can read any scripture. Doing this routinely (which I'm not always good at) gets you in the habit of re-creation and rest.

Dance, dance, dance

This is my personal favorite way to re-energize. Pull up your favorite dance song with an awesome pulsing beat on Spotify or Pandora, turn it up loud, and dance to your heart's content. (If you have difficulty moving, you can dance in a chair!) You don't need any special moves. Just dance! It's amazing how re-energizing five minutes of glorious, free movement can be. You can do it yourself or invite family to join you and be silly together. It can be a prayer without words. At the end, shout AMEN! Or, sit down, breathe, listen to God for a minute or two, and then say amen and go on with the day.

Eat or drink something refreshing

Nothing says summer like a big slice of watermelon, a tall cold glass of iced tea with a mint leaf in it, or a popsicle. Take five minutes to go out in the summer sun, kick off your shoes, wiggle your toes in the grass, and enjoy a summer treat. Tip your chin to the sky and feel the sun on your face. Take a deep breath and say "Ahhhhhhhhhh!" Reflect on what gives you joy in the summer and say a prayer of thanks for these joyful things before returning to your daily activities.