Why should we make time for this?

Exercising the brain and challenging the mind are keys to achieving intellectual wellness. However, if you are not getting enough sleep or allowing yourself time to learn and express creatively, you are limiting your intellectual potential. Slow down and take time to create an environment that encourages creative expression. Follow the tips below to improve intellectual wellness in your life.

How can I improve intellectual health with little time?

Hit the Pillow
- Getting enough sleep is key to intellectual wellness, but it can be tough to achieve in an overscheduled life. Sleep deficits result in fatigue and drain reserves in the brain, resulting in slower brain function and crabber moods. Make sure to recharge by getting eight hours of sleep each night for adults. Children need even more sleep. For example, 5- and 6-year-olds need 11 to 12 hours of sleep and kids 7 to 11 years old should average 10 to 11 hours of sleep per night. Get electronics out of the bedroom to avoid sleeping distractions. Park cellphones and tablets at a central power docking station away from sleeping areas. If you find yourself not getting the sleep you need at night, take a short nap during the day. Taking time to get adequate rest will make your awake time much more efficient.

Love to Learn
- Being a lifelong learner challenges the brain and facilitates cognitive growth. Read for fun when waiting at a practice. Play a board or card game with family or friends. Stretch your brain by doing a crossword or Sodoku puzzle. The brain needs to be exercised the same as any other muscle. Turn off all digital media for 30 to 60 minutes each night for family members to work on homework, read for enjoyment or do other mind-enhancing activities.

Let Creativity Shine
- Encourage the creativity of your kids as well as your own. Try new ideas; do common tasks in a different way. Figure out how to make a game of “Go Fish” out of matching the family’s socks. Let imagination rule in your family's life. In addition to stimulating brain growth, you are bound to have some fun.

Discover Together
- Spend a few minutes each day with your family to learn together. Read a short story or a chapter of a book before bed with the kids. Select a book everyone will enjoy. It's free and builds vocabulary, and learning and discussion take place. Be sure your children see males and females reading for enjoyment. Role models are vital for learning.

Family Conversation Starters
- List some chapter books we could read together as a family.
- What is your favorite board or card game? What car game do you enjoy most?
- How could we make sure electronics are not being used at least 30 minutes before bedtime?
Family Activity

Reading to Learn
Visit the library together and make a list of books or topics your family wishes to explore. Perhaps you want to learn more about a potential vacation destination. Choose one book you will read together and challenge your family to read one chapter each day.

Family Action Plan for Intellectual Wellness

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Who will do each task and by what date? How will we know if we are successful?

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