**Relaxation & Leisure**

**New twist on a Spanish tradition: Argentina has found a relaxing way to reclaim its Spanish heritage: adopt the siesta, said Vanesa Listek. Our cultural ties to Spain and Italy already make us receptive to the "Mediterranean habit" of taking an afternoon nap "to counter the exhaustion, distraction, and irritability that peak around 2 p.m." A few years ago, Argentine firms began installing nap centers, or siestarios, in the office and encouraging workers to doze, and now such centers are "a feature of prestigious workplaces," such as Google's waterfront offices in Puerto Madero and parts of the University of Buenos Aires. Ironically, just as we rediscover the pleasure, Spain itself is moving away from the siesta. The government there says the two-hour break in the middle of the day means workers get home too late to enjoy a happy family life, and it is considering enforcing a 6 p.m. quitting time that would effectively kill off the midday snooze. Maybe that's why the Argentine siesta isn't meant to be deep slumber. In the new siestarios, workers are expected to doze for just 20 minutes or so and then get right back to the desk. "That's enough to recover attention and consolidate memory," says neurologist Pablo Lopez. It's not about quality of life, then -- it's "a way to boost the productivity of employees." *(The Week magazine, March 10, 2017)***

**From 1973 to 1987, Americans chipped their free time down by more than a third to 16.6 hours a week, according to a series of Louis Harris surveys. One mid-decade study even found that numerous respondents said they enjoyed work as much as they did recreation. *(Elizabeth Venant, in Contemporary, April 21, 1991)***

**The little girl says to the dog laying on the couch: "You'd better get off there before Mom turns you into a mashed potato!" *(Brad Anderson, in Marmaduke comic strip)***

**Fewer than one in 10 executives and employees achieves "complete relaxation" while on vacation, while 58 percent achieve no stress relief and 27 percent report feeling more stressed when vacations end than when they begin. *(CSMonitor.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 7, 2013)***

**Resting the brain after a concussion – limiting reading, online activities, even homework – can result in quicker recovery, a new study says. In a study of 335 kids and young adults ages 8 to 23, those reporting the most mental activity took the longest to fully recover – 100 days on average. It took 20 to 50 days for patients reporting less cognitive activity, defined in the journal Pediatrics as “activities that require you to think harder than usual.” But “there’s no need to take cognitive rest to the extreme,” such as staying in a dark room, says study co-author William Meehan, director of the Micheli Center for Sports Injury Prevention in Waltham, Mass. Those doing mild cognitive activity did about as well as those with minimal levels. Between 1.7 million and 3 million sports-related concussions occur every year, and half go undetected, says the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Sports Medicine Concussion Program. *(Michelle Healy, in USA Weekend, January 24, 2014)***

**A day off is usually followed by an off day. *(Anonymous)***

**Every now and then, go away, take a little relaxation, because when you come back to your work, your judgment will be surer. To remain constantly at work will cause you to lose power of judgment. Go some distance away, because then the work appears smaller and more of it can be taken in at a glance, and a lack of harmony or proportion is more readily seen. *(Leonardo da Vinci)***

**It had been an unusually hectic weekend, and I decided to put off doing housework until Monday. As I was curling up with a book, old friends phoned. They were in town and wanted to stop by. I tore around the house, dusting and vacuuming. Time was running out when I reached the kitchen, so I grabbed piles of dirty dishes and put them in the oven. The doorbell rang. There stood my friends -- with a frozen pizza. *(Denise M. Knott, in Reader's Digest)***

**I am against all hobbies. I have been against them ever since I figured out that nothing I ever do is considered a hobby. All my life I have had to fill out forms that ask about hobbies. I always wanted to write down "reading," but reading is not a hobby. If you collect books, that is a hobby. If you actually read them, it is not. If you happen to watch a butterfly in a field, that is not a hobby. If you put a pin through its little heart, that is a hobby. *(Richard Cohen, in Washington Post)***

**Insanity is my only means of relaxation. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**The real problem of leisure time is how to keep others from using yours. *(Arthur Lacey, in National Enquirer)***

**Grandpa: “I thought you were going shopping.” Grandma: “I just don’t have the energy today. I guess that’s why they call these the declining years.” Grandpa: “I prefer to think of them as the reclining years.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**Man: “Thursdays are too far from the start of the week, and not close enough to the end. Thursdays just lie there. I should have named you ‘Thursday.’” Garfield: “That’s ‘Mr.’ Thursday to you.” *(Jim Davis, in Garfield comic strip)***

**The time to relax is when you don’t have time for it. *(Sydney J. Harris, Field Newspaper Syndicate)***

**Frank says to a man sitting on a park bench: ""Unemployed"? Oh, no, sir. We're just taking a time-out in the game of life! *(Bob Thaves, in Frank & Ernest comic strip)***

**The way we live today requires that we get away from the way we live today. *(Joan French)***

**What we do during our working hours determines what we have; what we do during our leisure hours determines what we are. *(George Eastman, philanthropist)***

**You never know what makes some people tick until they begin to unwind. *(Changing Times, The Kiplinger Magazine)***

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