

The 20-Minute Break by Ernest Lawrence Rossi, PhD, with David Nimmons (1991) highlighted excerpts from Katarina [Permalink](#) to our forum if you wish to use this

The 20-Minute Break

by Ernest Lawrence Rossi, PhD, with David Nimmons (1991)

G.P. Putnams Sons, New York

Here are excerpts from the book:

PROLOGUE, pages vii - viii

Have you ever found yourself

~ feeling overwhelmingly fatigued in the middle of the day?

~ spaced out or daydreaming during a meeting or conversation?

~ making inexplicable errors over simple matters?

~ suddenly unable to remember a familiar fact, name, or word?

~ missing obvious social cues and saying the wrong things?

~ right on the edge of anger, depression or tears without knowing why?

On the other hand, have you ever known times when you were

~ feeling particularly healthy and in harmony with the universe?

- ~ setting personal best records effortlessly?
- ~ relating exceptionally well to family friends, and others?
- ~ unusually rested and energized after a short nap?
- ~ performing surprisingly well in public and business meetings?
- ~ quickly able to deal with problems you had been stuck on?
- ~ easily coming up with creative solutions to problems?

You probably recognize both kinds of experiences, because we have all had them many times in our lives. Until recently, however, few people understood them for what they are—signs of natural peaks and troughs in a special kind of biological rhythm called ultradians (pronounced ul-TRAY-dians)

Stressing Out pages 35 -38

Stage One: Take-a-Break Signals, page 35

The take-a-break signals are the first mind-body cues that you need to take time out for inner rejuvenation, to break the cycle of stress generated by your activities. Your body has substantially depleted its energy reserves and the many messenger molecules that maintain mind and body in smooth synchrony.

Stage Two: High on Your Hormones, page 37

You have just ignored your first chance for a restorative

break. The Ultradian Healing Response is now a road not taken. The healing moment passes, and the Ultradian Stress Syndrome begins.

Nothing feels different immediately, yet already something has changed. Deep within the folds of your brain, in a region called the limbic-hypothalamic system, a series of stress-messenger molecules has begun to carry emergency signals to every corner of mind and body. The signals will rapidly touch every organ system in your body.

page 38

In this second stage, symptoms of the Ultradian Stress Syndrome include speeded-up, hyperactive, and manic behavior; overpressured and rushed interactions; irritability, impatience, and flashes of anger; and self-absorbed, narcissistic, selfish behavior.

In such states, we often don't know how or when to stop. We may feel we are on top of the world, but actually we are more like the drunk who does not realize how extreme his behavior has become. Other people can see we are acting inappropriately rushed, self-focused, and short-tempered, but we are blind to our symptoms.

Stage Three : Malfunction Junction,

page 39

By now, your body's systems need replenishment more

than ever. The tiny storage sacs within many cells of your brain and body that hold crucial messenger molecules like adrenaline are now near empty. With such low reserves, all the cells in your body are crying out for some time to replenish and rebalance themselves. But you are not about to stop-you are addicted to a hormonal rush, and it feels too good to quit now. Drugged by the high levels of mind-altering stress messengers coursing in your blood, you remain oblivious to the increasing ultradian cues for rest that your body is giving you. Distracted, numbed by the bliss-inducing beta-endorphins in your brain, you will continue to override your need for a quiet period of recovery and restoration.

Page 41

In this stage you are highly suggestible, close to your unconscious, and it is easy to see every glass as half empty. When you are in malfunction junction, you simply don't have the mental energy to see your way to a possible resolution of your problems.

Stage Four: The Rebellious Body,

page 42

Unfortunately, not all people come to their senses and quit at malfunction junction! Some continue to ignore-their ultradians cues for rest and recovery and remain hopelessly overwhelmed by what they imagine are the world's demands on them. These unfortunate people enter the last, and most destructive, stage of the Ultradian Stress Syndrome: the rebellious body. Such individuals, who chronically override and

disrupt their ultradian rhythms by ignoring their natural periodic needs for recovery even after experiencing the clear signals of failing functions in stage three, set in motion the basic process of psychosomatic illness.

When we repeatedly ignore our need for natural ultradian healing, our mind-body cannot repair and replenish natural wear and tear, so it simply deteriorates. This neglect packs a huge cumulative wallop. As we continue working, ignoring the ever-more ominous negative signs of increasing stress, we may begin to experience a variety of serious symptoms and ailments.

Like the Ultradian Stress Syndrome,
the Ultradian Healing Response, pages 47 - 57
is made up of four stages. However, these stages are not rigidly defined; they are offered here only as a guide

·
Stage One: Recognition Signals,
page 48

~ feeling comfort and emotional satisfaction
~ realizing your outer performance is slowing down
while your access to inner healing is on the rise

By recognizing and responding to these signals as soon as they occur, you can enjoy them as invitations to calming, restorative rejuvenation. You don't have to do anything special - you will slip into the Ultradian Healing Response entirely without effort. Remember, this is a natural phenomenon

**Stage Two : Accessing the Deeper Breath,
page 52**

**Stage Three: Mind-Body Healing,
page 54**

**Stage Four: Rejuvenation and Awakening,
page 56**

This phase of your ultradian rhythm is the deepest window of access to your **creative restorative capacity**, the core of the Ultradian Healing Response. While it usually takes about twenty minutes, its length will vary widely among different people, or in the same person at different times. Let nature be your guide.

**FACILITATING YOUR ULTRADIAN HEALING
RESPONSE, page 57**

Given how good the Ultradian Healing Response makes us feel, people are eager to find ways to help themselves move more easily into it. However, the essence of the ultradian approach is not to push or direct but rather to **attune yourself to the natural ultradian rhythms** of your mind-body. The most effective way to facilitate the ultradian healing response, then, is to **simply recognize the natural signals of its onset and allow yourself to enter** it when nature calls.