

# PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

*February 2015*

**Pass on  
your  
knowledge  
and inspire  
the future**

**Are you  
bombarded  
with Pointless  
Emails?**

**The Holiday  
Resolution  
Revolution**

**Living Timefully...  
slowing down is the  
new speeding up**

**Acas guidance for employers on  
workplace issues over winter months**

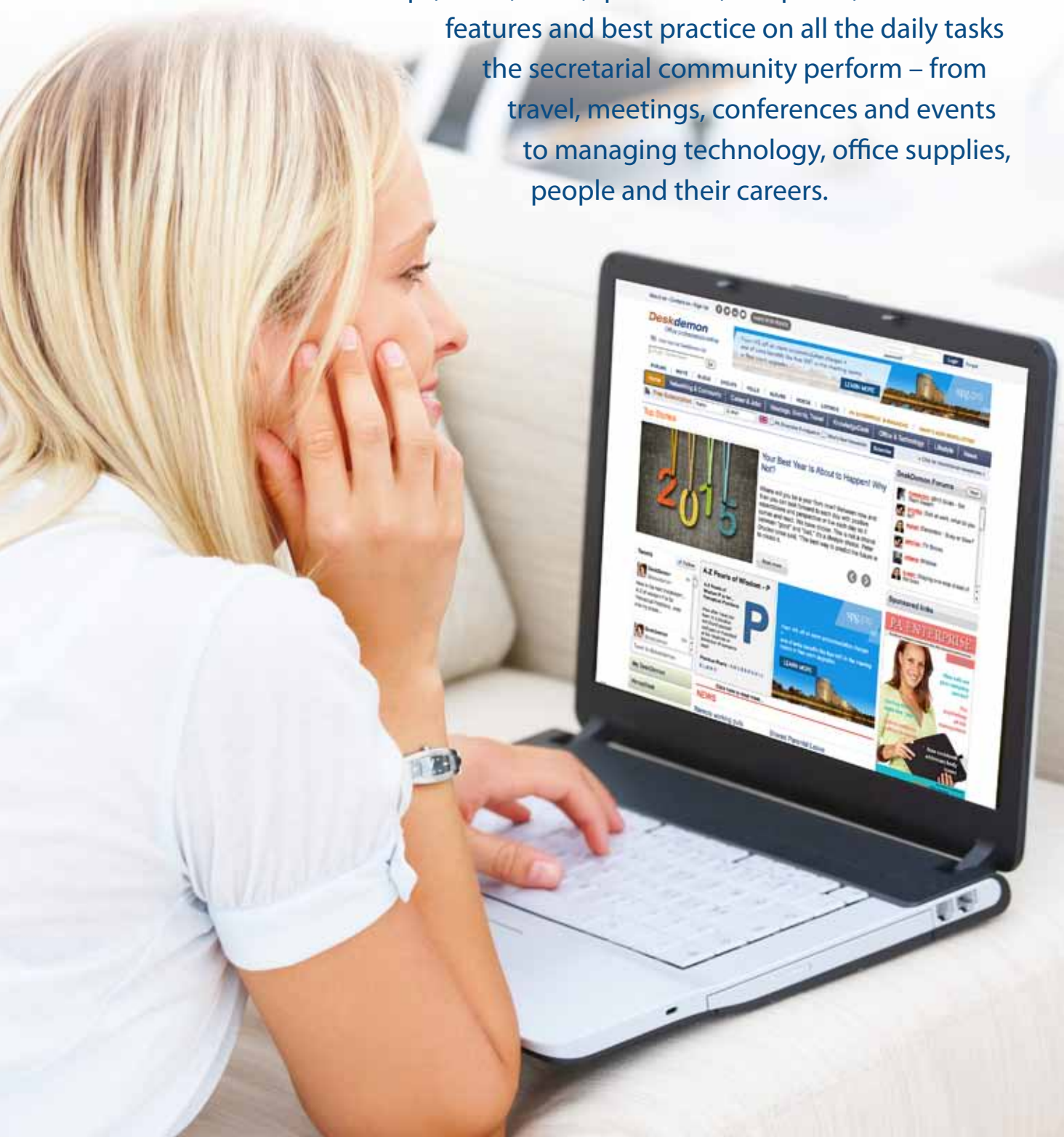
PA Enterprise is published by

**Deskdemon.com**

The World's Largest Website for Executive PAs, Secretaries, Administrators & Office Managers

## ***As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?***

DeskDemon is the world's largest resource, information and community site for Administrative Professionals, Executive PAs, secretaries, Administrators and Office Managers. Providing essential information, resources, tips, tricks, tools, quick links, templates, editorial features and best practice on all the daily tasks the secretarial community perform – from travel, meetings, conferences and events to managing technology, office supplies, people and their careers.







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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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## Are you bombarded with pointless emails?

**The average British worker receives 1728 pointless emails in a typical year, while 67% of workers reckon they send more emails than they make phone calls**

The poll of 2,000 office workers found a third said they have someone in their team who is known for sending pointless emails and half said they have colleagues that copy in 'everyone and anyone' to round robin emails.

Not surprisingly, 53% of those polled said they wish everyone picked the phone up and spoke more to one another, rather than clogging-up inboxes with wasted emails.

And over two thirds said things are far less likely to be misconstrued when there has been a physical conversation opposed to an email trail.

Charlotte Gaskin, Marketing Manager at Sennheiser

Emails detailing trivial information such as 'organising a whip around', 'please sponsor me' and the reams of polite 'happy birthday' emails topped the list of irritating topics. As does mail with subject headings such as 'the printer has broken' and 'can we turn the air con down?'

The poll by Sennheiser Communications found mundane emails about fire drills, Secret Santa and running out of milk were also viewed as futile by busy workers.

Communications said: "We are used to firing off emails for even the slightest thing. But it seems like some of the more mundane requests can be avoided. Copying in lots of people to emails does seem to be a bugbear of British workers.

Sometimes it's more effective to have a face to face conversation or just pick-up the phone. This way there's less room for misinterpretation as well."

The poll also found 38% of adults said they have sent an email that has been taken the wrong way, with the recipient thinking they were being rude, sarcastic or upset.

And writing emails in capital letters causes havoc with employees, with more than two thirds of Brits saying they feel like they are being shouted at.

And half of people said it irritates them when the person sat next to them sends them an email instead of just talking to them.

But 25% said they're usually emailing because they are talking about someone behind their back.

And 24% said they like to make out they are working, when in reality they are just typing emails to their pals.

The study found 67% of workers reckon they send more emails than they make phone calls, with seven in ten claiming it's easier and one in five confessing to not being confident on the phone.

In contrast the best email to receive were ones that included pay slips, juicy bits of gossip and those detailing birthday cakes in the kitchen or canteen.

Charlotte Gaskin concluded: "It's clear many people tend to hide behind emails, rather than have a telephone call.

"But phone calls don't leave room for error and making a call is usually easier than writing an email, especially with the wide range of professional headsets we offer, which mean your voice can be heard in HD sound clarity.

"You're also far more likely to resolve an issue quickly and correctly. Perhaps it's time we all started using our voices a little more often."

## MOST POINTLESS EMAILS

Please sponsor me emails

Happy birthday emails

**The printer has broken down**

**There is going to be a fire alarm**

Congratulatory emails about 'a job well done'

Someone's car has left their lights on

**Debates over the temperature of the aircon**

**Sweepstake for the lottery**

Sweepstake for the Grand National

The toilet is blocked

**Food has gone missing from the fridge**

**The fridge needs cleaning**

Whose photocopying is left on the photocopier

Someone is blocking me in in the car park

**Someone has stolen my stapler / calculator / etc.**

**Whose turn is it to make tea?**

There aren't any tea bags / coffee left

Someone has used their favourite mug

**The bins need emptying**


**Dishwasher needs emptying**

There isn't any toilet roll left

Anyone got the keys to the pool car



## Acas guidance for employers on workplace issues over winter months



From time to time, travel disruption can affect an employees ability to get to work on time, or in some cases at all. For situations from public transport cancellations to severe weather, employers and employees should consider how this could impact on the workforce.

### Key points to remember

- **Employees are not automatically entitled to pay if unable to get to work because of travel disruption**

There is no legal right for staff to be paid by an employer for travel delays (unless the travel itself is constituted as working time or in some situations where the employer provides the transport). However, employers may have contractual, collective or custom and practice arrangements in place for this. Discretionary payment for travel disruption might also be of use. Some organisations offer discretionary payments for travel disruption or have their own informal

arrangements for this purpose. Such arrangements are normally contained in staff contracts or handbooks or through collective agreements.

- **Be flexible where possible**

A more flexible approach to matters such as working hours and location may be effective if possible. The handling of bad weather and travel disruption can be an opportunity for an employer to enhance staff morale and productivity by the way it is handled for example is there opportunity to work from home. Think about other issues such as alternative working patterns or who can cover at short notice.

## ● Use information technology

Information technology could be useful in enabling a business to run effectively if many employees are absent from work, for example using laptops or smartphones.

## ● Deal with issues fairly

Even if businesses are damaged by the effects of absent workers they should still ensure that any measures they take are carried out according to proper and fair procedure. This will help maintain good, fair and consistent employment relations and help prevent complaints to employment tribunals.

## ● Plan ahead

Consider reviewing your policy and thinking about how you handle future scenarios. It would be best to put an 'adverse weather' or 'journey into work' policy into place that deals with the steps employees are required to take to try to get into work on time and how the business will continue if they cannot. You need to decide how to deal with lateness and what will happen with regard to pay. Having such a policy should mean, there is much less scope for confusion and disagreement.

## Question and answers

### *How can staff keep difficulties to a minimum?*

● Think about how you plan to get into work. Trains, buses and trams might be operating reduced timetables or be running earlier or later than normal. Car and bicycle travel may be delayed by road closures and slower driving. Have you arranged an alternative route or travel method to get in and get home? Have you considered

the benefit of giving yourself a little extra commute time?

● Think about what arrangements you have in place if your child cannot get to school, your normal childcare provider is unavailable or if your child's school is closed. Do you have a practical back-up arrangement?

● Make sure you know how to get in touch with your employer if you are unable to get into work and that you have a means of communicating with them if you are going to be delayed.

● If you are affected by the weather or other travel problems, is there some way you can work around this or keep the difficulty to a minimum? Think about if you have the option to work from home, alter your hours or if there is anything else you could discuss with your employer to help the situation.

● Consider how your employer can deal with your workload in your absence. Can you let your manager know where everything is with a phone call? Do you need to let your employer know if any deadlines are at risk?

### *If some staff manage to get into work but others can not but still get paid is that fair?*

While employees are not legally entitled to receive payment if not at work, some employers realise adverse weather and other factors that can affect travel don't happen often and may be flexible where possible. It can be frustrating for those who can get to work while others can't but not all situations are the same and it probably won't go unnoticed by managers.

For more advice go to [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

## Aparthotels and Serviced Apartments gaining recognition

According to the BHA, branded Aparthotels and Serviced Apartments will be at the forefront of new hospitality innovations and have already started to gain solid recognition as a core part of the hospitality industry.



Ufi Ibrahim, CEO of the British Hospitality Association, said: "Independent apartment-living with all the benefits of expert hospitality services are a popular and fast-growing trend, particularly for young people and business travellers. As well as dedicated new brands, many of our international member hotel brands are adding serviced apartment offers to their brand portfolios."

The BHA defines Aparthotels and Serviced Apartments as branded 'cook-in' plus sleeping accommodations with various degrees of hospitality services offered. This sector of the industry often has very specific customer target markets such as the increasingly mobile business traveller, family leisure

travellers, retirees or even university students.

Savills has identified the fastest growth markets for the aparthotel and serviced apartment sector as Birmingham, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, London, Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle.

Max Thorne CEO of CL Serviced Apartments said: "Aparthotels and serviced apartments are one of the fastest growing sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry, particularly in London and the UK's leading regional cities, so it's important that our Group has a strong voice in shaping key issues. For our sector, this year we see these priorities as sector brand building, jobs and skills, the sharing economy and cutting tourism VAT."



## Matching the right candidate to the right job

**The Business Continuity Institute has launched its new Careers Centre, providing those working in the industry with the support they need to further their career by highlighting the job opportunities available.**

If you're looking for a new job in business continuity or resilience then look no further than the BCI Careers Centre. Powered by JobTarget, the Careers Centre pulls in advertised vacancies from global recruitment sites, as well as those advertised directly with the BCI, and allows users to search by position or location. The system also allows users to set up a job alert so they can be the first to see new vacancies.

If you're a recruiter then post your job within the Careers Centre to make sure it can be seen by a wide selection of desired candidates. If you'd rather seek people directly then search through the CVs uploaded by business continuity professionals to find the one who is suitable for you, or perhaps a selection that you would like to shortlist. The BCI Careers Centre is an open site with business continuity and resilience specialists from around the world encouraged to register for vacancies.

As the Careers Centre is specifically designed to focus on roles in the business continuity and resilience industry, it might be helpful to know what industry memberships or



credentials a potential employee has. If you're a member of the BCI or hold a BCI credential then this will be clearly identified on your profile. It will also be clearly identified if you are on the BCI's CPD scheme.



**BCAW 2015 will take place 16th to 20th March 2015 and the theme will be 'testing and exercising'.**

**Visit [www.thebci.org](http://www.thebci.org) for more information**

## Survey predicts 2015 will be the year of the 'Fampreneur'

A recent survey has revealed that there majority of entrepreneurs who are planning to go into business with family members will do so in 2015.



A recent survey by BusinessesForSale.com has revealed that 65.2% of entrepreneurs who are planning to go into business with family members will do so in 2015. The survey was commissioned following a rise in activity on the site of people in employment keen to set up a business with one or more family members.

The full report 'The Dawn of the Fampreneur' also reveals that most fampreneurs are groups of two or three family members including spouses, siblings and in-laws who are taking a very considered and calculated step with a clear idea of budget and in most cases a strong skillset suited to the venture in question.

In addition a high proportion (75.4%) are willing or keen to relocate to enjoy the change in lifestyle they crave.

Rufus Bazley, Marketing Director at BusinessesForSale.com says, "We expect more families put the monopoly board to one side last Christmas and put together their own business plans for 2015 instead."

The survey also quizzed established fampreneurs, the majority of which had businesses established in the last four-year period. It found they too had small groups of family members enjoying the success of being the boss thanks to a relevant blend of skills and experience acquired prior to start up.

## Pass on your knowledge and inspire the future

We need to inspire and encourage the right people to become business continuity professionals, and where better to do this than in schools.

inspiring  
the  
future

The Business Continuity Institute has formed a new partnership with Inspiring the Future, a free service where volunteers pledge one hour a year to go into state schools and colleges and talk about their job, career, and the education route they took. Already to date, over 7,500 teachers from 4,400 schools and colleges and over 18,500 volunteers have signed up.

Everyone from Apprentices to CEOs can volunteer for Inspiring the Future. Recent graduates, school leavers, apprentices, and people in the early stages of their career can be inspirational to teenagers, while senior staff have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share.

Inspiring the Future is currently running a campaign called **Inspiring Women** with the aim to get 15,000 inspirational women from

Apprentices to CEOs signed up to Inspiring the Future, to go into state schools and colleges to talk to girls about the range of jobs available, and break down any barriers or stereotypes.


### Why volunteer in a local school or college?

- Going into state schools and colleges can help dispel myths about jobs and professions, and importantly, ensure that young people have a realistic view of the world of work and the routes into it.
- Getting young people interested in your job, profession or sector can help develop the talent pool and ensure a skilled workforce in the future.

To sign up to Inspiring the Future as a BCI member, go to [www.inspiringthefuture.org](http://www.inspiringthefuture.org)



# The Holiday Resolution Revolution



With all those New Year diet and fitness resolutions starting to waiver it appears that there is one set of resolutions a third of us Brits do stick to every year – those relating to our holidays! And according to research revealed today by Jet2holidays, a massive 78% of us have vowed to overhaul our holiday patterns making 2015 the year we look to break those longstanding habits.

## What are we resolving to do differently?

The research shows that our top holiday resolutions for 2015 are:

1. To have shorter breaks but get away more often (63%)
2. To be more adventurous and try a new destination (42%)
3. To spend less on our holiday wardrobe (35%)
4. To not leave booking until the last minute (%)
5. To relax more (20%)



## Savvy travelling in 2015

Saving money is high on our agenda this new year with 87% of us resolving to adopt thrifty holiday habits. One in three of us vow to book early, taking advantage of low deposit offers like Jet2holidays' £60 per person,

with the same number also promising to take advantage of sales and offers in 2015. An impressive 35% of us have committed to spending less on a new holiday wardrobe, opting to rock last year's faithfuls while away instead.

## Keeping the holiday feeling lingering

The findings also reveal that many of us definitely want to get away more often, with a massive 63% aiming to jet away on frequent short breaks. Plus a third of us have resolved to keep that holiday feeling alive when back home, simply by taking more photographs!

## The year for adventure

We are seeking new challenges in 2015 by resolving to venture into the unknown. More than two thirds (67%) of those who have made resolutions are seeking a new experience, whether that's heading to a destination we've not visited before – with the Greek Islands topping the travel wish list – sampling a new cuisine or trying a new sport.

## More 'me time'

Even though creating happy memories with partners and

kids is still key, 51% of us are determined to relax by promising ourselves more 'me time' while away, with a quarter saying they are ditching any social media updates so they can fully relax and switch off.

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays said: "Everyone should make holiday resolutions as they are the only ones we stick to! Early January is always a busy booking period for us but it certainly appears that this year people are taking the resolution to book early seriously – we've just had our best day ever with bookings up a massive 53% year on year.

"People taking several shorter breaks is also a trend we've seen growing in recent years and we've worked hard develop our product to give our customers the choice and flexibility to do this – whether its 3 or 45 nights!

"Whatever the holiday resolution, it's resulted in a fantastic start to the year for us and we certainly resolve to do all we can to help people keep their holiday-related commitments for 2015!"



## The Private Life of Mail



In today's rapidly transforming media landscape, brands and consumers are communicating in more diverse ways than ever. But let's not forget the impact of receiving a letter or card ... a new report outlines exactly what mail means to us...

Mail, however, represents a significant point at which communication becomes physical. Once we send our mail we're not often aware of how it is then handled around the home and how well our messages are taken in.

Royal Mail Marketreach has released a ground-breaking report into 'the Private Life of Mail', which examines exactly what mail means for today's consumers. Based on a series of research projects conducted over the last 18 months, it found mail lives a rich, complex and surprisingly long life beyond the doormat.

The research looked the emotional responses triggered by tangible objects such as

mail in their own home. Using the latest neuroscience techniques, it was able to get into people's minds and uncover that mail has a profound and direct impact on the brain.

Within the last few years we have seen brands migrate to the screen. We have started receiving our newsletters, offers and vouchers through our emails instead of our post box. This form of virtual communication we have now become familiar with may have changed, however, the way we interact with the brand and its messages has not.

It's an unprecedented look at what happens after mail enters the home, which is why they've called it, The Private Life of Mail.



## Heart

57% of people claimed that they felt more valued by receiving mail

38% of respondents stated that receiving mail influences how they feel about the sender

## Head

Mail has been seen to make a measurable change in how customers react when planned around TV and email campaigns.

Over half of respondents said that well thought out mail advertising helps to keep a sender's brand in mind.

## Wallet

Campaigns which include mail are 27% more likely to deliver top-ranking sales performance.

68% desired communication by mail which leads new audiences to respond.

With the use of mail, a brand is brought into the home where it flows through the household where each person can engage with the campaign. This key research shows how mail is displayed and shared around the home and truly becomes part of our everyday life. It helps to reinforce a message and drives a strong emotional connection all the while keeping the brand in the forefront of people's minds.

## The decline of a British favourite - The Cheese Sandwich

A Great British classic, the traditional cheese sandwich, is in decline according to a survey of 2,000 adults by British cheese brand, Anchor® Cheddar.

The survey conducted by Yougov looked into the nation's eating habits and discovered that although we place cheese as our favourite nostalgic sandwich, we just aren't tucking into them that often. In fact, 55% of those surveyed had not eaten a cheese sandwich during the past week.

And it looks like the younger generation have forgotten how great tasting a cheese sandwich can be, as only 13% of 18 -24 year olds have eaten one in the last week compared to a quarter of 45-54 year olds.

There's also a north south divide when it comes to tucking into our favourite lunchtime sandwich with 50% of northerners enjoying a cheese sandwich in the last week, vs. only 35% of Londoners.

Anchor® Cheddar is going on tour to 100 locations across the UK from 6th February, campaigning to get us supporting the classic cheese sandwich.



### BRITAIN'S TOP NOSTALGIC SANDWICHES

1. Cheese (21%)
2. Egg and Cress (17%)
3. Ham (14%)
4. Corned Beef (11%)
5. Jam (6%)

# Living Timefully...



slowing down is the  
new speeding up

**Would you like to get more done in 2015 than 2014? By clearing your mind, you make space for decision-making clarity and remove thoughts that would usually serve as barriers to your best ideas, according to Meditation and Mindfulness coach Tom Evans**

"Anyone who puts aside ten minutes a day to meditate will be more relaxed, happy and creative as a result.

"By clearing your mind, you make space for decision-making clarity and remove thoughts that would usually serve as barriers to your best ideas."

Tom leads a movement called 'Living Timefully', which is mindfulness with time management at its core.

Tom has compiled seven time-full and mind-full ways to take control of the passage of time.

## Key 1: Meditate daily

It is thought that every minute spent in the meditative state, gets added back to our lives. We either save any time spent by having a better day or add a minute to our longevity. When we learn to enter the meditative state with our eyes open, time bends and stretches so we get more done in less time.

## Key 2: Make a date with your Creative Self

Each and every day, even if it's just for 10 minutes, a date with our Creative Self is like a supercharge for the mind, body and soul. We might write 'morning pages', pick up a guitar and strum or visit an art gallery. Just going for a walk in the park and imagining the most amazing future counts too.

## Key 3: Trust your gut & follow your heart

Our head 'shouts' quite loudly. So much so that sometimes the signals from our gut and heart get overlooked and overruled. So, for each decision you have to make, ask your gut for a Yes or a No. Next ask your heart if it is cold, lukewarm or boiling hot about it. If your gut and heart give you the green light, proceed with gusto. If not, ask them what would have to change in order to get their blessing.



living timefully  
slowing down is the new speeding up



## Key 4: Create a To Love List

It's said when we love the work we do, we never work as such again. So ditch your To Do list and start a To Love list. At the top, put the things you love to do first and tackle your list from the top down. If there are things on there you don't like doing so much, either outsource them or be creative about how you could love doing them.

## Key 5: Sync with natural time

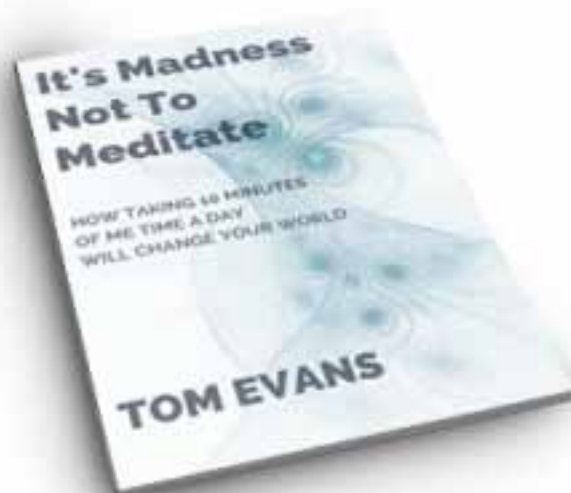
Our modern calendar has caused us to fall out of sync with natural time. Our creativity waxes and wanes with the seasons, the phase of the Moon and the hours in each day. When we discover our naturally creative times, we go with the flow and stop pushing water up a temporal hill.

## Key 6: Be thankful

At the end of each day, either in a journal or just in your head as it hits the pillow, reflect on the highlights of your day. As you drop off into slumber, say one last 'Thank You' for the day to your bed for giving you a good night's sleep.

## Key 7: Perform a Random Act of Kindness

When we get into the habit of performing a random act of kindness to a stranger each day, something rather magical happens. Other people, who weren't aware of our act or the recipient of our act, perform similar kindnesses to us. The ratio of kindnesses is more than two bestowed back on us for everyone we give out. The result is massive time saving.



When we meditate for just 10 minutes each day, we quickly find that the world around us becomes kinder, richer and more rewarding.

So daily meditation is something we can all benefit from in our lives. Read Tom's free ebook, *It's Madness Not to Meditate*, to find out why – and you can also download the Be Calm meditation and listen to it offline.

[www.tomevans.co/](http://www.tomevans.co/)