

The Benefits of Work

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | January 22, 2018



Human beings were created in the image of God. He is the Creator, and, therefore, we are designed to be creators in our own sphere. We are built to be industrious, creative, builders, designers, and workers!

When we engage ourselves in activities that are productive, whether they result in an income or not, we experience joy, fulfillment, and expansion in our abilities. We grow healthier and more capable as we apply ourselves and expend our energies to useful outlets.

Regular work has multiple benefits:

- **Improved self-esteem**, from actual accomplishment and achievement
- **Better physical health**, from increased physical activity and the reduced firing stress pathways as we experience satisfaction with completing tasks, or fulfilling our life goals, aspirations, and dreams. Additionally, physical activity produces factors in the brain that causes the neurons to stay healthy, improves the ability of neurons to make new connections, thus improving learning and reducing the risk of dementia as we age.
- **Development of our brain circuits** that control physical movement, which in turn improves our thinking and reasoning. When we engage in physical activity, the striatal pathways in our brain, that initiate motor movement, develop, but these pathways not only initiate physical movement, they also initiate thinking, so as we develop and use these pathways, we improve our ability to initiate thoughts. The cerebellum, which is involved in making our physical movements smooth

and coordinated, also helps smooth and coordinate our thoughts. Thus, when we stay physically active, we ultimately improve our thinking processes.

- **Blesses and benefits those around us.** As we engage in useful activity, it results in blessings in our environment, whether we are creating works of art or music to brighten the heart, or are mopping, vacuuming, and picking up trash to create clean environments, or growing food, all useful activity blesses those around us.
- **Reduces burdens on others.** By staying active, we reduce the likelihood of our own disability and the need for others to care for us.
- **Harmonizes with the law of love,** which is the principle of giving. The more we give, the more we receive. In every living system, the various parts are active in giving support to the other parts. The lungs actively work to give oxygen to the blood, which the heart sends through the body, but the heart benefits from the oxygen provided by the lungs. The digestive organs fill the blood with nutrients, but receive oxygen from the lungs and circulation sent by the heart. In a community, active people are constantly blessing those around them, while simultaneously being blessed from others. We receive benefits of electricity, clean air, water, emergency services, road crews that keep the roads clear, and so much more from people we will most likely never meet.
- **Reduces the opportunity for temptation.** This is perhaps one of the greatest benefits of useful work. Any time spent in usefulness not only produces all the blessings above, but is time unavailable for engagement in destructive and harmful activities. You've heard the old saying, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." When we are not engaged in useful activities, we are more vulnerable to temptations that result in harm to ourselves and others.

When we divert our energy, our mind, and abilities away from useful work—activities that may or may not generate income, but are beneficial (housework, lawn care, gardening, sewing, painting, sculpting, building, writing, playing musical instruments, drawing, developing systems or programs of education, parenting, coaching, and so many more)—and instead use the majority of our energies on entertainments, diversions, and indulgences (video games, TV, amusement parks, playing games), we undermine our physical and mental well-being. We become internally restless, lose our sense of peace, and often look for actions to change our feeling state, too frequently in alcohol or other substances, or more entertainment and avoidance of real-life responsibilities.

So don't resent work! Useful work is a huge blessing to us and, as we engage in it, we are not only healthier and happier, but we also grow and expand our abilities, while coming closer to the image of our Creator God!

The real trick is to find useful work that you enjoy, that fulfills your passions, desires, dreams, and aspirations—again, whether it results in monetary income or not. The happiest people are those who are productive people, so find your work and live life to its fullest!