

# 5 minutes!



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199 activities to  
put more life  
into your life

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## 199 activities to put more life into your life

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# Introduction

What can you do in 5 minutes?

Quite a lot actually. You could give a powerful presentation; write an important letter to a loved one; spend precious time genuinely listening to your child.

And if you spend 5 minutes doing something regularly over a period of time, the difference could be enormous. 5 minutes a day taking time out to de-stress could be extremely beneficial; 5 minutes a day with a skipping rope could make a big difference to your level of fitness; 5 minutes a day taking small steps to expand your comfort zone could bring untold benefits.


Of course, you might just want to spend 5 minutes doing something fun or light-hearted, like reading the cartoons in the paper; sitting with your feet up and a nice hot drink; or chatting to a friend. These are important too.

This book gives many suggestions for how you can use 5 minutes. It could be a spare 5 minutes while waiting for the evening meal to cook; a 5 minute break between tasks; a regular planned 5 minutes daily, or any other situation where you have 5 minutes you could spend doing something useful.

Many of the activities are low-cost or no cost.

For some of the activities you may need to do some prepara-

tion beforehand. 5 minutes practicing a musical instrument isn't going to go very far if you have to spend time digging your guitar out of the wardrobe and working out if it's tuned or not; 5 minutes dipping into a book won't go very far if you are in the office and the book is in your car in the car park ... in the next street. If it is going to be a regular activity it pays to have the appropriate items ready!

 Activities that require some form of preparation beforehand are marked with a star.

### **How to use this book**

The book is split into chapters containing activities of a similar nature. Within each chapter are categories, each with five suggestions for 5 minute activities.

At the back of the book there is space for you to write your own activities, as the topics may trigger ideas for something you would like to include. There are also blank pages as some of the activities suggest you write or make notes.

Of course, you don't have to do the activity for exactly 5 minutes, nor do you need to stop after that amount of time. If you feel you want to carry on, then by all means do so!

Some activities may take several 5 minute sessions, for example tidying up your inbox or tidying up a room. In these cases you may like to set a timer for 5 minutes. The

length of some activities may be dependent on other people, for example if you 'Call a friend who laughs easily' it may be a friend who is unable to limit their conversation to 5 minutes!

Some topics can overlap, for example 'Learn a simple card trick' could come under both *Increase your Skills* and *Fun*. In these instances you will find the activity listed in just one category.

Enjoy!

Kim Chamberlain

# People and relationships

## Relationships

- Contact someone you haven't been in touch with for a while to rekindle your friendship. You could email, text, write, phone, send a card, connect on a social media site...
- Send someone a thank you message. It could be for any reason, for example for providing a service; for offering a listening ear; for helping you when you needed it; simply for being a great friend
- Have a quick meeting – standing up - with your family where everyone puts in their ideas for a fun day out. Choose one and decide on the day you will do it
- Along with your family members, choose a dinner plate that is different from any others you might use, and earmark this as the 'special plate'. When someone does something special, they will have their meal served on this plate
- Make positive comments on people's social media postings. A few words, even infrequently, can nurture a relationship connection

## Marriage

- Write some 'love notes' for your partner and leave them in unexpected places, for example in their pocket, in the coffee jar, taped to the sun visor of their car, on the bathroom mirror, in their shoe

# Fun and pleasure

## Fun

- Play Twenty Questions. One person thinks of an item or subject. They can say whether it is 'Animal, Vegetable or Mineral', or can give a category, such as TV programme, Sports person, Food. The others have to guess what this item or subject is by asking up to 20 questions. The responses to the questions can only be 'Yes' or 'No', or 'Yes' 'No' and 'Maybe'.
- Sing along to your favourite song, preferably with others, as loudly as you can
- Have a pillow fight, in a safe environment
- Have a running race. Remember to do some warm up exercises first
- Play a quick game on the Wii, Xbox, or PlayStation

## Books

- Choose a book that you feel happy to part with. Tape a note to the front of the book saying 'This book is freely available for anyone to read. Please take it, and when you have finished reading, leave it somewhere for another person to use'. Leave it in a suitable place, such as in a café, on public transport, at the train station
- Pick out one of your factual books, such as a dictionary, user's manual, or fact book, turn to page 15 and see if you can learn something new



# Personal development

## Personal Development

- Make a decision to do something scary this week - or today - or every day for a year. Choose activities that don't endanger you. Write down the top five scary actions you are going to start off with, along with the dates you will do them – in the very near future! The more you confront your fears, the more your confidence can build and the more you get out of life. Can you, for example decide to make an appointment with the dentist; agree to speak at an event; go to a party on your own; jump off the diving board at the pool; ask someone out on a date; leave your job; spend the day on your own; pick up a spider and look at it...?
- Think of an area of your life you would like to improve on for example your finances, public speaking, losing weight, improving your marriage. Go online and order a book about it
- It is said that successful people ask better questions, and as a result get better answers. What issue are you dealing with at the moment? Work out useful questions you can ask yourself about it, or chat with someone and ask them to ask you questions
- Unsure of what your real passion is? Start the process of finding out by taking a piece of paper and drawing a line down the middle. On the left hand side write down things you love. Anything, no matter how big or small,

# Skills and knowledge

## Increase your skills



- Practice a musical instrument. Keep it easily accessible so that you can simply pick it up and start. Also keep accessible anything else you might need, such as books, music sheets, timer. Practice a short section at a time. (Note this type of practice is aimed at those who want to learn for fun. More practice is needed for those who want to take it seriously)



- Learn a simple card trick. Find one in a book or look online. There are a number on YouTube. Over time you can progress from very simple tricks to harder ones. An easy one to start off with: Take two cards from the top of the deck. Make sure you hold them together carefully so that it looks like you only took one card. Show it to the other person. Then put the two cards back on top of the pile and this time take only the top card and place it at the bottom of the pile. Then turn over the top card and it appears to be their card
- Spelling. Think of a word you have difficulty spelling. Find the correct spelling and practice writing it out. Then practice including it in different sentences. Also write this word on a sticky note and attach it to the bathroom mirror. Leave it there till you feel confident you can spell it. You may like to check online for a list of common spelling errors to see if there are any you need to be aware of. Common errors include such

# You and your body

## Exercise

Do some stretching exercises and a warm up before you start, and finish off with a warm down and stretching to let your body recover. Please take medical advice before doing exercise if you are unsure

- Do some star jumps. Begin with your feet together and your hands by your side. Jump, raising both feet to the side while raising your arms to the side slightly above shoulder height. Finish with feet together and hands at your side
- Go on a treadmill, either walking or running
  - Begin slowly. If using a motorised treadmill step on the belt once you know that it's moving at the slow set-up speed
  - Use the handrails only if you need to. It's OK to hold on when learning to use the treadmill or if you have balance issues, but otherwise let go when you feel comfortable and move naturally
  - Always look straight ahead, and don't turn if someone calls you
  - Always wear walking or running shoes, don't go barefoot
  - The first few times you may feel dizzy when you get off. This is normal and will stop
  - Don't read while using the treadmill
- Walk or run up and down some stairs. If you want to

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