



Laziness Can Kill You

Eva Nickolas, Freshman Reporter

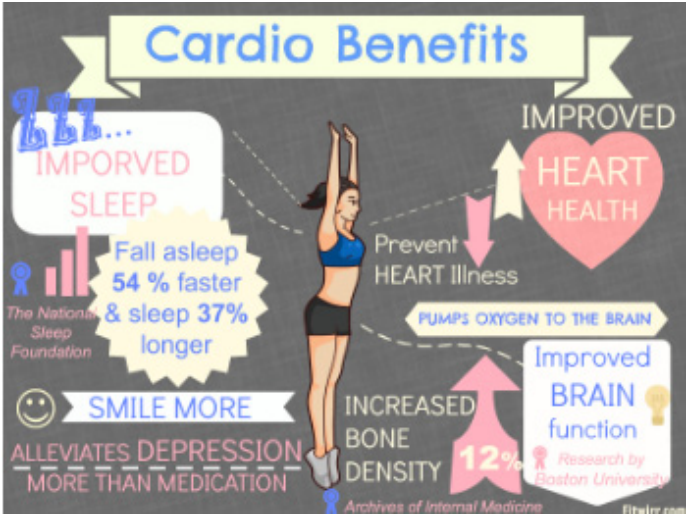
The human race is busy and hard-working, so we take advantage of the free time that we are granted. It's easy and enjoyable to come home after a busy day at school or work and sit on the couch to watch your favorite show. We all enjoy this simple form of relaxation, but do we enjoy it too much?

Studies have shown that humans are turning relaxation into laziness, and laziness into early deaths. Humans are meant to be active animals, but technology is changing our ability to do work. Traveling back to our early days, we were forced to hunt and gather our food, causing us to build strength and exert energy. Today, however, we can easily warm a bowl of soup in the microwave with minimal use of our energy. Modern technology has many perks to it, including convenience. However, convenience may also be our worst enemy. It is causing the human race to grow increasingly lazy. We are not even required to get up to turn our television on. Living a sedentary life can be the cause of many illnesses and even early deaths.

Laziness is a cause over 40 diseases such as diabetes, along with mental illnesses like dementia. Not only this, but "Whether slim or fat, a person leading a sedentary lifestyle has similar chances of dying young to a smoker" claims BBC News. The authors of a BBC News health article explain that every week spent inactive is equally as harmful to smoking one cigarette pack. Your eyes may widen with shock when seeing these statistics, but they do not have to apply to you. All that is recommended is just 30 minutes of exercise every day for five days per week. That's under five hours of exercise over the course of seven days.

Given that the human body is designed for physical exertion, workouts come with several benefits. For example, sweating is a natural detox. It releases negative toxins, allowing one's organs, such as the liver, to become stronger and improve their ability function. Additionally, muscle workouts create bone density, decreasing an individual's risk for osteoporosis. Physical exertion also lowers one's chance of being diagnosed with fatal illnesses such as certain cancers and heart disease. To add to this list, an individual who exercises daily receives better sleep and has a sharper mind than someone who does not work out. This allows for a more efficient work ethic and ultimately better school grades, or possibly a job promotion. Although there are several advantages stated above, perhaps the most important asset is a happier well-being. Exercising releases endorphins that create positive feelings. People who exercise are likely happier and healthier than those who do not. This alone is worth the 30 minutes every day spent on physical exertion.

The claim is often made that one does not have the time to work out, but statistics show that the average American adult is using technology for nearly three hours every day, while teens waste nine hours on their device every day. All that you have to do is take a 30-minute break from your phone every day. Make your health and happiness a priority.



MHS's First School-Edition Newspaper Is Starting Soon!

MHS HEADLIGHT'S
first of many school issues

Student-Written Work FEATURING:

- What's going on at MHS
- Events in the greater community
- Obstacles for Generation Z
- Peer opinions
- A teacher-themed crossword/word search

Find it in the lobby the week before winter break!

Headlight's Quote of the Week

"The crux is not the publisher's 'freedom to print'; it is, rather, the citizen's 'right to know.'"
~Arthur Hays Sulzberger

The Layers Behind the Gender Wage Gap

Jillian Lederman, Junior Editor-In-Chief

Aman and a woman both graduate from the same college, at the same age, in the same year. They move to the same city, apply to the same business, and become employed in the same position. They start working on the same day, and every day after that they arrive and leave the building at the same time. When a month has passed, they go together to receive their paychecks. They open their envelopes together, expecting to see the same sum. But, lo and behold, the woman is crushed to see on her paper a mere 80 percent of the money earned by her male counterpart. Assuming that gender wage gap is solely caused by difference in gender, this scenario is representative of the way society is run. However, this may not be entirely true.

According to the gender wage gap, for every dollar an average man makes, a woman earns about 20 or 30 cents less. Many studies confirm this to be true. It is impossible to deny that on average, women do make less money than men. However, responding correctly to the issue requires more than just acknowledging its existence. It is the causes that have led to the gender wage gap that are truly important, and understanding them is key to deciding if the situation is a problem that needs to be solved.

There are fundamental issues with how the wage gap itself is calculated. It involves measuring the average wage for all women working full-time and year-round and dividing it by that of all men, completely disregarding type of occupation, hours of overtime worked, and numerous other factors. For example, a CEO of a company makes far more money than a nurse. If there were as many female CEOs as male, and as many male nurses as female, the process of finding the gender wage gap statistic would produce more accurate results. However, the distribution of the sexes across levels of occupations is not equal. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as of October 2017, seven out of eight heads of agencies and entities and 16 out of 21 directors in the OECD were men. According to the Center for American Progress, women occupy 44 percent of the S&P 500 labor force, but they comprise only six percent of CEOs and 20 percent of labor seats. Clearly, the difference in type of occupation performed by men and women is an influential factor in comparing their wages.

Additionally, several studies indicate that men typically work for more hours than their female counterparts. Of full-time employees, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that on average, men work 8.2 hours a day and females work 7.8 hours. When the entire workforce is considered, men usually work 42 minutes longer than women, meaning 3.5 hours longer a week or 14 hours longer a month. Given this disparity, an average male will likely be paid more than an average female, simply because he works for a longer period of time.

These studies beg the question: are women being forced into lower-paying jobs or otherwise unfairly discriminated against by society, or is it their own voluntary choices that lead them to occupy different types of occupations than men? If the former is true, then the gender wage gap is truly caused, as claimed, by societal bias against females. However, a study by the National Bureau of Economic Research in April 2016 has provided a different answer. In the study, a group of undergraduate students were presented with a variety of realistic career scenarios and asked to choose which they would prefer. The study found that the women, on average, were more likely to voluntarily select a scenario based on flexibility and security, while the men mostly prioritized wages. In a similar study giving choices of college majors, it was found that males were more likely than females to choose a major based on the amount of money they would be able to earn in the future rather than on other non-monetary considerations.

Thus, the issue facing society is not that women are being paid less than men simply because of their gender. Rather, women receive less money on average because they typically choose to occupy lower-paying jobs and work fewer hours than men. In 2016, Glassdoor studied over 5,000 salaries of employees in the United States. After actually considering factors like education and occupation, the study found that women earn 95 cents for every dollar that a man makes. Although this statistic indicates that a minor disparity still exists, it fails to consider some of the other variables discussed above, such as men working longer hours and women being more likely to value non-wage benefits of an occupation. Acknowledging these variables in the process may very well cause the gap to close completely. The gender wage gap is not a black-and-white issue. Every aspect that has contributed to its existence must be considered and analyzed fully. And, if it is the choices that many women voluntarily make in the workforce that have led to this supposed societal crisis, how we can undermine their freedom in pursuit of a solution?

Headlight Staff 2018-2019

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