

Treating Your Body Like a Computer: Trouble-shooting Tips

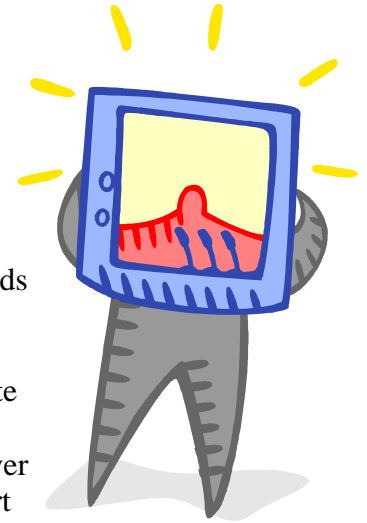
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If your body was a computer, would it be receiving lots of "error" messages? Is it beginning to run slower and take longer to "start?" Here's a checklist to help optimize your performance and prevent crashing.

✓ Are you trying to run too many programs at the same time?

If you're operating less efficiently because there are too many activities making demands on your system, shut down some programs. Some examples include:

- If time is tight, rather than make a special company dinner from "scratch," invite people for a potluck meal.
- No time to work out AND fix your hair afterwards ... get a new hairstyle or cover your hair with some type of interesting headgear. Who knows ... you might start a whole new product line!



You may actually accomplish more if you don't try to accomplish several things at the same time.

Researchers, such as Dr. Earl Miller, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Picower professor of neuroscience, are finding that multi-tasking can be less efficient than doing one task at a time, especially if the tasks are more complex. "Switching from task to task, you think you're actually paying attention to everything around you at the same time. But you're actually not," says Miller.

Consider scheduling tasks for separate times, for example:

- Alternate cooking days with workout days. Cook ahead on cooking days, freeing up time on your workout days.
- Plan a casserole or stew that can cook while you do yoga or take a walk.

If you do multi-task, combine a task that doesn't demand as much input from your system as the other task. Here are two possible examples:

- Work out on a treadmill while watching TV.
- Listen to music while cooking.

Know how. Know now.



Is your anti-virus software up-to-date and running?

If you're susceptible to every bug that comes around, it's time to check if you're eating right, getting enough sleep, being physically active and reducing stress. The cost and time for "repairs" may be greater than the amount needed for prevention.



Is your battery dangerously low?

Recharge your battery before it loses power completely. Habit #7 in Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is "Sharpen the Saw." Covey tells the story of a woodcutter whose productivity decreased after sawing for several days straight. Each day his saw became duller and duller.

Covey advocates a balanced program for self-renewal in these four areas of your life: physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual.

Recharge by eating healthy, getting some physical activity, making meaningful connections with others, stimulating your mind and devoting time to your spiritual renewal through such means as time spent in nature, music, prayer or service.



Are you bogged down by unneeded files and programs?

Remove anything from your life that isn't needed and slows your overall performance. For example:

- Do you still belong to a club or organization that no longer meets your needs or interests? The time you're giving this activity is taking time from something else. Move on!
- Are you ironing (what's an iron, some of you may say!) the whole shirt when only the collar will show under your sweater?



Do you need to hit "escape," "undo" or "delete?"

Your computer offers several options if you change your mind about a decision. Offer yourself that same choice with your life.

You may have a reputation for always saying "yes" to a request for help, regardless of how busy you are. The next time, say something such as one of the following examples. It's not necessary to elaborate and give an explanation.



- "I'm sorry but I'm not available that night" or "I have another commitment for that time."
- "I can't help you right now, but I could (in a half hour, next week, next month ...)."
- "I can only help you for an hour, and then I have to leave." Leave after an hour ... even if it's just to go to the bathroom if you're at your office!
- "I can't do that right now, but I could ... (name a less time-consuming task)."

Time to reboot

Now, that you've finished trouble-shooting your personal system, consider making some changes. Then, reboot your body and enjoy the benefits!