

## No Time For Reading Fiction?

Remember when you used to...

Do you ever stop to think about the things you used to do that you enjoyed and the fact that you no longer do them? I watched a film on video last week called 'The Notebook'. If you've seen it or heard of it then you probably know that it's a bit of tear jerker...actually it's a whole box of tissues worth! I really enjoyed it but then I was in the mood for a bit of melodrama.

Anyway, one of the character's in the movie loves to paint. She comes from a wealthy family who has high expectations for her and painting is one of the few things that she does because she enjoys it not because she has to. When she is engaged to be married to a man that her parents endorse she finds that she doesn't paint anymore - basically she is living the life her parents have chosen for her and not her own. This realisation is what attracts her to a different path in life (and consequently a different man). And OK its only a movie and our choices in life are never so clear cut or simple but it got me thinking that all of us probably have done things - hobbies, sports, leisure activities - in the past that we really enjoyed and for various reasons don't do them anymore. It got me wondering why that is. If we liked it so much - whatever 'it' was - why on earth did we stop? Was it time? Money? An ageing body? Family?

But just because you stopped doesn't mean you can't start up again. Why not pick up where you left off? Or if that's not possible you could do something that is similar and gives you the same pleasure but fits in better with the life you're currently leading.

Maybe there are lots of things that you used to do and no longer do. Why not take a pen and paper and write down 5 things that you used to do that you enjoyed. These could be things that you used to do last year, five years ago or twenty years ago.

Then next to each activity write down what you liked about doing it. Why was it so enjoyable? Perhaps you loved curling up with a great novel and consuming it without stopping. You loved being able to escape into other people's lives. But now you don't have time to indulge in reading anything just for pleasure. Or maybe you loved knitting or stamp collecting or board games but put them aside because of study or because you had to get a part-time job.

Writing down the activities you used to do is the easy part but trying to figure out exactly why you liked it is a bit harder and may take some reflection. If that is the case, think about how you felt when you were doing the activity, how you felt when you had to stop or put it away because of another commitment. Think also about how you feel when you name your activity, what feelings does it bring up for you?

Figuring out why you liked something will not only help you identify whether that need in you is currently being satiated elsewhere but will also help you pinpoint another activity that could give you the same enjoyment. For example, if you loved to read fiction but you don't have time to read full length novels anymore then you could look at a short story service like espresso Fiction. Or if you loved ballet but can't see yourself donning leotards and point shoes then maybe you could look at trying some other form of dance. Or maybe you loved swimming because of the sense of calm you got from being in the water but find it difficult to get motivated to swim on your own. Maybe you could look at joining a squad and training in a group.

There are so many leisure activities around that there is sure to be something that fits your schedule and budget. And if the thought of all this makes you scream 'I don't have the time or money to do things I enjoy' then maybe you need to take a broader look at where your life is heading.

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### About the Author

Jill Brennan, an experienced writer, editor and mom to 2 boys, created espresso Fiction to help time-poor fiction lovers get some satisfying fiction they could read in 15 minutes or less. Learn more about getting great fiction home delivered at <http://www.fastfoodforyourmind.com>