

Day 2: Film and TV

How can you make your viewing habits work for your well-being?

A great movie or gripping TV show can be the ideal way to switch off and distract yourself from the stresses of the working day. Make your viewing habits work for your well-being, with these tips.

- **Know yourself and make good choices.**

Make sure your film choice matches your mood. If you've had a rubbish day, forgo that *Guardian*-recommended misery-fest in favour of an old favourite or a cheesy comedy.

Below are five films guaranteed to leave you with a smile even bigger than this happy chap's...



- Cameron Crowe's *Say Anything*
- David Lynch's *The Straight Story*
- Whit Stillman's *Damsels in Distress*
- Adrienne Shelly's *Waitress*
- Powell & Pressburger's *A Matter of Life and Death*

- **Engage with what you're watching.**

It can be easy to allow what you're watching to become background noise, as your mind keeps drifting towards unwanted thoughts of work.

If you're struggling to switch-off, opt for a film or TV show that requires your full and undivided attention.

Why not watch something in another language? Having to read subtitles will make it more difficult to think about other things.

I recommend Agnès Varda's *The Gleaners and I*.

If you sense your attention fading, try to focus on what's happening around the characters. Pick TV shows or films which have plenty of background action, or elaborate set design, to keep your eyes and mind occupied.

I recommend Sofia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette*.

- **Pick something new.**

You never know what you might enjoy until you try it. Embrace the recommendations of family, partners and friends to explore what's out there, and discover new favourites.

How can film and TV can bring us together?

If you would like to add a collaborative or sociable dimension to your viewing activity, try one of the below suggestions.

Family Movie Night

Turn off the lights, grab some popcorn, and put all phones out of reach and sight.

Whether your family is big or small, or you're tandem-watching a film with your best friend via Zoom, having someone there, sharing in the experience, can enhance your enjoyment of the movie, especially if it's a silly comedy, or a jumpy thriller.



A designated movie night also facilitates quality family time, without the burden of having to make conversation. If you have young ones, it's also a great opportunity to share with them your own childhood favourites!

Film Club

If you love chatting about movies as much as you enjoy watching them, why not get a group of friends involved in a film club? Pick a film, give everyone a week or so to watch it, and then come together to discuss.



Below are some suggested talking points, to get you started:

- What did you like most/least about the film?
- What do you think were the main themes?
- Who was your favourite/least favourite character?
- How well did the music/soundtrack convey what the film makers were trying to say?
- Did anything in the film surprise or upset you?
- How did the ending make you feel?
- What choices were made by the characters, and what were the consequences of those choices?

Whilst we're all streaming from different sources, there are many films available for free on YouTube, or BBC iPlayer, that most people can access. And there's always scheduled programming (remember that?) – for example, on FilmFour (with the opportunity to catch up on All4).

Film Festivals

Why not design your own mini film festival? You could focus on a director whose films you like, award winners, or movies with a specific theme.



Invite friends to watch with you – you could even create a programme for your festival, with interesting facts about the films.

Below are my suggestions for a mini film festival celebrating LGBT+ History Month:

- Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts*
- Matthew Warchus's *Pride*
- Céline Sciamma's *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*
- Hettie Macdonald's *Beautiful Thing*
- Stephan Elliott's *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*

Blogs/Podcasts

If you'd like to share your hobby with a wider audience, you could start a film review blog, or get a friend involved in a podcast, discussing whatever TV show you're both currently obsessed with.

See our '[Share Your Hobby](#)' blogpost from Day 1 for some tips on how to get started.

Resources

[Glasgow Film Festival](#)

[British Film Institute](#)

[Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)