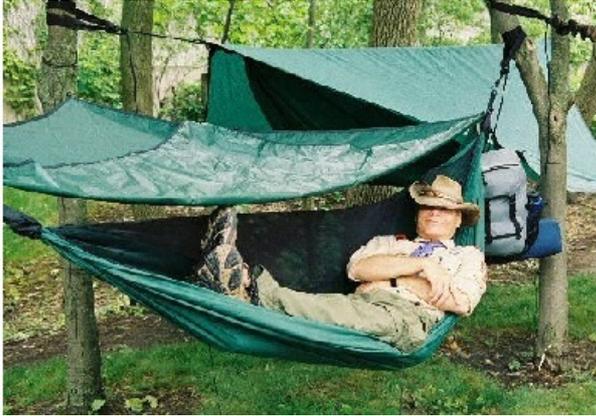


WHEN IT'S OKAY TO BE LAZY



Let's say you were laid off and let's say you weren't expecting it. If you have a spouse and that spouse depends on you, here comes the pressure, here comes the demands for an explanation of why you didn't make the cut, and the expectations that you will get back on the horse, and sooner is better than later. You, meanwhile, need more than demands and pressure at this point: you need to process what happened to you. Give yourself permission to be lazy. Our "protestant work ethic" frowns whenever we take a break from work. Often, we define ourselves in terms of our work, "Oh me? I'm an accountant." "Nice to meet you, I'm a lawyer." "My name is Jeff, by the way," "Didn't ask." We define ourselves in terms of our career, so to be unemployed is a wretched state. Nevertheless, this is the time to shrug off this so called work "ethic," and let yourself indulge in some mindless pleasure, to be selfish, even if our family depends on us. How dare we do such a thing? From psychological necessity. You need some time to process your recent loss of a job. Take a break, be like Thoreau and go to the woods, if you have a taste for that sort of thing, and contemplate the travails of life from the sanctity of nature. Indulge yourself in whatever hobby you prefer. A hobby is a catalyst by which we process the rest of our day. So if you haven't picked up your guitar in a few years – too busy with the job and the kids – let yourself strum away at the old ax and don't let yourself feel guilty about it. You need this. And it will do you some good. Otherwise, you will be flying from employed, to laid off, to desperately scrabbling for your next job. What a sorry plight! Life needs punctuation, life needs breaks. What you need, above all, and despite the insistence of bills, children, spouses, and in-laws, is to rediscover your center, your true self, that belongs to you no matter if you are employed or unemployed, married or single, religious or atheist. That center of your personality is your anchor amidst all the various storms of life, amidst the noise of the world, and being so consistently employed and at work, we might identify with a secondary quality. We might say "I am an employee at XYZ corporation, and I want XYZ to succeed, and I will sacrifice my happiness and even my time with my family to make sure XYZ keeps competitive in this difficult economy." But what is XYZ in the eyes of eternity? Take unemployment as a gift, the way sickness and death are gifts, since they force us to face mortality, force us to look in the mirror and not see an employee, but a Self unlike any other the world has ever known. Having had your bout of laziness, having indulged in just being a bit happy once again, then you can go back to striving for that next job. Having taken time to breath, you will be recharged and eager to do the [job search right](#). Looking for all available jobs? [Click here](#).