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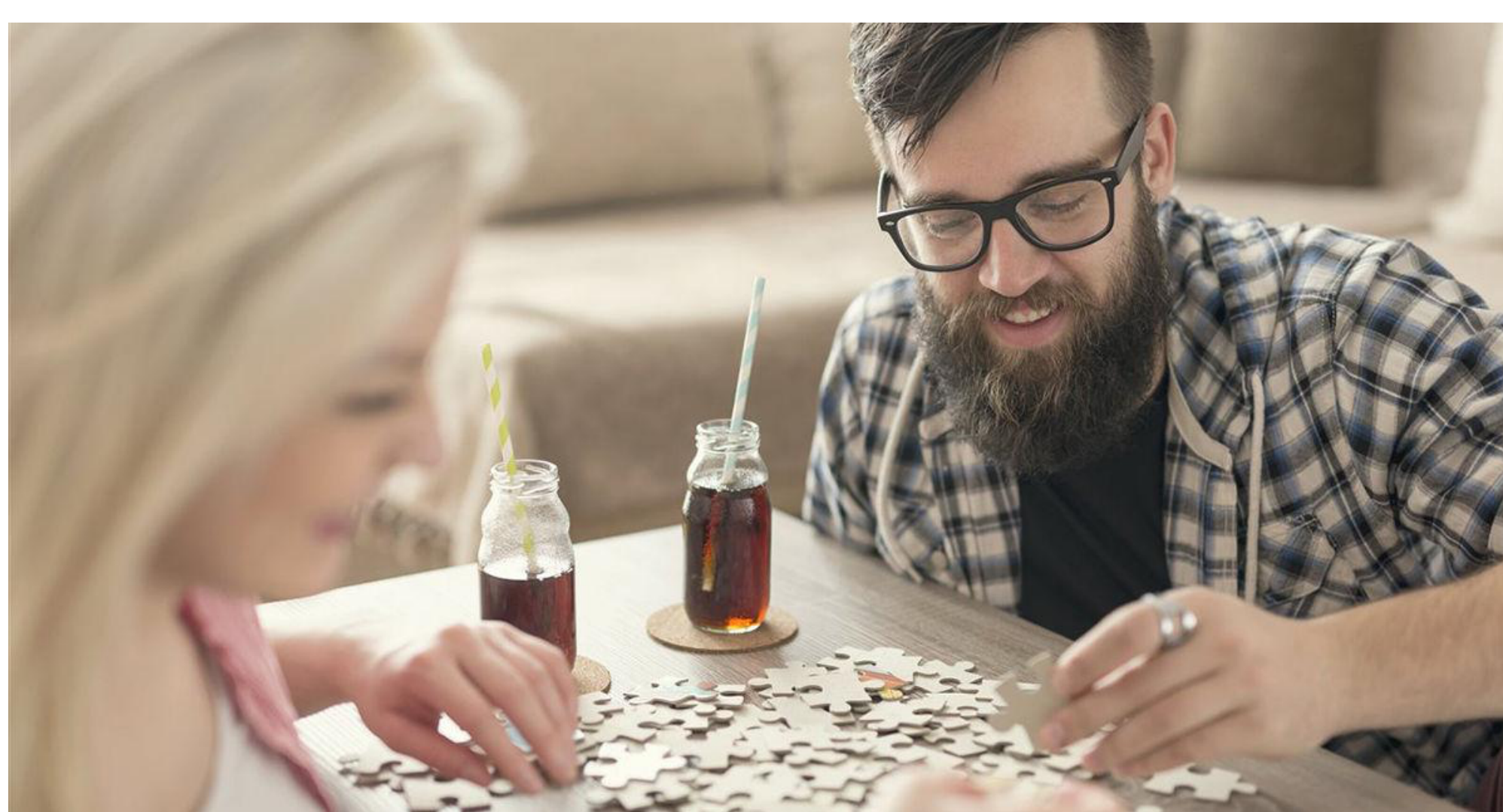
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## 7 surprising benefits of doing jigsaw puzzles



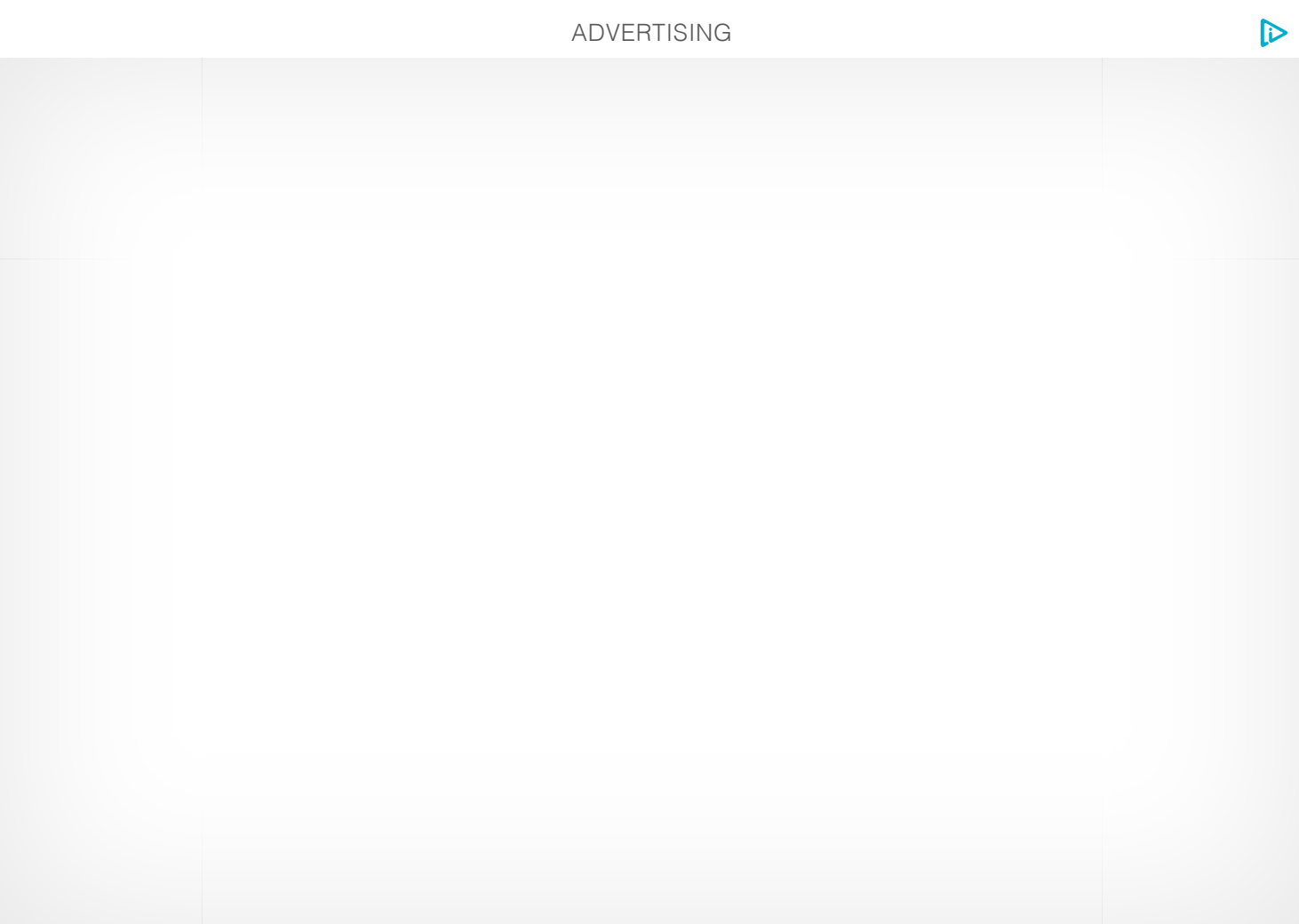
Everyone from tweens and teens to millennials and over-worked parents to seniors are returning to this quiet pastime of childhood. Call it a retro revolution. [Buy Now](#)



There's a quiet movement going on in this country, and it doesn't involve apps, data or the latest fad. Following the lead of vinyl record albums, coloring books and traditional board games, jigsaw puzzles are seeing a resurgence in popularity. Perhaps, because it's an opportunity to unplug and give yourself and family an escape from the information overload that is buzzing through the very fabric of our lives 24/7.

Wrestling the kids (or yourself) away from screens, devices, even the television can be a nearly impossible task, but it's vital to our mental and even physical health. A jigsaw puzzle requires your full attention and therein lies the magic. Everyone from tweens and teens to millennials and over-worked parents to seniors are returning to this quiet pastime of childhood. Call it a retro revolution.

Ravensburger, a company that has been making high-quality, premium jigsaw puzzles for 134 years, recently partnered with Target to offer a new line of 500- and 1,000-piece puzzles because anyone and everyone can benefit from puzzling.



(HINT: Start with the 500-piece puzzle. They're designed to strike the perfect balance of challenge and solvability.)

Here are some benefits of puzzling that might surprise you.

### Jigsaw puzzles exercise the left and right sides of your brain at once

Your left brain is logical and works in a linear fashion, while your right brain is creative and intuitive. When you're doing a jigsaw puzzle, both sides are engaged, according to Sanesco Health, an industry leader in neurotransmitter testing. Think of it as a mental workout that improves your problem-solving skills and attention span. It's no surprise that Bill Gates admits to being an avid puzzler.

### Jigsaw puzzles improve your short-term memory

Can't remember what you had for lunch yesterday? Jigsaw puzzles can help with that. Doing a puzzle reinforces connections between brain cells, improves mental speed and is an especially effective way to improve short-term memory.

### Jigsaw puzzles improve your visual-spatial reasoning

When you do a jigsaw puzzle, you need to look at individual pieces and figure out where they'll fit into the big picture. If you do it regularly, you'll improve visual-spatial reasoning, which helps with driving a car, packing, using a map, learning and following dance moves, and a whole host of other things.

### Jigsaw puzzles are a great meditation tool and stress reliever

Focusing on one image for a long period of time, without extraneous thoughts entering your mind, is in itself meditation. By doing a jigsaw puzzle, you're getting the same benefits as if you meditated. The stress of everyday life evaporates and is replaced by a sense of peace and tranquility that lowers your blood pressure and heart rate.

### Jigsaw puzzles are a great way to connect with family

Starting a jigsaw puzzle and keeping it on a table in your living room or kitchen is an invitation for the whole family to participate, whenever they have a few minutes to sit down and focus. It's a tactic that parents of teens can use for starting a conversation while working toward a shared goal.

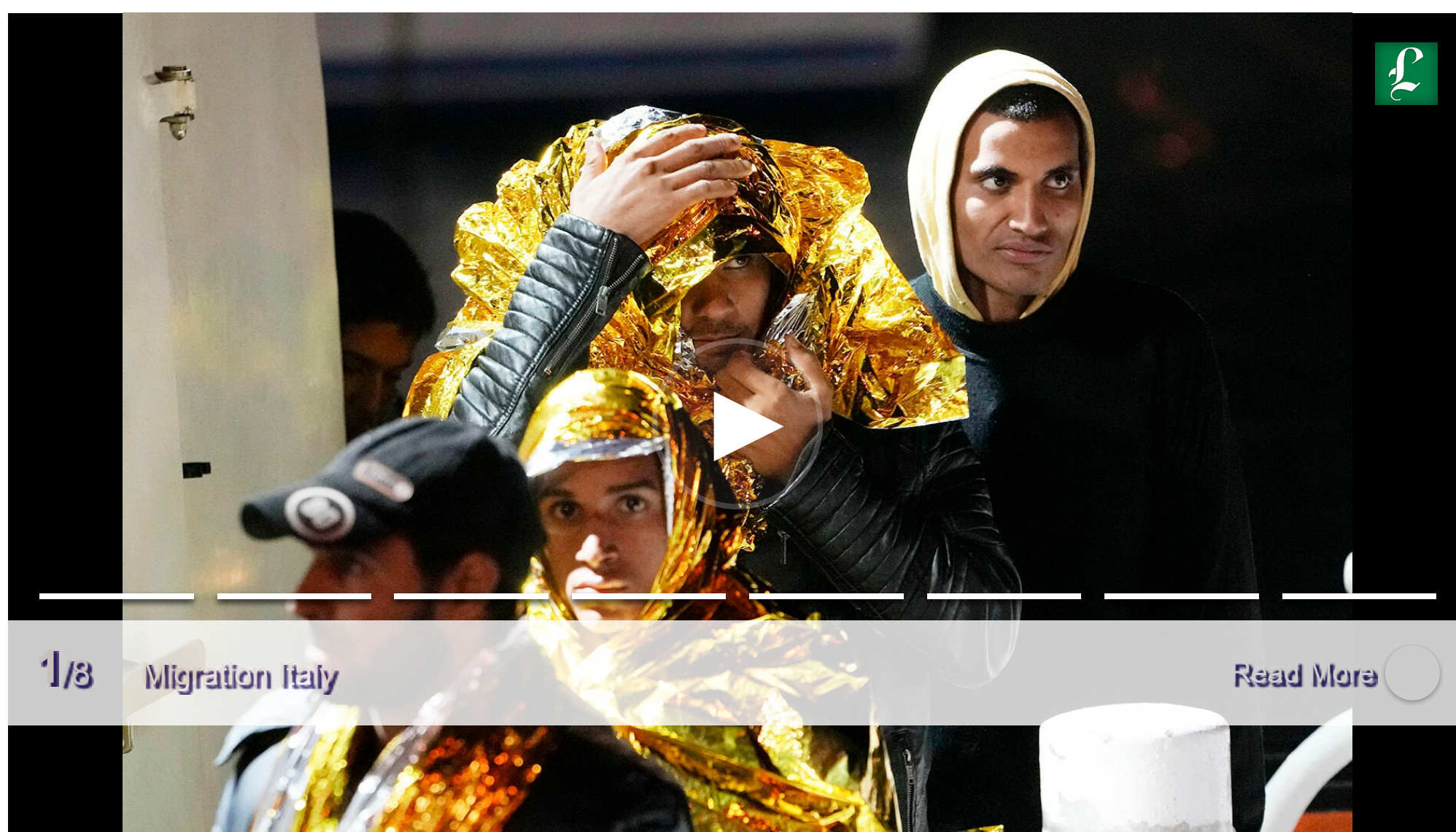
### Conversely, jigsaw puzzles are great for some needed alone time

Puzzling is perfect for people who want a quiet, solo break from the bustle and unrelenting stimulus of today's digital lifestyle.

### You'll live longer, better if you puzzle regularly

Studies show that people who do jigsaw and crossword puzzles have longer life spans with less chances of developing Alzheimer's disease, memory loss or dementia. Puzzling stimulates the brain and actually wards off the plaque that is the marker of Alzheimer's, according to a recent study published in the Archives of Neurology. The study compared brain scans of 75-year-olds to 25-year-olds. The elderly people who did puzzles regularly had brain scans comparable to the 25-year-olds.

Doing jigsaw puzzles is good for your mind, body and spirit. So, on your next lazy Sunday (or better yet - crazed Monday), unplug, put your phone on "Do Not Disturb," and get swept away by a puzzle.



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