

## Live your life the Swedish way

(LEVEL B2/C1)

Part 1: WARM-UP

**EX.1. Look at the pictures below showing some main associations with a Scandinavian way of living. What do you think could be its main principles? Compare your ideas with a partner.**



Source: <http://pexels.com>

## Part 2: WATCHING

Source: <http://www.health.com/stress/swedish-lagom-tips-for-balanced-happy-life>

**EX.2. Watch the video about Lagom – the Swedish concept of a happy and balanced life.**

**Then answer the following questions and discuss them with your partner:**

1. What is the meaning of the word *lagom*?
2. What are the 6 ways to a balanced life according to the Swedish?
3. What are the advantages of living this way?
4. Which tips would you like to adopt and why?

## Part 3: READING

**EX.3. Read more about *lagom* below and fill in the blanks with the words from the box.**

SLEW	OFF-GUARD	TWINGE	RARITY	SOLITARY	AWKWARD
JOLT	RUSTLE	HARDY	VERSATILE	FUSS	BREATHER

Pronounced LAH-gum, the term translates to "not too little, not too much" or "just right"—and in Sweden it represents the art of living a balanced, slower, \_\_\_\_\_-free life. Below are six tips to help you add more lagom to your everyday life.

### **Adopt the *morgondopp***

Most commonly enjoyed between May and September (although some \_\_\_\_\_ types go year-round), the *morgondopp* is usually enjoyed first thing in the morning before coffee.

Try ending your daily shower with a cold-water blast. It may not be as mindful or empowering as a saltwater swim, but you'll still get many of the physiological benefits and will almost certainly wake up with a \_\_\_\_\_!

### **Dare to go alone**

It's in these grand moments that you appreciate the \_\_\_\_\_ of the leaves in the wind, the sound of the breaking waves or the distant melody of a lark.

The unbroken spell of nature allows you to slow down, switch off and be alone with your thoughts — something of a \_\_\_\_\_ in the noisy world we live in today.

### **Create a capsule wardrobe**

Loosely speaking, the Swedish wardrobe could be likened to a capsule wardrobe—a minimalist, highly practical closet created by clearing out unwanted or unused clothes and replacing them with a limited number of loved, highly \_\_\_\_\_ garments, which can ultimately be worn together.

### **Take breaks**

The Swedish *fika paus* is a break with a coffee and maybe a little treat. Formal or informal, it's about taking time to switch off for a few minutes and giving yourself a \_\_\_\_\_.

You may feel a \_\_\_\_\_ of guilt at the self-indulgence but actually, putting your feet up once in a while makes total personal and business sense.

### **Learn the art of listening**

Converse with a Swede and you'll notice that they very rarely interrupt or talk over anyone else. Voices are kept to even tones and pauses in conversation are completely acceptable.

Swedes feel slightly \_\_\_\_\_ in these silent moments, too, but rather than desperately fill the gap with a hurried \_\_\_\_\_ of off-the-cuff words, they'll make sounds, like a sharp intake of breath. This gives them time to reflect on something meaningful that they can contribute.

### **Perform random acts of kindness**

Spreading a little happiness doesn't need to involve grand gestures. Sometimes the most ordinary acts add the most meaning and inspire the greatest smiles of all. Often catching people \_\_\_\_\_ with an unexpected act of kindness can be the most touching gesture of all.

Excerpted from *Lagom* by Niki Brantmark. Published October 3 by Harper Design, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Source: <http://www.health.com/stress/swedish-lagom-tips-for-balanced-happy-life>

#### Part 4: VOCABULARY PRACTICE + SPEAKING

**EX.4. Discuss the following questions with your partner. Make sure you use the new vocabulary as often as possible.**

1. Do you agree that following the principles of *lagom* could lead to a *fuss-free* life?
2. How often do you give yourself *a breather* at work? Do you ever feel *a twinge of guilt* when you do it?
3. Would you like to have a capsule wardrobe limited to a small number of *versatile* clothes?
4. Do you enjoy *solitary* moments in the nature?
5. What makes you wake up with a *jolt* in the morning?
6. When was the last time someone caught you *off-guard* with some random act of kindness?
7. Do you ever feel *awkward* in silent moments during a conversation?

#### Part 5: HOMEWORK

**EX.5. Read the article about *hygge* – the Danish secret to happiness in life. Compare it with the text about *lagom*. Can you see any similarities or differences? Which concept sounds more appealing to you?**

Source: <http://www.health.com/mind-body/hygge>

### **KEY (EX.3):**

Pronounced LAH-gum, the term translates to "not too little, not too much" or "just right"—and in Sweden it represents the art of living a balanced, slower, **FUSS**-free life. Below are six tips to help you add more lagom to your everyday life.

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