



Take some ‘me time’ during the pandemic

Everything that has happened in 2020 has left many people feeling helpless. Many parents have had to balance work with home schooling and lack of child care. Many people have lost jobs or had to start new ones. Many people have had to change all their routines. Many people have felt very isolated and alone. There are days when you may feel like you don’t have one single second to yourself. However, time to ourselves and some basic self-care can be absolutely critical for our mental health. Here are some tips for carving out a little time to ourselves.

- Unplug yourself from electronics, social media, email, and phone calls for a set amount of time. Maybe it is while you have a cup of coffee or while taking a short drive or walk. It does not matter what you are doing. Just put down the phones and turn off the TVs and screens for even a few minutes.
- Create something! Draw a picture or bake a cake. Make a clay sculpture or color in a coloring book. It doesn’t matter what you do or how good it turns out. Just do something that you enjoy. It will get your creative juices flowing and help clear your mind.
- Spend a little time on your favorite hobby. Maybe you like to sew. Maybe you like to read. Maybe fishing is your favorite thing to do. Just make it a priority to spend a little bit of time on your favorite hobbies when you can.
- Write it down. When we are stressed out, it can be helpful to spend a little time writing down how we feel. Just getting it down can often lift our moods or help us to better realize our needs once we fully realize what we are feeling.
- Connect with people. Sometimes “me time” means time connecting with others to feel less alone. Call a best friend. Spend an afternoon with someone you are not already seeing every day. In the midst of this pandemic, we may need to connect with others more than ever because we have been very isolated because of social distancing.
- Watch a movie alone. You may be spending a lot of time on screens, but it may be things your child likes or things your spouse or partner likes. Maybe there is a movie you have been wanting to see or a movie you loved from the past that you have been wanting to see again. Take a couple of hours to yourself and watch it!
- Extend your shower or bath time. We often jump into a shower or bath in a big hurry. But sometimes this may be the only place where we are left alone. Take a longer bath with bubbles or aromatherapy. Play some favorite tunes on your phone while you extend your

shower by a few minutes and let the water run down on you. It is renewing and helps to relax your body and your mind.

- Exercise or walk. Although this may not always sound like fun, it can be extremely helpful for our bodies. It can help clear our minds, lower blood pressure, help us take a break from a person in our household, and more. It can even help us sleep better. There are too many benefits to mention that can result from just taking a short walk alone or with another person.
- Reward yourself! Maybe a bowl of ice cream is your favorite. Maybe you love a warm cup of tea. Whatever it is, do it. Rewarding ourselves with something we love can do wonders to boost our mood.
- Clear your head. For some, yoga or meditation may work well. For others, guided relaxation or breathing techniques may work. Just take a little time to be quiet and mindful of what your body and mind are telling you. We all need to take a break at times.
- Take a nap. Sometimes the very best thing we can do for ourselves is to get a little extra sleep. The things we are all experiencing right now are huge and overwhelming. They may be affecting us more than we even realize. Sleep can definitely be affected in many negative ways. Even a short nap can help us recharge and face the rest of our day.

It does not matter what you do during your “me time.” All that matter is that you remember to make yourself a priority. We all do a great job of caring for others but do not always do a good job of taking care of ourselves. We cannot be good caretakers for others if we are not also caring for ourselves. Respect yourself, and remember that you need and deserve time for yourself.

Reference

Celeste, R. (2020). 15 Ways to Find Your “Me Time” – and Enjoy It. Retrieved August 2020 from <https://www.amexessentials.com/tips-for-finding-me-time/>.

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