

Feel like you don't have a second to yourself? Then make 'me' time your top priority this very minute.

**!** If you find there aren't enough hours in the day to scratch yourself, let alone schedule in some much-needed 'me' time, you're not alone. Between meetings and appointments, errands and arrangements, taking time out every so often just for you can sometimes seem like an impossibility.

But here's the thing: 'Me' time isn't actually a luxury, it's a necessity to help you balance the stress and strains of everyday life. Essentially it's like taking a mental health holiday so you feel stronger, happier and more in control on a daily basis. Think of it as a supplement for the soul.

In fact, looking after everyone else in your life and ignoring your

"If anything, taking this time to replenish and nurture yourself will put you in a better place to support those you love – as you're stronger physically, mentally and emotionally." More importantly, taking some much needed 'me' time helps reaffirm your worth to the most important person in your life: you.

Easier said than done, right? When there aren't enough hours in the day for all the things already going on in your life it can be hard to spot an opening for anything else. The good news is that finding time for yourself doesn't require block-booking a whole weekend or even taking two hours out of your day, it could be just 10 minutes. Just like exercise, a little is always better than none at all.

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own needs can seriously impact on your health, rendering you, ironically, tired, unsatisfied, stressed, and you'll lack an overall sense of joy or purpose in your life," explains Roseleen McNally, Life Coach with the Dublin Holistic Centre (www.dublinholisticcentre.com). "Taking time off allows you to recharge your batteries and connect with yourself. After spending this time on yourself, you'll emerge relaxed and refreshed and you'll have more energy, better concentration and you'll even sleep more soundly.

"It's important to understand that no matter how important you are (or feel you are), life will continue in the office or at home whilst you enjoy time out," insists Roseleen.

"Start by asking yourself, 'What am I going to do for myself today? This week? This month? This year?' suggests Roseleen. "Plan your time around what is actually important to you... what makes you happy. Then start looking for solutions on how you can incorporate these into your life. Do you need more childcare, more support from your boss or family, better time management? Do you need to get up earlier? Do you need to set yourself a deadline to leave work on time that day?"

Once you ask yourself these important questions, and answer them honestly, you can then focus on what's important. That is, to stop worrying about everyone else so much and starting giving yourself the time you deserve. Go on, you know you're worth it. **S**

## The 'Me' Checklist

- **Make use of your commuting time.** If you take public transport, use this time to your advantage by making every second of your journey count. Positive affirmations, visualisations, even meditation, can be a great way to gear yourself up for the day ahead. Just don't get into the Lotus Flower position on the bus – it's hard enough to get a seat as it is.

### ● Make an appointment with yourself.

When we make appointments we tend to follow through, so start treating your personal tasks – like your monthly manicure or massage – as important appointments that you can't cancel. Schedule it into your diary and decide ahead of time what you want to get out of it.

### ● Make lunch count.

Instead of aimlessly surfing the internet every lunch hour, use it productively to pay bills or order your weekly groceries. That way, when you get home from work, and all you want to do is sink into a bubble bath, with a glass of wine in hand, you can.

### ● Change your routine.

If there are never, ever enough hours in the day, why not create some and get up earlier? Okay, so you'd probably rather eat your own vomit than get out of bed 30 minutes earlier, but you'd be amazed at the difference half an hour can make.

### ● Do nothing.

Just be with yourself. It might seem scary, but doing absolutely nothing is highly underrated – it gives you time to just be and to actually hear what's going on inside your head. So often, we're running from one thing to the next, and are trying to keep so much information in our heads, that when we stop we can take the time to let it all out (write it down) and then process it.