



# *MAKE* *Me-time* A **MUST-DO**

*Feeling frazzled? By making a small amount of time for yourself, you'll be instantly refreshed – and happier*

Look at the words and phrases below. How do you think they are connected to me-time?

self-care

meditation

picking outfit

waiting

happy memories

small pillow

swimming pool

Read the article and check your ideas.

When did you last have time to yourself? When 'mum's taxi' went on strike? The laundrette was off duty? The café you run alongside your actual job shut up shop? If that's the sound of your frazzled laugh, we're not surprised. But this is no laughing matter. Time to unwind is "like fuel in the tank," says psychologist Dr Jessamy Hibberd. "You need 'self-care' to function at your best," she adds. "We're not meant to be doing and thinking all of the time; we're not machines." Most of us can't simply down tools and nip off to a spa. But it is possible to carve out time for yourself. Here's how.

10 minutes

20 minutes

1 hour

Carve out 10 minutes for yourself by turning any daily activity into a meditation, whether that's taking a shower or getting ready for work. A simple shower can feel like a full spa treatment if you immerse yourself in the experience rather than worrying about to-do lists. Concentrate on the drops of water hitting your skin and use a deliciously uplifting body scrub to add extra zing. Reading suggests you can turn getting dressed into an act of self-care too. Forget grabbing a bunch of scrunched-up clothes from the back of your wardrobe - instead, take ten minutes to lay out your outfit carefully, picking out colours that lift your spirits.

Perhaps you're sitting on the train or waiting for an appointment - now's your chance to master the art of savouring. Researchers at Southampton University found that the odd detour down memory lane can significantly lift your spirits, and those who wrote about happy memories were happier after the exercise than those who didn't. But you don't need a notebook to do this, as the biggest mood spikes come by replaying happy memories in your head. "This kind of nourishment is accessible anywhere, at any time," says the researcher. Focus on how positive you felt at the time of the experience, rather than how it's over now to stop the memories from feeling too poignant.

If you're at home, or work for a forward-thinking company, take a nap. That extra 40 winks will reduce anxiety, boost concentration and increase your energy. You'll also make wiser food choices, improve your memory and think more clearly. Jayne Morris recommends keeping a small pillow in your desk drawer (she used to bed down in empty meeting rooms when she worked for the BBC), and setting an alarm so you don't oversleep. If you can't make this happen, move your body instead. Go for a walk or try a yoga class in your lunch hour. If you work near a swimming pool, Morris recommends a dip as the most nurturing exercise.

# Verbs with Time

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Complete the sentences with the right verb from the list.

give have kill make up for run out of save spare spend take up waste take (x2)

- 1 I \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of time playing games on my computer instead of studying.
- 2 If you take the highway, you'll \_\_\_\_\_ time — it's much quicker than the local roads.
- 3 I had three hours to wait for my flight, so I sat there doing *sudoku* puzzles to \_\_\_\_\_ time.
- 4 There's no hurry, so \_\_\_\_\_ your time.
- 5 When my mother was young she never had the chance to travel. Now she's retired and wants to \_\_\_\_\_ lost time — she has booked a trip around the world.
- 6 The novel is 700 pages long and I'm a slow reader. It's going to \_\_\_\_\_ me a long time to finish it.
- 7 I'd better go home now. If I'm late again, my dad will \_\_\_\_\_ me a hard time.
- 8 I would like to go camping with my friends this weekend, but my final tests are next week, so I can't \_\_\_\_\_ the time.
- 9 My children \_\_\_\_\_ all my time — I never seem to get to read a book or watch a movie!
- 10 New York's such a fantastic city! You're going to \_\_\_\_\_ the time of your life there.
- 11 Let's not spend too long at the museum or we'll \_\_\_\_\_ time. We have to get the train back at 10:30 and there are lots of other things I want to see.

## Expressions with Time

Match sentences 1–10 with A–J.

- 1 The referee's looking at his watch.
- 2 He hardly spoke to me at lunch.
- 3 I'm really looking forward to my vacation.
- 4 I'm sorry, I can't help you this week.
- 5 I can't afford a new computer.
- 6 She's sure to find a job eventually.
- 7 I think I need to take up a hobby.
- 8 Stop writing, please.
- 9 I really thought I was going to be late.
- 10 You look very young in that photo.

- A But in the end I got to the airport with time to spare.
- B He spent the whole time talking on his cell phone.
- C Time's up. The test is over.
- D I'm a little short on time.
- E I've got time on my hands since I retired.
- F I'll have to make do with this one for the time being.
- G It's only a question of time.
- H It must have been taken a long time ago.
- I There isn't much time left.
- J This time next week I'll be lying on the beach.

## About you

1. Do you have any electronic gadgets that you think really save you time?
2. What do you usually do to kill time while you're waiting at an airport or at a station?
3. When you go shopping, do you like to buy things as quickly as possible or do you prefer to take your time?
4. Is there anything or anybody who is taking up a lot of your time at the moment?
5. Are you usually on time when you meet friends? Does it bother you when other people aren't on time?
6. Do you like to get to the airport or station with time to spare or at the last minute?
7. When you were younger, did your parents give you a hard time if you came home late?
8. When you take a test, do you tend to have time left at the end or do you usually run out of time?

## Do you agree?

Both spouses need to take the same amount of time off when they have a baby.

Retired people have too much time on their hands. They should be encouraged to continue working longer.

Everyone would benefit from seeing a psychotherapist from time to time.

By the time they are 21, all young people should be living independently of their parents.

It's only a matter of time before governments impose a complete ban on alcohol and smoking.