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Solitude

By Sue Dyson

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What mom really ever gets enough quiet time to herself? It's a basic mom need in my books. If you aren't used to taking time for yourself, you're in for a treat. I'll explain why it's so necessary for our well-being, how to get into the habit, what it isn't, where to get it, and some of the benefits of establishing it as a ritual. The benefits are far-reaching.

Alone time, solitude, whatever you want to call it, is essential for our spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. It provides us with an opportunity to let go of everything we have become, everything that we do, everything we are to everyone in our life, to return to who we truly are. Done effectively, regularly, religiously, it strengthens our core. This strength enables us to be more effective, efficient and most importantly, joyous.

If you aren't used to taking time for yourself, you may find it to be a gradual, and even ongoing, process. You need to take that initial step. It may mean making a date with yourself, setting things up, letting the entire family know and get used to the idea. They will resist change!! It's human nature. But persevere. Your sanity is worth it, don't you think?

Time to yourself is NOT running errands, working outside the home, or commuting time. I don't know why. It just doesn't count. Alone time is when you don't have to be doing anything for anyone else. Alone time is strictly YOU time. A filling-of-your-cup-time. Personal time. And personal time without guilt, please! Sure, you may have been away from the kids with work or other responsibilities, but trust me, everyone will benefit when you return from your mom time refreshed, happier, more peaceful and ready to carry on. It won't take long for the family to realize what a great thing mom time is.

What you do during your personal time is just as important as where you take it. Take your time with the intention of reconnecting with your Self. Is it journaling? Writing? How about personal planning? Creating a vision for yourself, your life, determining the steps required to get you there?

In case you haven't quite established how to do this, consider the following:

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Lock yourself in the bedroom with your journal, books, a good cup of tea.

Find a comfortable coffee shop. I have a favorite here in town where I can order a huge cup of tea, sit at a table in the corner and write. Nobody bothers me. I stay until I feel ready to go home.

Sit yourself down at a quiet beach. The comforting swoosh of the waves, the spiritual connection to the flow of water, nature. Nothing more soothing. Don't forget your journal and a dose of sunblock if need be.

Your public library. It has built in quiet. As long as you can keep yourself away from the kids' section. And you must. How many times have you taken the kids to the library and never really had the chance to look around at the adult section?

A meditative walk in nature. This is my church, my place of worship. Feel yourself reconnecting.

Or, imagine this one! Ooh, luxury! Going away to a hotel for a weekend by yourself. Aaaaah. Imagine. If you want it, you can make it happen! Don't forget to dream big.

With alone time, you may expect to feel more peaceful, focused, re-energized, lovable and loving. Now how's that for benefits? Pretty nice.

You may still find some resistance to this practice, making excuses to yourself for not indulging. There will always be chores, so get over it. We will never be done our to-do list. It will be there when you get back. Let it go. It's natural to feel this resistance. It is an indulgence AND the benefits of taking mom time far outweigh any detrimental effects of you not being there. You just have to try it. Sometimes we think our life will cave in if we don't attend to it 24/7. Guess what? It won't. It will all be there when we get back, just as we left it. Isn't that comforting!?

Getting away on our own is just one of those constants we need to adjust for in life. One of the biggest challenges to motherhood is the illusion of no time to yourself. It's actually there, you just have to take advantage of it, plan for it. The benefits are oh so sweet.

Article by Sue Dyson, publisher of SuccessfulMama Ezine, dedicated to empowering women in the creation and pursuit of their personal goals. Sign up for SuccessfulMama Ezine today at:
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Quiet Mind; A Powerful Tool That Gives You More Time, Creativity, And Productivity And Takes

Just 10 Minutes A Day

By BZ Riger-Hull

**Quiet Mind; A Powerful Tool That Gives You More Time, Creativity, And Productivity And Takes
Just 10 Minutes A Day**

Solitude

by: **BZ Riger–Hull**

The National Center for health statistics reported that in 1997, doctors made two million diagnoses of "Acute reaction to stress" when patients were seen for check-ups or complaints of headaches, stomach problems, immune system disturbances and some heart problems. These were usually a direct result of chronic stress and overwhelm, patients were trying to do it all with no time just for themselves, the resulting complaints were making it harder to get things done and causing lasting health problems.

By spending a minimum of ten minutes a day alone you can reduce your stress hormones and improve your immune functions. Using the refrain I'm just too busy to have ten minutes of quiet all to myself is really slowing us down, making us less productive, and opening us to the risk of severe stress related disorders. Periods of solitude have been proven to be as vital to our health as good food, sleep, and water.

There are many ways and places to give yourself your daily solitude; some people like to sit quietly and meditate, others find listening to soothing music helps them recharge. Walking your dog or gardening are also great ways to get your solitude. A few requirements to make sure you are getting the full benefits of your quiet time are to make sure you are being present in the silence or activity you are doing, rather than running over that to-do list again, or thinking of all the things you need to accomplish once you get done with this 10 minute solitude break you are having. The real value of taking at least a 10 minute daily break is that you give your mind a rest. If thoughts come up you can just notice them and release them, or write them down on a small pad so you can look at them again later. We have a great wealth of insight and wisdom within us but we never stop to tap into it.

Make the 10 minutes a priority in your day and you'll find you have more energy, greater clarity, and are able to be creative and focus on the things you would like to achieve and make them happen with ease and be more fulfilled then you had ever imagined.

I usually introduce this idea of taking a solitude break to my clients during the first month of our coaching, there is resistance at first but once they have experienced the feeling of being recharged and the insights they gain they schedule time every day sometimes twice a day for a break just to be alone. One of my clients was stuck in a position she didn't like. The money was terrific and she used that as an excuse to put up with the long hours and the lack of passion she felt day in and day out. I made a request that she set aside 10 minutes a day to just be by herself.

As I requested this she became fidgety and spent the next five minutes listing all of the reasons why it wouldn't be possible to add this one more thing to her overwhelmed schedule. After talking a bit more my client acknowledged that she never had any time just to herself and she found the idea appealing, she started with five minutes a day.

Early in the morning before work she would sit in her sunny kitchen window seat and just watch the sun begin its day. After only four days of this she called me to say that spending this time alone had given her a recharge and she was ready to explore new career ideas and make a change.

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She increased her solitude time to 30 minutes a day and within 4 months she had found a job in a similar field doing work that paid more but also gave an outlet for here creativity and left her feeling happy, with a sense she was making a difference at the end of the day.

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