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Time For a Little "Me Time"

At what point did your life become more about everyone else – work, family, etc. – and far too little about you? It's OK to be selfish when it comes to your health; after all, if you lose your health, you won't have the ability to do all the things you do for all the people in your life.

So take a little "me time" with these tips to get away from your busy day (week, month, year, life) and focus on becoming a healthier you:

1. **Hit the Road:** We talk a lot about the benefits of working out at home, but the disadvantage to that strategy is that unless you have a dedicated gym space, away from the hustle and bustle of the family, you never really get to enjoy your own private time. So schedule gym time 3-4 times a week and stick to it; that hour or so out of the house (even when surrounded by other gym enthusiasts) will feel like a refreshing, reinvigorating break from the daily household grind.
2. **Wind Down:** Even the busiest day can end the right way if you plan for it. Dedicate a good 45-60 minutes every night to an activity of your choosing that not only gets you "away from it all," but also allows you time to wind down, relax and prepare for restful slumber. Prepare a hot bath, read a good book, do some yoga, or even just take a brisk solo walk and "discuss your day" with.
3. **Make a Plan:** Dinner and the movies is a great plan that too often stays a great plan, rather than manifesting into reality. So schedule a date night and make it happen. Even the act of scheduling will do wonders for your day. Once you know it's on the calendar, you'll look forward to it - and worry less about the hectic moments in between.
4. **Keep Learning:** When we're young, we're always learning – new activities, new projects, new information. But somehow after a certain age, we're too likely to stick to the "same old, same old." That leads to boredom, burnout and dissatisfaction with the state of affairs. The solution? Try something new! Whether it's a new hobby, a new jogging route or a new certification to take your career to the next level, you'll be amazed how good you'll feel.

We all need more "me time" in this crazy, overworked world – so make sure you're getting enough. If not, you could pay the emotional and physical consequences. <http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=2216>

Exercise: Good for You, Good for Baby

It's common knowledge that regular exercise is all-the-more important during pregnancy. Why? Well, for one thing, because the combination of developing child, hormonal fluctuations, and other factors means you will likely gain a moderate amount of weight as part of the natural process.

Moreover, as any mother will tell you, delivering a baby can be a physically traumatic - albeit joyous - experience; exercise in the months leading up to that day helps strengthen your muscles and heart, which can be placed under severe stress during delivery.

Less well-known is that exercising during pregnancy may make for a healthier child. Consider a recent study involving pregnant women (ages 30-35) who were divided into two groups - one group that performed moderate-intensity aerobic exercise for 30 minutes per day at least three times per week, and a second group that did not perform regular exercise over the same time period.

The study revealed the following:

- Fetal heart rate was significantly lower (a good thing, within reason) in the exercise group during fetal breathing and non-breathing movement periods.
- Fetal short-term and overall heart rate variability (indicative of a mature neurologic system) were higher in the exercise group during breathing movements.
- The exercise-exposed fetuses had higher measures of vagal (cardiovascular) control during breathing movements.

Talk to your doctor about the benefits of exercise and which specific exercises are most appropriate to perform (and which are best to avoid altogether) during pregnancy.

<http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=1246>