

20 ways to indulge in that much-needed 'me time'

While we're sure you can't get enough of face time with your bundle of joy, sitting back and relaxing can actually help kick start your battery to enable you to give much more care to your baby, and family. Read on to know more

BY ARUNDHATI NATH

In most families, women are the primary care givers. Motherhood has no time gap in between. It is a duty which takes up almost all the time in a woman's day. Taking time out for herself seems like a very difficult task for most mothers. However, a mother who takes care of herself is always in a better position to take care of others in the family.

Need for me time:

"Self-care is crucial for everyone, especially for moms. Since mothers have a lot on their plate, it becomes overwhelming and stressful," says Nupur Roopa, founder, Bliss For Moms, a wellness site for mothers. "Today, mothers are extremely tired and sleep deprived. Having some

'me time' is essential to unwind, otherwise stress will eventually manifest as a physical disease," she adds.

Pregnancy and motherhood lead to a lot of hormonal changes in a mother's body. Moreover, moms go through a lot of stress and societal pressures as she is often held more accountable for her children's well-being in comparison to her partner. "Caught in the whirlwind of nursing, burping, diaper change, and other things that go into round-the-clock baby care, a new

mom is barely left with time to unwind. It's easy for her to lose her sense of self and experience disillusionment, especially in the first few months. So taking time out for herself can really help restore the balance within," says Hyderabad-based mom Sumi Madireddy.

The guilt trap:

Mothers often feel guilty about taking time out for themselves. It is often considered selfish to do so and this thought is very deeply ingrained in most mothers' minds. It is a social and cultural

norm for mothers to take care of everyone else's needs before thinking of their own well-being. Although everyone expects a mother to be there 24X7, it is essential for all to understand that a mom who doesn't nurture herself well, will not be able to take care of others in the family for a long time.

How to find 'me time'?

Mothers can engage in different recreational activities in their 'me time'. According to Nupur Roopa, the kind of 'me time' activities a mother can engage in would depend on a number of factors such as age of the kids, family responsibilities, routines and schedules, and availability of time and space. "Considering these factors, mothers can create a list of activities that they enjoy ranging from five minutes to 30 minutes. If you can't spare 30 minutes at one time, you could break it for shorter durations," Nupur says. It is essential to hire help if you can. With the breakdown of joint families, there could be situations in which there isn't anyone to fall back on in case of an emergency.

Nidhi Dorairaj Bruce, mom to three kids, shares an incident which reminds us how useful it is to hire help. "I learnt the hard way that it is okay to hire help in order to help with the children. I did not have any help till my daughter was almost four years old. I used to take care of her 24X7. Then one fine day my back gave way. I could not stand straight, let alone walk. My husband travels a lot and we are a nuclear family. With absolutely nobody to fall back on, I was completely helpless. That's when I first hired help and learnt that





it also was a great way for me to get some time for myself. Now with three kids, I have no choice but to have hired help. Because it is physically impossible for me to tend to the needs of three kids simultaneously!” she says.

Me time is all about the things that give you a sense of peace and relaxation. For some, it could be unwinding with a good book, for others, it could be hitting the gym. Here are just some ways in which you can make time to relax. **MB**

TWENTY ME TIME IDEAS!

1. Read that novel you bought last year and couldn't complete as you were busy.
2. Take a short walk amidst nature.
3. Do some gardening.
4. Listen to some uplifting music or to a podcast.
5. Write a few lines in your journal.
6. Go social on Facebook.
7. Get some exercise in the gym.
8. Practice yoga and meditation.
9. Engage in a hobby. It could be music, dance, a sport, cooking or baking a favourite dish.
10. Shop online if you do not have the time to step out of the house.
11. Go for a cup of coffee with your girlfriends.
12. Pamper yourself to a facial, massage or pedicure.
13. Watch a movie at home. Do it in parts, if necessary.
14. Grab some pencils and paints and do some sketching and colouring.
15. Do some overdue organising.
16. Watch nature or the world pass from outside your window.
17. Read your favourite magazine.
18. Take a short nap.
19. Take a pampering shower.
20. Visit your best friend or go on a girl's day out.

Trust us when we say, you'll be thankful for this time away. When you get back home, you won't be able to wait to dive in to the madness, head first!