

## 1 Say 'No' to time and energy drainers

This doesn't mean you have to become ruthless. Just remember all the things you'd rather be doing. If you feel at all guilty, remind people whom you're saying 'no' to (and yourself) that taking time out for yourself will make you much happier and they'll benefit too.

## 2 Get lost!

What do you usually 'lose yourself' in? For some people, it's reading a novel (or even writing one), for others it's a film, visiting a gallery or museum, making or listening to music or taking a long walk. When did you last lose track of time? Do this activity more often.

## 3 Exhale

Many people find that meditating regularly gives them more time. You don't have to light incense and chant (unless you want to). Even if you think you can't sit and meditate 'properly', make a little time for this mini meditation when you wake up, before lunch or even when out walking: inhale a quality you want to bring into your day (peace? delight? patience?). With each exhalation, release any blocks to this feeling (frustrations, irritation etc.). Even a few minutes of this will transform your mood...

## 4 Prioritise

When you have too many things to do and don't know where to start, stop everything and take a deep breath. Get into the habit of taking a moment to ask yourself: 'What's the most important thing I can do right now?' This may mean going with the flow and accepting a spontaneous invitation. Another time, the most important thing for you might be to allow yourself a lie-in or bubble bath. Start getting used to checking in with yourself so, whatever the situation, you make the right decision for you.

## 7 Love every minute

Think about all the people in your life. Who do you most love spending time with? How can you fit these positive people in to your life more often? Could you turn shopping, a trip to the garden centre or time at the gym into a social event? Too often, people drift apart because they don't have time. This will not only keep you closer but the time spent on chores will fly because they'll be fun.

## 6 Imagine your ideal world

What would you love to have more time for? If nothing immediately springs to mind, imagine having a completely free day. How would you spend it? What would be the highlight? Gardening? Reading? Painting? Spending time with loved ones? Imagine yourself doing more of the things you love and you'll begin to find all sorts of unexpected ways to make it happen.

## 5 Get organised

How much time do you waste looking for things? Spending a little time bringing order to your home and life will free up time for things you want to do. Take a realistic look at the project and divide it into manageable chunks. Do you need a weekend blitz or daily organising? When you clear the decks and give your physical and mental clutter a proper time and place, you'll suddenly find extra time throughout your day.

How to make more time for yourself each day.

# 7 ways to take time out...