
Indulge in Time for YOU

If life-work balance seems elusive, maybe you're trying too hard.

Tightly scheduling your work week can produce stress — but making room for unplanned leisure helps relieve stress.

Give yourself time to recharge and even improve mental health.

You'll likely boost creativity, too, according to INSEAD business school professor Manfred Kets De Vries.

Five me-time tips:

- 1 Indulge in what rejuvenates.** Whether it's a hot bath, meditation or riding a bike, don't feel guilty when you aren't busy.
- 2 Go for a walk.** Walking is great exercise, but just taking a leisurely stroll can boost your mood, according to American Psychological Association research.
- 3 Relax about family time.** Be spontaneous and in the moment instead of always relying on formal plans for family activities. Cook a meal, visit a local park or play a game together.
- 4 Connect with nature.** Take time to watch clouds, stars and birds in flight. Connecting with sights and sounds of nature increases the sense of well-being, according to University of California research.
- 5 Spend time with your pet.** Relaxing with your pet can lower stress hormone levels. Pennsylvania State psychologists found simply being around a dog dampens stress responses.

