

# Taking time out for yourself

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## Looking after yourself

Everyone is different in how they like to take a break. Some people like to sit and read or go for a walk. Others like to catch up with friends or go shopping. Taking time out for yourself is most effective when it is enjoyable and relaxing, and something you look forward to.

## Why is taking time out for yourself important?

There are incredibly positive things about becoming a parent, like the joy of seeing your baby smile. But parenting is not easy. All parents make mistakes and learn through experience. Parenting requires observation, understanding, persistence, imagination, patience, honesty and energy!

There is also more responsibility, less time for you and your spouse – and maybe more tiredness than you ever imagined.

Looking after yourself helps you be the parent you want to be. Even a few minutes every now and again might help you ‘charge your batteries’. And happy couples have a positive effect on their children. This means that taking time out to spend time with your spouse can help you both get the most out of being parents and spouses.

## Tips for taking time out for yourself

Many parents find it difficult to take a break. Some are unsure about leaving their children with others or feel guilty about taking time off. Sometimes just finding time in a busy day can be a challenge.

Here are some things to consider in making ‘taking time out’ happen for you:

- Give yourself permission to take time off.
- It is OK to have ‘time out’ more than once a day.
- Plan for it – make a time for it to happen.
- Variety is important. Think about different ways you can have time out both at home and out of the house.
- You can enjoy taking time out on your own or with the family.

Some of the barriers to taking time out for yourself might be not having time, or not having someone you can call on for babysitting. Here are some ways you can overcome these barriers:

- Take turns with your spouse to care for your child while the other has a break.
- Ask another family member to look after your child so you and your spouse can have time together.
- Plan time for yourself around your child’s daytime naps or when she is in preschool.



## Recommended Reads by the National Library Board

### Recommended Reads

- [Zen & the path of mindful parenting: meditations on raising children](#)
- [Meditate with me: a step-by-step mindfulness journey](#)
- [The Mommy Group: Freaking Out, Finding Friends, and Surviving the Happiest Time of Our Lives](#)