Finding Time for Yourself While Social Distancing with Others

In between work, family commitments, and everyday life, finding uninterrupted time for yourself can come as a challenge. And, during these unprecedented times, doing so can be harder than ever. Many people are adhering to the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines of social distancing with their families, partners, and roommates, and for this reason, getting time alone can be hard to come by. Gone are the minutes from an undisturbed morning commute. Done are the days of heading to your favorite cafe to grab a cup of coffee by yourself. And absent are the hours of doing workouts at the gym alone. In are the days of staying at home and, more often than not, with other people.

In a time when social distancing is the new normal, carving out time for yourself while living with others is no small feat. Over the last couple of weeks, I realized just how precious those minutes alone were and decided to find a way to get them back. While cooking meals and going on walks with my family is never underappreciated, being able to check in with myself in the midst of all this carries its own important weight. So, these are the six things I do during this period of physical distancing to give myself (and others) time to reflect and find peace.

Go on Walks

Enjoying time outside is a refreshing way to check in with yourself. Taking in the fresh air can help clear your mind and let you focus on how you're feeling. Whether your walk takes you down the street or miles away, these simple strolls can give you time alone that you can't always enjoy inside. While practicing social distancing, I've noticed that these walks can not only benefit my mental well-being, but also my body. Take different routes each time to experience new views or simply do your usual route if you're in need of normalcy. It's important to note that when you go on a walk, you should stay socially distant from others (at least six feet away), wear a mask if you're in a crowded area, and only walk with people you live with or are socially distancing with.

Journal

Whether you've been jotting things down for years or you just picked up your first notebook, journaling is a thoughtful way to spend time alone with yourself. Carving out anywhere from five to 30 minutes a day to journal in peace can help sort your thoughts and record your feelings. You can write down something you're grateful for each day, express your feelings, record your day, or even just doodle. If you're physical distancing with others, be sure they know when you're going to be journaling so they can respect your quiet time.

Practice Self-Care

If this time at home hasn't inspired you to try every face mask in your cabinet, hair mask under your sink, and self-tanner in your bathroom, we don't know what will. With hours in the comfort of your own home at your advantage, now is the time to take self-care to a whole new level. Block off some time every night to take a relaxing bath alone. Go into your room and try the latest makeup trend when no one's around. Bathe yourself in moisturizing lotions and indulge in long bath soaks. Allot time each day to focus on yourself and enjoy some serious self-care.

Find New Hobbies

Spend some free time learning how to sew, arrange a flower bouquet, try out a new recipe, draw a picture, or pick up a new hobby. Giving yourself something new to learn will challenge you to expand your mind and get out of your comfort zone. Finding a hobby you enjoy will also encourage you to make time for it, subsequently making more time for yourself. Don't feel bad for trying these hobbies alone. Cooking is fun with a partner, but if there's a new recipe you're excited to try, let those you're at home with know it's your turn in the kitchen.

Read

A quiet room, cozy setting, and a good book are hard to beat. Cracking open a new book is an underrated way to spend time with yourself alone. Being able to lose my mind in a good read can help me de-stress by distracting myself with a whole new world. Seeking out a time and place to read while you're living with others might even encourage them to do the same. Let your time reading be your own form of escape as well as time to be on your own.

Block Off Alone Time

In the morning, during a lull in the afternoon, or before you go to bed, be sure to give yourself an allotted amount of time that's just for yourself. Whether you spend this time bingeing your favorite show on Netflix, reading a book you've read a thousand times, going on a run outside, or even just enjoying the silence, let these minutes or hours be used for you, and you alone. While quarantining with others, whether that's your family or your roommates, make sure you're getting the time you need alone, and always make sure you're checking in on yourself and others.

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