How to Find the Right Balance Between Screen Time and 'Me' Time (and Why It's So Important)



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In the hustle and bustle of the modern world, our screens are quickly overtaking pets and other hobbies as our best friends. Our lives have become entangled in an endless stream of notifications and alerts that keep us constantly glued to our screens. While these technological advancements were all intended to take us all to a new frontier in life, they have all come at a cost: our personal time.

Many people struggle to unplug from their screens and spend time alone or with friends and family. Unfortunately, all this

comes at the expense of their mental health. Have you been having a hard time striking a balance between your screen time and your “me” time? Then, this discussion is for you.

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The effects of screen time on mental health

Spending time scrolling through social media or binging on your favorite show could feel exciting at the time. However, the thrill of constantly spending time on your screens affects your mental health.

Excessive screen time can worsen your health and well-being. What’s even worse is that studies have linked spending more hours on screens to conditions such as anxiety and depression.

All this shows that finding a way to keep your screen time in check could benefit your mental health. The secret lies in prioritizing your “me” time.

The importance of “me” time for mental health

As the name suggests, “me” time is generally any time you reserve from your regular schedule to spend alone and do whatever feels exciting to you. You can think of it as the time you take to recharge. It plays a vital role in your mental health and well-being. For instance, it:

- Helps you take time to manage stress
- Gives you a chance to focus on the things that matter to you

- Allows you to reflect and strategize
- Reduces anxiety
- Helps you rest so that you can be more productive when you get back to work

How to find the right balance between screen time and “me” time

Unplugging from your devices can feel like a daunting task, especially in a world where nearly everything happens online. However, you should find a way to strike a balance between your screen time and your personal time. The ultimate goal is to improve your well-being.

So, how can you strike the right balance between your screen time and the time you spend alone? Finding a universal response to such a question might be problematic.

However, the general rule is that you should never spend more time on screen than you spend away from it. This ensures that your body and mind are relaxed without you feeling guilty. Let’s discuss some strategies you can explore to maintain effective screen time management.

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Strategies to use for effective screen time management

The best way to start managing your screen time effectively is to track the time you spend on your screen. Monitoring your screen habits can help you figure out what unhealthy practices you are accustomed to and how you can fix them.

Once you have a ballpark figure of how much time you spend on

your screens, the next step would be setting limits on your screen time. Most of the modern phones and computers come with apps to help you limit your screen time. You can use these features to set a limit on the time you spend on certain apps hence limiting your screen time.

Another great idea is creating a digital routine that focuses on reducing the time you spend on your screens. For instance, you can have a personal rule of not using your phone and computer for at least an hour after you wake up and before you sleep. You can also opt to keep your devices in a different room from your bedroom. This minimizes the urge to pick up your phone on impulse the moment you wake up.

Finally, you can consider restricting notifications on your devices. Have you ever noticed how quick you might be to pick up your phone or laptop the moment you hear the notification chime? By limiting the number of notifications that pop up on your phone, you can reduce the number of times you check your screens daily.

Activities that you can try during “me” time

The aforementioned strategies are quite efficient in managing your screen time. But they might not be enough if you want to achieve the best results for your mental health. You still need to integrate healthy habits during your “me” time. Some of the healthy habits you can explore include:

- Mindful relaxation techniques
- Exercise
- Reflection and journaling
- Self-care practices

You can also consider taking up a new hobby that keeps you away from your screens and helps you learn new things.

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In conclusion, spending too much time on your screen can affect your mental well-being adversely. Taking time alone through “me” time can help strike a balance between the time you must spend on screens and the time you ought to spend away from them. The strategies we have covered are not exhaustive, but they are a great place to start.

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