

How to celebrate yourself

You're worth celebrating! Here's how to show yourself some love.

By Katherine Vankoughnet

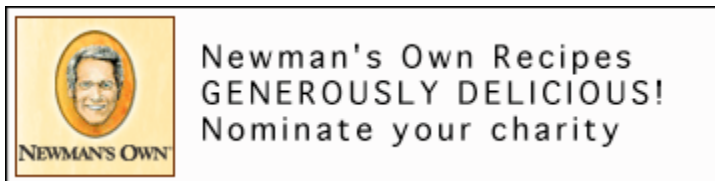


Time – or lack thereof – is a universally accepted excuse for putting other needs before your own. Splitting your time between work, family and day-to-day responsibilities leaves barely enough time for sleeping, let alone a spin class. But by putting yourself last, you're doing more harm than good.

Dr. Alex Gellman, doctor of natural medicine and motivational coach, explains that while making yourself a priority can seem selfish, it's essential in order to properly function in other areas of your life. "Think of the emergency procedure on a plane – you have to put your oxygen mask on first, before you help others," Gellman says. "To be the best for work and family, we have to have cared first and foremost for ourselves – otherwise we can never be our best for anyone."

The consequences of neglecting yourself include fatigue and listlessness, or it can manifest itself as an increase in negativity, passive aggressive behaviour and self-sabotage through unhealthy life choices like overeating or substance abuse. "We also begin to harbour resentment to the ones we feel 'keep us' from doing anything for ourselves," Gellman explains.

Make a point to set aside time for yourself each day, and optimize your "me" time by working on these four pillars of [health](#); this will help you rediscover your inner self and celebrate it.



The physical



Physical manifestations of self-neglect like weight gain, [fatigue](#), and aches and pains are the first and most recognizable signs that you're not making yourself a priority. Taking care of your body by exercising regularly, eating properly and getting plenty of rest will increase your energy levels, and getting into shape will boost confidence and self esteem.

Try: Massage therapy. Not that anyone needs a reason to go for a massage, but regular visits to an RMT will not only promote relaxation, but also help improve your body awareness, joint mobility, circulation and immune system.

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The emotional

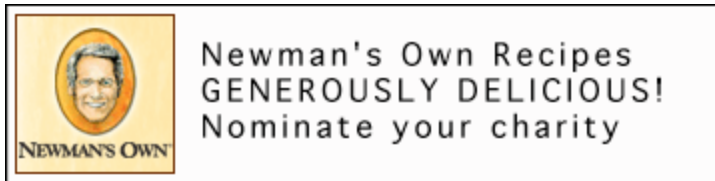
Emotional catharsis is essential to living a well-balanced life. Those who bottle up [feelings](#) are more likely to use crutches like food, drugs or gambling to cope with the constant internalization. "Working on your emotional health will help you realize that stuff happens – you'll begin to see negative situations as isolated episodes," Gellman says. "And you'll learn positive responses to life's stressors."

Try: [Journaling](#). Diaries aren't just a place for pre-teens to spill secrets. Write down your day-to-day thoughts and feelings, and be surprised at how great you feel afterwards.

Try: Therapy. Whether you sit one-on-one with a therapist or join a support group, communicating your issues verbally in a non-judgmental, informed environment is an ideal way to work through them and learn more about yourself in the process.

The spiritual

Set time aside to clear your mind and step away from life's noises, and you'll notice an increased ability to concentrate, achieve [goals](#) and stick to your commitments. "This doesn't have to be religious – just anything that involves breathing and being present," Gellman says. This could be as simple as drawing a bubble bath, or as involved as learning the art of meditation.



Try: [Yoga](#). The ever-increasing popularity of this ancient Indian practice makes it about as easy to get into as a pair of pants, and it's often touted for its meditative qualities.

Try: Acupuncture. This form of traditional Chinese medicine uses pin-like needles to cure everything from anorexia to carpal tunnel syndrome, but has also proven to relieve stress and anxiety.

Life's passion

Very few people are lucky enough to earn their living pursuing their true [passion](#), but even if you're not one of them, you should keep doing it! "We primarily use our left brains, concentrating only on the tasks at hand and we become robotic," Gellman explains. "Continuing to embrace your life's passion is a direct connection to your more creative right brain, which is how we go about stopping to smell the roses."

Think on the creative activities you enjoyed in your youth when you had fewer responsibilities – whether it was poetry, playing in a band, or making model airplanes – and make time to reconnect with that pastime.

Page 2 of 2 -- Do you nurture and celebrate yourself? Find out why it's crucial to do this on page 1.

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