Research Shows Why You Should Start Spending More Time Alone

It can be hard finding time alone in a world that has most of us "connected" in some way, 24/7. The technology that has made its way into our daily lives is almost impossible to avoid using in this day and age. Between smartphones, tablets, iPods, laptops and regular desktop computers, we're never far from the domain of the internet and all of the connectivity that comes with it.

The smartphone revolution caused a shift in our culture. Now, practically everyone you come across has one, and some people can't function without one. A **Pew Research Center** study found that 67% of cellphone owners find themselves checking their phone even when they don't notice it ring or vibrate; 21% reported being online "almost constantly."

But there's **something to be said about going off-grid** and being with your own thoughts for a while. Research shows that people often overestimate how much they need others, while simultaneously undervaluing their experiences while alone.

Being alone helps us reboot — With the tremendous amount of connectivity at our fingertips, it has become second nature for most people to scan tiny bits of a lot of different information rather than read a lot about only one thing. This causes us to be distracted easily, and there are *a lot* of distractions in the world. The constant rush of a thriving social life has us running around in circles most of the time, trying to keep our heads on straight.

When we're alone, it's the perfect time to channel our focus or decompress some of those tense nerves. It's as easy as spending even just a few moments with yourself; do whatever

you like, go for a bike ride or simply lie in bed and listen to music. Prepare your energy for the coming days.

Alone time makes you more creative – It's fairly common for people to band together when attempting to solve a problem or come up with a solution. While it can be beneficial to brainstorm with a group of people, oftentimes people will not speak up out of fear of rejection or lack of commitment to the task. **When you're by yourself**, there is no one to answer to; open your mind and explore.

You are more productive when alone – When you're working in a group or with other people, a unique phenomena occurs called "**social loafing**." A social loafer is that one person in your group that didn't do much work, but still got the same grade as you in school. It has been replicated in numerous studies, showing that even when someone believes they are contributing their best effort to the task, they actually are not. Being alone allows one to channel their motivation and be able to achieve more.

Isolation increases intimacy – Research has shown that when we are by ourselves, disconnected from others, we are given the opportunity to to strengthen these ties with others.

Being alone provides one with time to reflect on the direction one's life is headed, to reflect on the relationships that occupy one's space and time. Also, when you pursue activities alone, you often meet new and colorful people that you otherwise would not.

When you're alone, you're free – There's a certain feeling of relief that comes with being alone, and that's freedom. It's what every parent starts to miss just a little bit once they have kids, it's what college students feel when their roommate leaves for the weekend, it's what the long-married couple yearns for every now and then. Everyone needs their space and freedom.

As we get older, the freedom to do what we want wanes. So, take the time to detach from the world from time to time, and do whatever you want, knowing that it's good for your soul. Remind yourself just how in control of your own life you are without judgment.