

The Power of Alone Time

College is a great place to meet new people, visit new places and learn new things. In fact, there is so much to see and do, it can be easy to forget to save some time for yourself.

Being alone might seem like the last thing you want to do when you're away from home and starting fresh in a new community, but there are some big advantages that can have a lasting impact on your college years and beyond:

- **It boosts creativity.** Contrary to common wisdom, working alone generates more creativity than brainstorming in a group. You can let your mind take you down any rabbit hole that interests you, without influence from others.
- **It helps you work harder and more efficiently.** Group projects – or even just group study sessions – can have the unintended consequence of “social loafing,” or assuming that tasks require less effort with more people. You're more likely to work faster and more efficiently on your own.
- **It can restore your energy.** Being alone isn't always about working harder; for some people, it's just about taking time to recharge without the drain of social interaction.
- **It helps you meet new people.** Imagine going out to lunch by yourself, or to a bookstore or a party. Without your own entourage in tow, you're bound to find new people to interact with, and maybe even pick up a new friend or two.
- **It boosts your mood.** In the right proportion, alone time can be a great way to improve your mood. Too much time alone can get gloomy, but not enough can be equally frustrating. Experiment to discover how much alone time is best for you.
- **It clears your mind.** Constantly being around other people likely means you're constantly “on”... listening, talking, interacting. Giving your brain a chance to be still – even to the point of meditation, if you're into it – is a great way to focus and think more clearly. You may find it even revitalizes your body as well.
- **It gives you freedom to pursue your own interests.** Being with friends and family can be fantastic, but with any group of people, compromise is always part of the equation. Pursuing some things on your own means you can do exactly what you want. No feedback, no objections, no compromises.

Taking time to be alone – and making good use of that time – is a valuable life skill that will serve you well beyond college. You'll find restorative down time can help you manage stress, solve problems and maintain a healthy outlook throughout your career and personal life, and even offer physical health benefits. If being alone isn't something you enjoy, try small periods of alone time to start... you'll find it's well worth your effort.