

## YOU

You are the main character of your life. You are the one that lives your life daily. You make decisions. You do for and/or provide for you and your family. You determine the best road to travel.

If you stop and contemplate you, do you find that you are usually not at the top of the list when considerations are being made? Do you put your needs above others? Do you do things that are good for you first? Do you plan an outing that would make you jump up and down happy?

It seems to be routine that we always put others first. Maybe you really need a day off because you just cannot face another routine day. That is your body, mind and soul telling you "*I need a break*". Do you find that if you plan to take a vacation day to enjoy to yourself, other things pop up. You end up spending your much needed retreat taking an elderly relative to the doctor, or your spouse decides to take the day off with you so you can finally go look at furniture you have been discussing to replace.

It's important to spend time with your spouse, children and other family members and friends. It's important to look at furniture if you really need to replace the couch. We think about all the things that need to be done and are easily swayed to do what needs to be done, putting these tasks before your much needed down time.

Balance can be a struggle, but it is vital to your well-being to include you at the top of your to do list. If your day off does not go as you imagined, at least take yourself out for a coffee/tea or a beer/cocktail at some point during the day. It's a small thing compared to an entire day of self indulgence, but it is still something you are doing for you. Even these small things will bring you a little breathing room from your normal grind.

Doing at least one small thing just for you, will help eliminate the disappointment, resentment or even anger of spending your vacation time doing things others want and/or need you to do for them. You will cherish this brief outing. This is one reason why it is so important to do something

for you.

Once you do one thing for you, you will feel better. When you realize you deserve this small luxury, you may start doing small things for you more often. Who knows, this may turn into a daily habit. It may grow to bigger things like taking yourself to the movies to see what you want to see.

You may also find other ways of incorporating tasks with “me” time. Instead of walking the dog around the neighborhood, you may decide to take the dog to the park. Going to the park helps you refresh by taking a little time to be out in nature. This could lead to more exercise, which you also know is a good thing for you. You may get all your errands lined up and breeze through them because you know that when you are done, you can take yourself fishing.

Your first steps may be small, but can lead you to take bigger leaps.