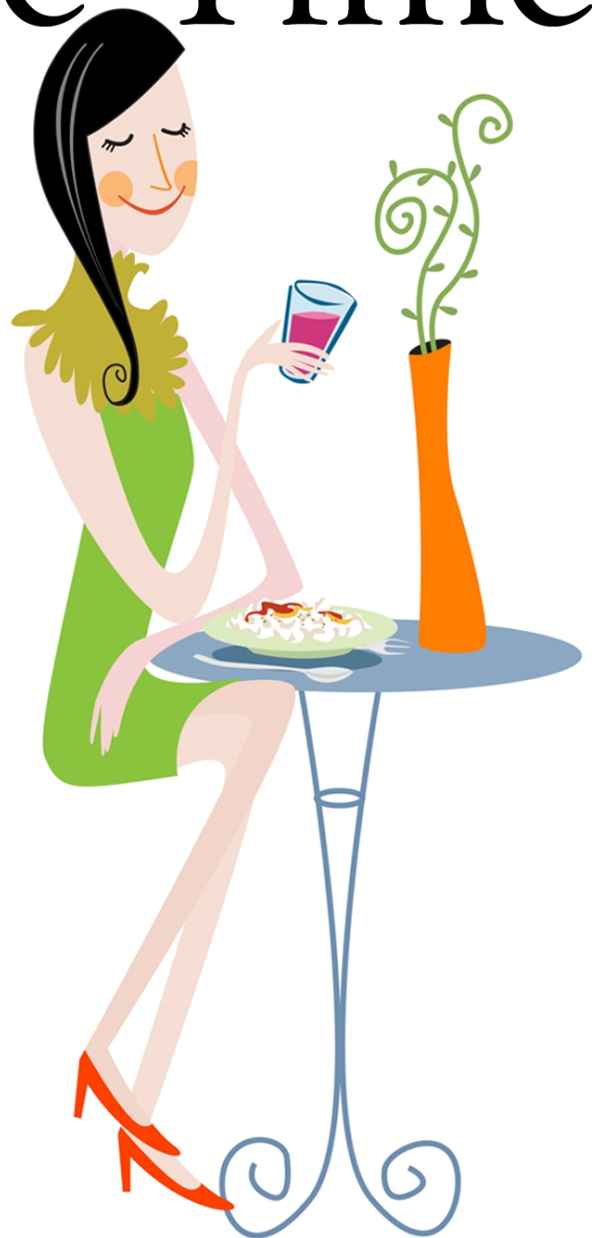


HEATHER BESTEL

More Me Time

The
Busy
Woman's
3-Step
Plan



TO RECLAIM YOUR LIFE
AND FIND JOY EVERYDAY

More Me Time
The Busy Woman’s 3-Step Plan
To Reclaim Your Life
And Find Joy Everyday

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Note: This e-book is optimized for viewing on a computer screen, but it is organized so you can also print it out and assemble it as a book.

Since the text is optimized for screen viewing, the type is larger than that in usual printed books.

Contents

Message from the author	3
Introduction	4
More Me Time explained	5
Doing less means achieving more	7
Equipment needed	8
The journey itself	8
Step One – Just Ten Minutes everyday	9
A word about relaxing	10
The Ten Minute Relaxation	12
The Just Ten Minutes Commitment	17
Step Two – One whole hour every week	18
Step Three – A day a month	19
Where now? – Simple Life Long Strategies	20

Message from the author

Hi, I’m Heather Bestel, psychotherapist & stress management consultant. I’ve been working with busy women since 1994, helping them to create the balance that they crave in their lives. I know only too well what it’s like trying to run a home and a business and be a good mum all at the same time.



Over the years I have travelled around the UK as a consultant and public speaker, writing articles and appearing on TV and radio; talking to women just like you about what they want and need more of in their lives. I often get asked *“Please find a way to help put me back in control and give me more balance in my life”*.

My quest led me to discover how taking time out to relax each and every day can make dramatic and significant changes in even the most stressful lives. *More Me Time* brings together very simple yet powerful coping strategies to answer those needs.

More Me Time is my gift to you. I am sharing with you the knowledge I have built up over the years that has helped me and thousands of my clients. Please feel free to tell your friends about it and those you know who are in need of it and let’s watch as

... *‘ all these ripples of calm one day add up to a sea of tranquility.’*

My love & best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather" with a small "x" at the end.

Introduction

Do you ever feel like hitting the escape button when stress hits? Do you wish that life were simpler? Do you crave some time for yourself?

As your head hits the pillow at the end of another manic day of juggling job and family commitments, feeling trapped by the relentless cycle of work and mothering, do you imagine a parallel universe where life is so much easier.

Where you sail through your day dealing with all the stress life can possibly throw at you with a gracious smile and a deep knowing that you possess the secret to balance and harmony.

With *More Me Time*, being constantly exhausted can be a thing of the past. I’m going to share with you the *secret to ‘creating an oasis amidst the chaos’*. No matter what is happening around you, you can be calm, confident and in control.

You too, can be that serenely composed woman enjoying life to the full and finding a reason everyday to rejoice and be grateful that she is alive.

WARNING

I must warn you that, on first reading, you may scoff at the simplicity of such a system. You may be sceptical of its promises and you may even choose to dismiss it as another gimmick, that’s OK.

It will still be here in a few weeks or months when you wake in the wee small hours unable to let go of that niggling worry about work, the house, your relationship or the children and you will remember my promises and you will search this plan out to ‘give it a go – just for a few days ... what harm can it do?’

More Me Time Explained

Right, let's get this over with right now! To achieve this plan you are going to have to take MORE ME TIME! – you probably guessed from the title that we were going somewhere with this.

Yes, I know, women are brilliant at putting themselves last and at the end of a busy day there is never any ME time left to take. Well you have to listen to the next thing I say very carefully.

The only way for you to have More ME-TIME is for YOU to make it for yourself.

Nobody is going to present it to you on a silver platter – YOU are going to have to carve it out all by yourself.

I can hear some of you screaming at me 'where am I suppose to get it from, my whole life is booked up for at least the next 18 years?'

And my answer is 'if that is how you feel right now, then you need this more than anyone'.

Trust me, this is achievable! I've had hundreds of clients, just like you, say exactly the same thing and three weeks later they had changed their lives for the better.

And now they enjoy a wonderful life, better relationships, more energy, refreshing sleep and wouldn't go back to putting themselves last for anything.

Look at it this way – as a woman, you are like a deep well of crystal healing water and each and every day you ladle out this precious water to those around you who need it.

You are a mother, partner, sister, daughter, friend, caregiver, chauffeur, nurse, teacher, chief cook and bottle washer. Everyone needs your healing.

A depressed friend phones for a chat, an elderly parent needs to be cared for, a child needs a story, a husband needs love and support, the laundry needs doing, the family need feeding and the dog needs walking.

That's before you sit down at the end of a long day to just catch your breath and figure out your next move.

Before you know it, all the healing water has been ladled out and there is no more left for you. And you have to get up and do it all again tomorrow.

Ask yourself this question – how long before I just burnout?

How long can you keep doing this before your health suffers? How would everyone else cope if you got ill? How long are you going to carry on like this?

Are you happy with the present situation or are you ready to make simple changes that will benefit not only you, but all those people around you that rely on your love and support?

So, are you ready to reap the rewards of giving yourself a little nurturing?

When you embrace More Me Time:

- You allow yourself to take time out when you need it.
- You put yourself first but everyone benefits.
- You return to your family and your work refreshed and calm.
- You can feel as though you have had a good night's sleep
- You feel energised and alive.

When you take time out to re-fill your well of healing water, you are not being selfish – you are actually doing it for those around you (that's what I tell my clients and they laugh).

We women can often be self-sacrificing; putting other's needs before our own. Incorporating *More Me Time* into your life means you can nurture yourself and others at the same time.

Doing less means achieving more

Please don't start to worry that, by taking time out; you won't be able to get everything done. The opposite is actually true.

Very often when we are stressed, we start to rush things and that's when mistakes are made. Time is then needed to undo the mistakes and put things right.

By learning to take time out, we become calmer and less mistakes are made. Therefore, we do things once and we do them properly.

Taking time out also means that when we come back we are refreshed and can see things in a different light and (you will be interested to find), this is not a new concept.....

“Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation, for when you come back to your work your judgment will be surer. Go some distance away because then the work appears smaller and more of it can be taken in at a glance and a lack of harmony and proportion is more readily seen.”

Leonardo da Vinci

Equipment needed

So now that you know what's ahead, you are ready to make your escape. Before you start though, there are a couple of things you will need for the journey:

- A belief that you will achieve your goals
- An acceptance that you deserve this
- An agreement to put yourself first
- A commitment to taking just ten minutes out of your day
- Support from those around you
- The following mantra repeated throughout the day:

*"I am doing the best I can, with what I've got,
AND it's good enough!"*

The journey itself

You can make this as easy or difficult as you like. You can choose to embrace its philosophy from the start or you can wrangle with the guilt of looking after yourself for weeks.

What will happen though, along the way, is you will start to notice a difference. You will feel a lot calmer. Life will still be stressful, no-one can change that, but you will start to react differently.

And over the next few weeks you will start to look forward to taking time for yourself. You will enjoy the luxury of it and savour every last drop.

Other people will start to notice a difference too. Your loved ones and also those you work with and they too will want to know your secret.

Step One - Just ten minutes

Take just ten minutes everyday to relax. That's it! Sounds simple doesn't it?

Let's be clear about this - all I'm asking is that you set aside just ten minutes every day. Out of the next 1440 minutes that make up a whole day, you have to believe that you're worth just ten.

This is *Step One* and the most important step.

If you're having a problem with this, then get your best friend to hit you around the head with a soggy newspaper. Or give me a call and I will shout at you. Come on – just ten minutes!

It can be any ten minutes you like:

The first ten minutes of the day, just as you wake and before you start the day (you could even set your alarm for ten minutes earlier than usual).

It can be at lunchtime, mid afternoon, early evening or just before bed. You are in control – you decide when.

I suggest that you think carefully about when to fit it into your busy schedule. Make sure you will be able to do it everyday.

If it feels like a chore, then you won't do it for long and this needs to become a permanent change. This has got to be like brushing your teeth or getting your clothes ready the night before (you do do that, right? – there's a whole other e-book right there!)

Taking just ten minutes must fit easily into your life and become a ritual. After a few weeks you will do it automatically.

So, now that you've scheduled your ten minutes, decide what you are going to do to relax. Here are a couple of my favourites:

- I like to spend ten minutes stretched out on a lounge in the conservatory early in the morning before anyone is awake and catch the first warming rays of sunshine.
- Or, sometimes, I'll light a candle and just sit and meditate until I feel balanced and peaceful and ready to face the day.
- Or, in the middle of a meeting when people are indulging in heated discussion, I may imagine I'm lying on my own desert island – bliss!

A word about relaxing

Relaxing is when your whole mind and body can become calm and tranquil. Your whole central nervous system gets to chill. Relaxing is not sitting in front of the TV or chatting on the phone.

It has to allow your mind and body an opportunity to unplug itself from everything. No mind-chatter (that constant buzz inside your head), a chance to float away and drift off into an altered state of awareness. A chance to feel at peace. To totally rest.

At first you may need to do this in a quiet, calm environment and then, as you become more accomplished, you will be able to switch off anywhere, anytime.

Getting the best from your relaxation

Whether you are relaxing first thing in the morning or last thing at night, there are things you can be doing to make the experience more enjoyable and more beneficial.

To really optimise your time, you need to be allowing your whole mind and body to go into a deep state of relaxation. Letting the central nervous system calm down and the brain waves change from beta (natural waking state) to alpha (very relaxed).

Here are some tips to get your mind and body to this stage – they are quick and easy.

Pay attention to your surroundings.

When you are very experienced at relaxation you will be able to 'switch off' just about anywhere. While it is new to you, it may be useful to develop a calming environment in which to relax.

So, dim the lights, make sure you are warm enough, unplug the phone and make yourself comfortable.

Assume the position.

Sit in a chair that is comfortable and gives your back good support and place your feet flat on the floor, if possible. If not then leave them relaxed, uncrossed, and hands on your lap – palms facing upwards.

Alternatively, lie on the floor with your feet relaxed (uncrossed) and arms at your side with palms facing upwards.

This may be familiar to those of you who practise yoga and is a position in which you can become extremely relaxed. If it feels strange at first, just keep practising and it will become familiar.

As you relax you may notice a tingling sensation at the ends of your fingers and toes, this is completely natural and all part of the process.

Don't forget to breathe.

A little known fact is that your central nervous system triggers a state of relaxation when your out-breath is longer than your in-breath.

Practice breathing in for the count of two heartbeats and out for four. Then proceed to 3 and 6, then 4 and 8, until you find a rhythm that is right for you.

Don't fight it.

When we are relaxing, very often, thoughts come into our heads that we don't want. This is natural so let them come, observe them from a distance and let them float out again. When we focus on trying to fight against them, we end up using up all our energy on the unwanted thoughts.

They are just letting us know that they are still there and need some attention. When we acknowledge that we know they are still waiting for our attention, our sub-conscious mind is content. This can take some practise, so be patient.

Take a moment.

At the end of your relaxation, give yourself a few moments to 'ground yourself': become aware of your surroundings; wiggle your fingers and toes; stretch and yawn; take some deep breaths.

A ten-minute relaxation is like a power nap and is allowing you to re-energize and rejuvenate.

Sometimes, when you are new to this, you can feel a little tired afterwards until you get into the habit of switching off in the middle of the day. Just give yourself a moment and allow your energy to return.

If you need to, have a brisk walk and some fresh air. Carry the calm feeling with you as you carry on with your day.

The Ten Minute Relaxation

I have developed the following ten minutes relaxation to share with you.

During your ten minutes you are going to relax all the muscles in your body and then relax your mind. At the end of the relaxation you will feel relaxed and alert and will bring renewed energy with you to keep you going throughout the day.

The Benefits

When we start relaxing regularly we notice changes in our lives. Our immune systems become stronger so we don't succumb to all the bugs and viruses around us. We don't let little things bother us as much as they may have in the past.

We become relaxed about other things in our lives too: we stop beating ourselves up; we stop being such perfectionists; we let go of trivial problems and focus on what's really important; our relationships improve, we become happier.

There are so many benefits from taking this tiny amount of time out. You will want to teach it to your children and all your friends. Sometimes the smallest things can make the greatest impact and, in my experience, this is one of those things.

Warning

Many of my clients, after joining the *Me Time* club, have become so chilled and happy, that they give off this aura of calmness which is contagious.

Other people around them just feel calm in their presence and they become a magnet for all those stressed people who want a 'cure'.

You may become a guru of calm – be prepared!

OK. Let's begin ...

1. Make sure that you won't be disturbed for the next ten minutes and make sure that you are warm. As the body relaxes it loses heat so cover yourself with a blanket.
2. Take the phone off the hook and put on some relaxing music. You may want to create a relaxing environment by lighting a candle – anything that makes the experience special. Doing these things signifies the start of your daily ritual and will help to ease you into the routine.
3. Sitting in your relaxed position or lying on the floor, begin your relaxation by telling yourself that this is your time to relax, refresh and rejuvenate and that you are going to let go and relax as fully as you can right here and now. Tell yourself that you are totally in control of this relaxation and that you will not fall asleep, but relax fully.
4. Take your attention to your breathing, noticing your chest rising and falling as you breathe in and out. Allow your breathing to become slow and gentle. Take time to fill your lungs fully and then let the breath leave you slowly and steadily.
5. Make your out breath a little longer than your in breath and repeat this process for about a minute until you feel relaxed and comfortable.
6. Now, with every breath that you breathe out, repeat the word 'calm' very gently (in your mind, not out loud). Repeat the word 'calm' over and over in your mind each time you breathe out. Don't bother to give it any meaning, just say it over and over as you breathe out and you will very quickly start to feel calm.
7. If you haven't done so already, you can now gently close your eyes and allow them to rest. They have been working very hard for you, focusing and concentrating and now they can rest and relax.
8. As your eyes relax, all of the tiny muscles around your eyes are relaxing and as those muscles relax, all of the tiny muscles around those muscles are relaxing until all of the muscles in the whole of your face are feeling warm and comfortable and relaxed.

9. And that relaxation is spreading out from your eyes, up over your forehead, right over the top of your head and down the back of your head and into your neck and your neck muscles are relaxing. And that relaxation is spreading out across your shoulders and your shoulders are relaxing – a place where we carry a lot of pressure and stress.
10. And you can feel that relaxation as it spreads out across your shoulders and down into your arms. Your upper arms and elbows relaxing; your lower arms and wrists relaxing; right down into your hand and fingers; right down into the tiniest muscles at the ends of your fingers. The whole of your arms are feeling warm, heavy and relaxed.
11. And now, that relaxation is spreading out across your back. Spreading out into the big muscles on either side of your spine. And as that relaxation is spreading out, you are letting go of any tension and stress and a lovely feeling of relaxation is taking its place.
12. That relaxation is spreading down your back, down each and every vertebrae of your spine and your spine is relaxing and feeling heavy and limp and relaxed. And you are letting go and relaxing into the chair that supports you or the floor as you are lying down.
13. Take your attention once more to your eyes, heavy and comfortable and relaxed and allow that relaxation to spread downwards and outwards. And as that relaxation spreads out across your face, you feel your cheek muscles relax, your nose and mouth relax, your jaw muscles relax, even your tongue relaxes.
14. And that relaxation spreads down into your throat muscles and down into your chest and you take your attention once more to your breathing and you notice your chest muscles rising and falling as you breathe in and out.
15. And as you repeat the word 'calm' over and over with each out breath, so your breathing is becoming calmer and more natural.
16. That relaxation is now spreading out through the rest of your body. Down through your abdomen and into your legs. Your upper legs and thighs relaxing. Your knees relaxing. Your lower legs, ankles and feet relaxing, right down to the tiniest muscles in your toes.

17. The whole of your body is now relaxing, from the top of your head to the tips of your fingers. From the top of your head to the tips of your toes. The whole of your body is relaxing – feeling warm, heavy comfortable and very, very relaxed.
18. And now that your body is completely relaxed, you are ready to relax your mind. And with every breath that you take you are noticing that you are letting go of more and more of the worrying things that you have been holding in your mind.
19. The more and more relaxed your body becomes, the more and more you are letting go of any negative thoughts in your mind. And from now on – things aren't going to bother you as much. You are able to let go of worry and anxiety and leave things in the past where they belong.
20. From now on, no matter where you are, what you're doing, or who you're with, you are going to feel calm, confident and in control.
21. Take a moment now to imagine yourself in the future being calm, confident and in control. See yourself dealing calmly with difficult situations. See yourself letting the stress wash over you and feel how calm you are.
22. Give yourself a moment now to relax more deeply than you ever have before – and to do that, let yourself just drift off while you listen to the relaxing music in the background. Tell yourself you are going to relax deeply for one minute and trust your inner mind to let you know when one minute has elapsed.
23. Relax for one minute
24. *Now you can start to bring all the relaxation and calmness with you as you focus once more on your breathing and bring your awareness back to the here and now. You have relaxed very deeply and will carry that calmness with you for the rest of the day. Take some deep breaths and as you start to wiggle your fingers and toes, you can open your eyes.
25. You are feeling calm and relaxed, confident, in control and ready to face the world.

*NB. If you are using your relaxation last thing at night and want to go to sleep straight away, then use the following:

Now you can allow yourself to drift off into a deep sleep, relaxing very deeply and having a good night’s sleep. You can awaken in the morning feeling calm and relaxed and ready to face the world.

Tips

I know it can be difficult to totally relax when you are focusing on all the steps, so here are some tips to make things easier for you. Either, ask a friend to read the relaxation instructions to you or record yourself saying them.

Practise making your voice very calm and relaxing. Speak in a gentle tone very slowly and keep your voice gentle and hypnotic by repeating some of the words. This will help you to relax quicker and reach a deeper level of relaxation.

If you really don’t like the idea of someone there with you when you relax, or you just don’t want the hassle of recording the words yourself, I have produced a relaxation called *‘Just Ten Minutes’* that does it all for you, so you can just sit back and get on with the job of relaxing.

Warning:

Getting the utmost out of this system depends on consistency. Miss a session and you start to notice the difference. This takes commitment – so make that decision right here, right now and join the thousands of people who have found the escape button.

You can print off the next page, sign it, frame it and meditate on it often...

The Just Ten Minutes Commitment

(License to practice a little bit of me time)

- Everyday I will take just ten minutes for myself.
- I will look forward to my ten minutes and will enjoy them without any feelings of guilt.
- I will relish the time to just do nothing while I allow my whole body the treat of total relaxation.
- After I have enjoyed my ten minutes, I will carry on with my day feeling relaxed, refreshed and rejuvenated.
- Always remembering that I am doing the best I can with what I’ve got - and that it’s good enough!



SignedDate

Step Two – one whole hour every week

Once you have mastered step one and feel comfortable that it is part of your daily lifestyle, you can move on to step two and introduce one hour per week of *me time*.

This is where you chose to do something relaxing for YOU for a whole hour and you do it once a week.

You may chose to do something on your own, like: walking along a favorite beach; having a manicure, learning to meditate, or you may wish to do it with others (yoga class; salsa dancing etc).

Take a moment now to give this some thought. Ask yourself, "What is a little bit of me time to me?"

If you could snatch an hour all to yourself today, what would you do with it? What if you suddenly found yourself with no children, no pressing work to do and no chores?

Maybe a friend called round unexpectedly and offered to take the kids for an hour or the in-laws offered to baby-sit. What would you do with that precious time? What is the first thing that springs to mind?

Let's start our list here, I will tell you what defines my perfect *me time* and you can email me with yours to add to it. Here goes ...

- *A little bit of me time is*Sitting undisturbed, with a cup of tea and flicking through a magazine in the garden with my chair in the little patch of sunlight left at the end of a long summer's day.
- *A little bit of me time is* ...A skinny Soya decaf latte in a tall glass, served at a window seat overlooking a busy street of happy shoppers.
- *A little bit of me time is* ...Lying in a deep bubble bath surrounded with candles and the promise of at least half an hour without interruption.

NB. Once *me time* has been scheduled into the diary it is to be protected at all costs, cannot be cancelled or re-scheduled. Once it is in the diary - it becomes sacred.

Step Three – A day a month

Once you have mastered step two, you can introduce one day a month of *me time*.

Now this, sometimes, is a bigger step than anticipated and needs to be approached gently. If you feel too guilty to indulge in a whole day all at once, then try starting with half a day and build up over the following months.

Examples of *me days* are: horse riding; spa day; mooching round antique shops or book shops; going shopping with friends or, one of my personal favourites: staying in pj's all day, watching weepy movies in front of a crackling fire (chocolate is always involved)

If you feel more comfortable introducing half a day to start with or maybe an afternoon or evening, then consider the following:

A little bit of me time is ...having a monthly massage.

A little bit of me time is ... going to a favourite shop and browsing through the merchandise in your own time without being hurried or feeling guilty.

A little bit of me time is a girl's night in with wine, nibbles, great conversation and lots of laughter.

I think you're getting the hang of this!

Now, if this really starts to sound exciting – you can take it a whole level further and book one whole week per year just for yourself – now imagine that!

Get out your diary right NOW and start writing in your *me time* dates.

Where Now? – Simple Life Long Strategies

There is nothing better than waking up every morning feeling happy to be alive.

With the tools you now have and with a little practice and a bit of time, you will see the benefits of these simple steps.

There is nothing big or clever or complicated about them. They are very simple and easy to do and fit easily into your life.

But, (and this is the fabulous part) – those of us who use them wisely know how very powerful they really are.

Those of us who live by these simple, powerful strategies and techniques can float through life no matter what it throws at us.

There is something wonderful about nurturing another human being and there is something magical about nurturing yourself.

Once you have mastered *More Me Time*, you will have it for life. You can choose to share the secret with others or you may keep it to yourself. I think you’ll want to pass it on ...

If you don’t fancy the idea of recording the relaxation for yourself, you can get a copy of my relaxation here:

[Just Ten Minutes relaxation](#)

Anyway, whether you are listening to my relaxation or your own, I hope you enjoy your new found *Me Time* and savour every last moment.

You can write to me here, relax@alittlebitofmetime.com with any questions or comments (nice testimonials are most welcome). Visit my website here <http://alittlebitofmetime.com>, follow me on twitter here, [Twitter Heather](#) and come say hello on my blog where you will find lots of helpful tips, hints and inspiration: <http://HeatherBestel.com>

My love & best wishes



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