



Soul Support:

4 Ways to Bolster Your Spirit

By Lara Krupicka

You've made your resolutions and hammered out a few goals for the New Year. But have you planned where you'll get the energy for them? If not, you may lose steam before Valentine's Day. When you take time to shore up your spirit - to refuel - you can do more and enjoy life better in the process.

Not sure what your spirit needs? Here are four common practices you can try:

1. Engage With Nature

House to car to building and back again. Our exposure to the outdoors, particularly this time of year can be limited. And when we deprive ourselves too long, we begin to see the effects. Taking the time to pause and soak in natural surroundings can revive our spirit in many ways.

Lori Whalen, a nature center educator, appreciates the break from routine the outdoors provides. She advocates getting outside to expand your awareness and see things differently.

Christina Hyun, mother of two agrees. She takes an extended time to explore the beach alone several times each year for this reason. "It reconnects me. It gives me

perspective. Part of the reason I like to go to the water is that I feel really small next to the ocean."

Many people find actively seeking out time in a park, by a pond or hiking a forest trail to bring them new energy. But be careful not to turn it into another item on your checklist. Whalen warns, "It's important that people come to nature without having a scheduled activity where someone is leading them and teaching them something."

2. Take Time to Be Alone

Homeschooling mom, Carrie Klayum, knows well her need for time alone. But her family life doesn't give her many opportunities for this. So she works to make it happen. "If I get up early enough where I'm the only one up, I can be alone," she says. "Sometimes when I feel like I've starved my spirit and I've cheated myself of caring for myself, I will schedule a pedicure. Or I'll go out and run errands alone."

Getting "alone time" can be tricky. But for those whose spirits hunger for space like that, it's well worth it. As Klayum explains, "It energizes me and refreshes me. When I get a good chunk of alone time, then I'm ready to face the family again. I miss them." ▶