

## Filling Up Your Cup

by Cynthia Hancox © 2007

[www.CynthiaHancox.com](http://www.CynthiaHancox.com)

As busy wives and mothers, we are constantly pouring out of ourselves to other people. We serve our husbands, our children, our extended family and friends. Some of us serve in churches or ministries, or in helping in the community. Some are involved in running homeschool support groups, or youth groups such as Scouts or Guides. All these things are wonderful, but all of them require something from us. They require our time, our energy, our thought and emotions, our prayer and inspiration. We are giving out, giving out, all the time. In order to keep pouring out, we need to get filled back up, to refuel. If we don't, we'll soon find ourselves running on empty, and chronically running on empty leads to burn out.

Sometimes we feel guilty about taking the time to do things that are good or fun for US. We feel that we should be busy doing things for others, but we don't feel right about doing things for us, fearing that maybe that is selfish. Let me tell you, my friend, that doing things for ourselves is not about being selfish - it's about doing what is absolutely VITAL if we are to continue ministering to others! Sure, it can develop into selfishness if we seek ONLY to do things for ourselves, but when approached as a part of a balanced lifestyle, it is a GOOD thing, a VITAL thing!

So, what are some ways to fill up your cup, to refresh yourself? Oh, there are so many things you can do! The main thing is that it must be something that relaxes you, that refreshes and renews you. Here are some suggestions:

- A deep bubble bath, perhaps with a good book, or some audios to listen to, or simply relaxing in the gentle light and aroma of scented candles
- An early night - regardless of all that is clamoring for your attention
- A long walk
- Sitting on the beach or in a park
- Cuddling up and watching a good movie with your sweetheart
- Having a shoulder and neck massage, or foot massage
- Getting your hair done
- Going for a swim
- Pulling aside for a few hours or even days, to rest, seek God, pray and plan
- Chatting with a friend over coffee while the kids play

- Going to browse in the library - ALONE!
- When I used to ride horses, there was nothing to "blow away the cobwebs" like a good gallop! My husband finds the same with riding his motorbike. Sometimes just being able to go (safely) fast, and let the wind stream through our hair and across our faces is the best therapy of all, whether it's on a horse or bike, in a go-kart, on rollerskates, or just driving with the windows down!
- Singing and dancing in the rain
- Laughing! At funny jokes, a funny movie or book, or just being silly with your husband and kids, or a friend! Take time to laugh - it is like a medicine to your soul!
- A daily quiet time
- Taking a nap
- Curling up with a good book
- Going on a date with your husband
- Sitting in the sunshine
- Playing with your children
- Letting your kids play dress up with you - let them do your hair and put makeup on you, rub your feet and neck, and pamper you. Who cares if it's not perfect? - it's just wonderfully soothing to have someone minister to you in this way - you can return the favor another time. My little girls are excellent and shoulder and foot massages, and at brushing and playing with my hair. They get some personal time with me, and I get to relax and enjoy! :-)
- Doing a puzzle, jigsaw or playing games or cards with your husband or children

I'm sure you can think of more ideas! Make a list of things you like to do, or would like to try, and then write them on your calendar. If you don't PLAN to take time out, it will never "just happen". Have small breaks during the day, reward yourself when you accomplish certain of your To-do's, and plan weekly bigger treats and "time-outs"!

You're not being lazy or selfish - you are actually serving those you love by taking care of you. If you burn out, then you won't be able to be there for them. If you constantly run on nothing, you won't be able to give them your best.

Even Jesus took time out to rest!

Love, Cynthia