

# Time to start doing more things alone

By Roberto A. Ferdman, Washington Post

On any given Friday night, bars, restaurants and movie theaters tend to fill up with people spending time with friends, lovers, and family. But when the weekend comes, those who find themselves on their own are likelier to be found on the couch, at home, doing something in private.

There's nothing particularly strange here. But maybe we're missing out when we automatically choose to stay in when we don't have social plans.

"People decide to not do things all the time just because they're alone," said Rebecca Ratner, a professor of marketing at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, who has spent almost half a decade studying why people are so reluctant to have fun on their own and how it may lead to, well, less fun overall. "But the thing is, they would probably be happier going out and doing something."

Ratner has a new study titled *Inhibited from Bowling Alone*, a nod to Robert Putnam's book about Americans' waning participation in group activities, that's set to publish in the *Journal of Consumer Research* in August.

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