

# Why Do We Need to Vacation?



What started this thought was a beautiful sunset on Siesta Key. Upon being presented with one of the most incredible sights Florida has to offer, I asked myself, "Who would want to leave paradise?" It truly is beautiful here. The weather is temperate, the energy is vibrant, and people actually come here for vacation, so why would I need to leave? Every day, my patients ask me: "Will you be able to get away this year?"

I have always found it interesting that our culture has been founded on the concept that we all "just need to get away." It makes us wonder if it isn't all just economic folly and we are being fed subliminal messages to spend money in places other than where we live... which, to me, makes no sense. What is a vacation, and what does it mean to take one? The origin of the word vacation has its roots in Latin and means at its essence, "freedom from something." Hm. Freedom from what, I wondered – work, school, partner, kids, dog, bills, politics, life?

Then I began to think about the traditional Asian concept of balance and that having true balance in one's life would make it hard to leave the steady and peaceful flow. Then I realized, "Duh; who really has balance?" We are all just searching outside of ourselves for that balance, and, of course, leaving one's home, the source of all strife and tension, will eliminate that

for a temporary period, right? Spending more money to go without the comforts of local foods and familiar housing would make everything better, right? Sarcasm aside, I do think that the vacation thing is overrated, and, fortunately, people are now finding that if you explore the locality in which you live, you will: one, save money, and two, become more invested in your community.

Of course, taking a break from continuously working is part of the whole balance deal. Keeping your qi/source energy in abundant supply and flowing smoothly really does take effort. Here are some ways you can take a break from your routine while staying in the comforts of your own space:

Take a week off from work and spend it doing yoga at a studio every day. Plan dinners out every night like you would if you were out of town. Take your significant other on a tour of Myakka or Oscar Scherer Park, and have a picnic. Pretend you are on an out-of-town vacation, and plan spa services that you normally wouldn't get. Have lunch with friends you don't usually have the opportunity to see. Take a meditation or psychic development class. Take a moonlit kayak trip on Lido. Take a sunset bicycle ride in Myakka State Park, and be present to all of the wildlife Florida has to be proud of. Go to the beach for sunset with a bottle of wine and that special

someone. Take a cooking class. Begin or finish that gardening project you haven't had the time to do. Read a book. Go body-surfing at the beach with your kids, riding the waves without a boogie board or surfboard. Take a break from the media; stop watching television for an entire week. (It's not that hard; I am on a month-long sabbatical from television right now. I have so much more time it is incredible.)

Giving your mind, body, and spirit some relaxation time is essential to keeping your entire self in balance and maintaining your health. Take some time to get clear on what a vacation is for you, and then set out to achieve whatever that is. Remember that spending some or all of your vacation dollars in the city in which you live is a great way to be in alignment with your intention, mission, and purpose in life, building a strong community that continues in its vibrant energy and creates a safe place for people of all kinds to live and grow. Now *that's* a purpose. Happy local vacationing!

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