

# The 4 BEST Vacations You Can Take without Spending a Dime



Checking out for a while, taking a break, getting away from it all... those are terms people use when they start talking about vacation. In fact, according to the Miriam- Webster's Dictionary the most prominent definition of vacation is "a period spent away from home or business in travel or recreation". But, there is another definition of vacation on the list that I am talking about today: "a respite or a time of respite away from something". If you take this kind of vacation, I believe it can be just as satisfying as any trip to the mountains or beach, (well almost) and you do not have to spend a dime or a vacation day to feel refreshed, invigorated and energized once its over.

## Take a vacation from devices

Have you every gone unplugged for a week? No emails, no social media, no texting or phone calls? The first time I tried this, it was forced upon me. That's because I was on a cruise ship and at the time they offered internet connections, for practically the price of the cabin! That forced me to turn it off and put my phone away. It was one of the BEST things I ever did on that vacation. I never realized how much of a babysitter my phone was. Bored in line.. look at the internet. Wake up in the morning get coffee, check e-mail. Out to dinner with friends, check the latest notification that just pinged. We have become like zombies. Every ding, ping, flash and buzz and we go right back to the phone, tablet or computer. Taking a break from this is truly a vacation from information overload and allows you to tune into the moments in life you might have otherwise missed. It allows you to participate in conversations by *talking with people in person*. It also proves that you can survive boredom. You might actually read a real book with paper pages!

## Take a vacation from Negativity

Commit to putting a stop to criticizing and complaining. It's so easy to look at people, situations, workplaces, organizations, religions, etc and see what is wrong with them. But have you ever decided to take a look at what is right about them? Or look to see common ground instead of differences? Take a few minutes, a few hours or even a few days if you dare, and purposefully seek out the good. It may take more time and it may be a lot more challenging, but once you do this you will start to see that we are so much more alike than we are different and so is just about anything else. I am working on changing my bad habit of complaining about the weather. Yes, I prefer sunny and mild days to cold and rainy ones, but can I do anything about either? No. What I am doing is choosing to let the forecast determine my mood instead of choosing my mood regardless of the weather outside. (over)

It's the same with a meal, a play, a book. If you take a vacation from criticizing, you may actually find yourself becoming grateful. Believe me, gratitude is the gateway drug to Happiness!!

### Take a vacation from the News

I rarely watch or read the news, or listen to confrontational radio programs, and I am so much happier and positive! That probably shocks people given that I am a former TV news anchor, reporter and producer and that I was the host of a daily talk radio show.

I was inundated with the worst of the world all the time. Believe me, when you have steeped yourself into the murders, rapes, hurricanes, drug overdoses, flooding and political scandals for over 2 decades it takes a toll on your mind and your outlook on life. But with the advent of 24 hour news, instant news from the internet and social media it's very easy to get just as absorbed as I was when I did this for a living.

Taking a vacation from the news in any form for a week will allow you to start seeing what a wonderful world this really is, rather than tuning in to only see the worst and that is quite refreshing.

### Take a vacation from Toxic People

Know anyone who you have to tiptoe around because they could blow at any moment? Have snarky comments tossed your way at work? Always have someone criticize you for everything you say, wear or do? The good news is, it's not you. The bad news is, those folks are toxic! The best way to take a break from these people is to steer clear. And if you can't do that, just don't engage. It's hard to argue when no one is responding. This can be a bit challenging, especially if some of those toxic folks happen to live with you. But just because you might be related to the original negative Nellie, doesn't mean you have to participate in it. I know this sounds easier said than done, but for your own sanity and peace of mind, slip away, disappear, get out! These folks are dream killers, spirit killers, and the effects can last for years. This might be a great time to take a walk, make a phone call to a fun friend or read a great book. Spending time with people who feed your soul with laughter, smiles, great conversation and support is truly energizing.



**Sherrie Dunlevy** is a motivational speaker and the author of the best selling and award winning book *How Can I Help? Your Go-to Guide for Helping Loved Ones Through Life's Difficulties*.

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