

# How TO “*Staycation*” WITH *fun* (and *Health*) IN MIND

by Natalie-Jean Schiavone, PhD

With warm summer days on the mind, you may have found yourself daydreaming of lazy days at the beach, an exotic island retreat, or backpacking through the European countryside. However, with the pandemic still causing hesitation for many people wanting to travel, it's difficult to plan a vacation with so much uncertainty. Now may be the perfect time to consider giving yourself a “staycation.”



## Staycation vs. VACATION

A staycation is time off at home or in one's local community. Some favorite staycation ideas and/or activities cost little to no money at all. They will require some creativity, but they will be cheaper than a plane ticket or a stay at a hotel. Plus, you will come back to work feeling refreshed and ready to get back into the daily grind! A wonderful byproduct of a staycation is that many activities will fit into a day or even a few hours. Let's explore some ideas that will help you stay safe, healthy and active during your time off.

## Spa Day

This past year has done a number on a lot of us. We have felt more anxious and stressed – so why not take a day and indulge ourselves? Grab a face mask, put on some tranquil music, light some candles, take a long bath, soak away your troubles and relax.

This simple act will allow both your body and mind to relax, recharge and refocus. Taking a mental health break is a great way to decompress from all of the outside noise that has been creeping into our lives this past year. You will leave the bathroom feeling refreshed and ready to take on the rest of your day. Don't feel guilty for taking a little "me time." You are worth it. Your body and mind will thank you.



## ENJOY THE Great Outdoors

If soaking in a hot, bubble-filled bath isn't your thing, no problem! Then pack a healthy lunch – think fresh fruit, vegetables, healthy proteins and water – and go take a hike. If you can get to a hiking spot near you and it's still open (*check the local listings for Covid-19 restrictions, requirements and closings*), why not go for a hike in the great outdoors?

No hiking trails? No worries. Just take advantage of the warmer, sunnier weather and get outside. Take a walk by yourself, with your partner, with your friends or with a pet. Soaking up some of what Mother Nature has to offer us will help balance out your well-earned couch time. Indulging your senses may help clear your mind and help you refocus on what's important – you! So, take advantage of your time off, get outside and get moving.



"*TAKING A mental health break IS A GREAT WAY TO decompress FROM ALL OF the outside noise THAT HAS BEEN CREEPING INTO OUR LIVES THIS PAST YEAR.*"





"YOU CAN SPEND A DAY, A WEEKEND, OR EVEN A WHOLE WEEK *playing tourist* IN YOUR OWN HOMETOWN."



## BECOME A *Tourist* IN YOUR HOMETOWN

Many of us spend our days going to work, running errands at the same location(s) we always go, and then making our way home. You can spend a day, a weekend, or even a whole week playing tourist in your own hometown. Go visit the local museums, local attractions, local hot spots or historic districts you'd usually reserve for out-of-town guests or visitors to see. Take this time and rediscover the best parts of your hometown.

## RECREATE A *Special Memory*

Have you ever gone on vacation and really enjoyed a beverage you had or an activity you did? Try to recreate this at home!

When you think about past vacations, think about some of the luxurious things that you enjoyed while there. One thing that always caught my attention on vacation were the enormous pitchers of water with watermelon chunks, sliced cucumber or lemon slices in them around the pool area – so very delicious and quite refreshing on a hot, summer day. Most of us don't flavor our water at home, so give this a try. Pick up some of your favorite fruits or vegetables and add them to your flat or sparkling water. Doing this can help you get in the vacation frame of mind and stay hydrated.



## PUT ON YOUR *Favorite Tunes*

What kind of music reminds you of your favorite non-staycation vacation? Is it reggae, classical or rock and roll? Whatever you like to listen to while on vacation, put that on at home. Play your favorite vacation music and have a dance party in your living room. Enjoy the music, let its melody remind you of safer days and shake it off. Staying active in a fun way will help you feel healthier and better overall. Have some fun, break a sweat and make a new staycation memory.

# You Can Still Have Fun at Home

A staycation has always been a great option for taking some time off and unwinding without having to travel or spend a lot of money. Now more than ever, this concept is very common. So many of us feel like we live, eat and study at home. This makes it difficult to view home as a relaxing, safe haven. But don't let that discourage you and stop you from taking some time off for you and for relaxation. There are still ways to give yourself a break at home and you deserve it. So, appreciate this time and enjoy your staycation.

## **About the Author:**

*Natalie-Jean Schiavone, PhD, has more than 20 years of experience in the healthcare industry. After receiving her Master's degree in General Psychology, Dr. Schiavone went on to complete her doctoral degree in Health Psychology with a specialization in obesity. Dr. Schiavone conducted her research and completed her dissertation on female adolescents with obesity and their social experiences. Using her education, experience and expertise, Dr. Schiavone works with patients to create a healthier lifestyle where knowledge is a key factor.*



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BREAK A SWEAT  
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Obesity Action Coalition

# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



PUBLIC EDUCATION



ADVOCACY



ANNUAL CONVENTION



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



VIBRANT COMMUNITY

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

**Through the OAC Community,  
you can get access to:**

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
- Community Discussion Forum
- Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE

**JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](http://OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN)**

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