

The Daily Item

HEALTH


Inside today
*Suit up for
broomball*
/E4

Section

E

Tuesday, July 16, 2002

The Daily Item / Tuesday, July 16, 2002 Page E3

Local

■ RECREATION

Ways to really enjoy summer

A-u-h, summertime! What a great season for getting in touch with your inner self and your outer world. Many of us are known to overextend, overcommit, and overindulge. So now is the perfect time for taking stock of our lives and taking time for ourselves. Just as we anticipated three-month summer vacations when we were schoolchildren we can still prepare for and create lower-key summers as adults. Hey, why not? The structure of school may be gone but the mental and physical health breaks don't have to be. Preferably, these types of activities are best practiced on a regular basis throughout the year; however, the more laid back schedule of summer provides more opportunities for engaging in a variety of stress-reducing and growth-enhancing experiences.

Here are some practical tips:

1. Relax! Acknowledge the new season and kick up your heels. Breaks are important for recharging the mind and body. Expensive vacations are not necessary; at home "down time" works just as well if not better.

2. Revel in the beauty of nature, from the chirping birds to the colorful display of assorted flowers to the smell of spare ribs on the barbecue. Crave the wonders of your world. Indulge your senses.

3. Read some of the books you never have time for. Warm weather is perfect for lying on the beach or in a hammock with a good novel.

DR. SYBIL HOLLOWAY

Thanks to Oprah, bookworms are now in style. So, visit your library or bookstore and crack some spines.

4. Rejuvenate with fun exercise such as aerobics, t'ai chi, tao-bo, or some other physical activity. This is an important but much overlooked health necessity. Stagnant bodies are more prone to illness and decay, so grab a ball, a jumprope, a pair of running shoes (or rollerblades) and get busy. What are you waiting for...winter?

5. Reap the bounty of delicious summer foods - ice cream cones, salads, lemonade, strawberries, shish-ke-bobs, and other picnic fare. Eat 'till your head and stomach are content. Relish in the many flavors, textures and aromas. Don't put your gut in a rut; explore the possibilities and make new edible discov-

eries.

A bonus tip: Rejoice in creativity. Pull out your drawing pencils and paints. Locate your journal. Sit at your piano and tickle the ivories. Put on your tap shoes. Art, writing, music, and dance are fun and stimulating ways to de-stress. Additionally, creative outlets such as these will enhance other areas of your life by adding inspiration to your work projects, innovation to your parenting skills, and intimacy to your relationships.

A healthy and balanced lifestyle requires attending to both body and mind. The above suggestions are just a few ideas to help you feel better, reduce stress, and maximize your summer experience. These are just for starters - feel free to add your own thoughts to this list.

■ Dr. Sybil L. Holloway is a Psychological Counselor at Bloomsburg University, and a freelance writer.

Copyright © 2002 by Sybil L. Holloway.
May not be reproduced without written permission from the author. Article was published in *The Daily Item* (Sunbury, PA) on July 16, 2002.