

Take time to recharge

Written by Julie Desmond
Tuesday, 09 April 2013 10:03

For many, the end of March is the beginning of Spring Break. School's out and families are forced to find a way to get through five or more days of alternative child care arrangements. But maybe the best arrangements you can make are for days off work. Whether you go away or stay and play, taking a break from work is good for you.

While many Americans have fewer than two weeks of paid vacation every year, many who do have time coming to them never take it. On average, people who are entitled to fourteen vacation days only use twelve. People are too busy to take time off; the work is still there when I get back, they say. Concerns about job security also keep people from taking much needed breaks.

Not taking vacation time can lead to the ultimate vacation, the permanent kind. According to various studies, men who do not use vacation time are somewhere between thirty and forty percent more like to have a heart attack than those who do. Women, too, are less likely to suffer a heart attack when there's time off on the schedule.

A vacation does not have to be an expensive long distance trek. While that kind is fun, it can also be stressful if money is a concern or planning is a hassle. A vacation from work can mean simply spending a few days spring cleaning with the kids. You sleep in, whip up some pancakes and maybe take a walk later on. That's a legitimate vacation which will provide you the kind of benefits a forty hour work week cannot give you: rest, relaxation and reconnection with family.

Away from the structure and routine of regular worklife, a vacation creates an opportunity to rethink who you are and where you are going in your career. You might get some creative perspective by being away from it all for a while. You might be able to curb a bad habit (like nailbiting) or take up a good one (like riding a bike). When you return to work, you can bring that new perspective along with you.

Vacations enable employees to recharge and return to work with new energy and focus. Taking the time you are entitled to is a favor to everyone: you, your family and your boss. It doesn't have to cost an arm or a leg, it doesn't have to be exotic; it just has to be time... away from work. Vacations of any kind last a lifetime, and just might make that lifetime last longer.

Julie Desmond is IT Recruiting Manager with George Konik Associates, Inc. and she is on vacation this week.