

Respite: as good as a holiday

by Josie Padro



Respite comes in all kinds of forms. In fact, respite looks different for each person. If digging in the garden for an afternoon renews your spirit, then it's respite. If you need a week at a seaside resort, that's respite too.

The important thing to remember is to take respite even when you don't think you need it. Regularly stepping away from your caregiving duties will help the person you care for become accustomed to getting assistance from others. When you really must have time away, your loved one will feel secure in your absence, and you may worry less, too. Many community organizations provide organized trips that can simplify planning and make it easier to get up and go. Some of these include Silver Harbour Senior's Activity Centre, Capilano Community Services Society Senior's Hub and West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre.

Continuing Educations programs through local universities and colleges offer a huge range of guided holidays. Check their calendars for excellent adventures like cooking classes in Tuscany, coffee lovers' trips to Nicaragua, or eagle-watching day trips.

You may want to check with your favourite resort; many offer special package deals during the low or shoulder seasons.

If taking a little trip is out of the question, create your own mini-holiday. Allow yourself a couple of hours at the local library or bookstore to browse through the titles. Visit an art gallery. Go for a walk. These simple activities will help you change your focus from your caregiving concerns to something else – and a change, they say, is as good as a holiday.

Tips for Happiness in Two Minutes or Less

Browse through a family photo album

Walk around the block

Inhale your favourite scent

Play your favourite music

Say hello to a neighbour

Smile

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