7 WAYS

TRAVEL IS SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN TO REDUCE STRESS

Feeling stressed? When life gets overwhelming we usually go for a nap, a bubble bath or a yoga class to help unwind and relax. But did you know that travel is one of the greatest ways to reduce stress? You probably already know that you'd feel better if you were sipping cocktails on a sunny beach somewhere, and now you've got the science to back you up. Here are 7 evidence-backed ways that travel reduces stress.

1 IT CAN HELP YOU STAY FIT & HEALTHY

Physical activity is great for improving both our physical and mental wellbeing, and travel offers plenty of opportunities to get moving. Whether you like walking around a new city, hiking mountain trails, or swimming in the ocean, getting active outdoors is a great way to reduce stress, boost energy levels and enhance your overall wellbeing. Spending just 20 minutes in contact with nature is proven to lower stress hormone levels, while the Framingham Heart Study found that people who travelled every year were less likely to suffer a heart attack or develop heart disease.

2 IT CAN HELP KEEP YOUR MIND SHARP

When you travel you meet new people, discover new places, adapt to new situations, and become more socially aware. New experiences help you keep your mind sharp and improve your cognitive flexibility, which all helps you manage stress. The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology found that those who travel are more likely to be open and emotionally stable, while other studies have shown that travel can increase creativity, cultural and personal awareness, and introduce new ways of thinking. You can use creativity to improve your daily routine, organise your life and figure out ways to reduce stress.

3 IT HELPS TO WARD OFF BURNOUT

Burnout happens when we're overworked and overstressed. One of the best ways to avoid burnout is to take regular time out to relax and recharge. And what better way to unwind than with a holiday? Whether it's a weekend trip or a getaway to tropical shores, a holiday is an enriching act of self-care. From the excitement of planning the trip to having the freedom to rest, be present and do what you love, travel reduces stress and helps to maintain a healthy mindset.

4 IT'S A BIG MOOD BOOSTER

Who doesn't feel good on a holiday? This study found that after just three days on holiday, the participant's quality of sleep, mood and physical complaints had all improved. Even better, these improvements were still there five weeks later. So why does travel make us feel so good? When we go on holiday, we're usually chasing the sunshine, and a dose of vitamin D is a big mood-booster. Leaving the stress of your everyday life behind, having the freedom to choose your schedule, and spending time with loved ones also adds to the feel-good factor.

5 IT CAN STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Enjoying the good times with your loved ones helps to strengthen your bonds and gives you wonderful memories to share and look back on in hard times. Solo travel can be just as refreshing and fulfilling, as you draw on your independence and get to know yourself better.

Travelling also increases empathy and fights prejudice in people. A travel survey found that 76 % of participants believe that travelling has given them a more positive outlook on differences, diversity and other cultures in general. And when you have a more positive outlook on the world, you'll likely have less stress!

6 IT SHAKES UP YOUR ROUTINE AND OFFERS A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Whether you're travelling to a new country or your neighbouring town, taking a break from your everyday routine can help break negative cycles and get you out of a stressful rut. Sometimes it's not about seeing new places, but escaping old ones, and this survey found that holidays can help manage negative emotions by taking us out of the environments that are causing us stress.

7 IT RELIEVES STRESS IN LASTING WAYS

So we now know that travel reduces stress. But if you're worried about finding the time and money for a big holiday – don't! This study found that a four-day "long weekend" holiday helped to reduce stress and enhance wellbeing and recovery for as long as 45 days. Participants felt less anxious, better rested, and in a better mood three days after returning home, and many said they felt more relaxed weeks later even after getting back into their daily routines.

The bottom line? When you travel, you give yourself the chance to rest, relax and rejuvenate. When you're well-rested and less stressed, you can approach your life, make decisions and manage stressful situations with a clearer head and a more positive outlook, which all contributes to improved overall wellbeing. Time to start planning your next holiday!

https://www.trafalgar.com/real-word/scientifically-proven-travel-reduces-stress/