

WELLBEING NUTRITION FITNESS HEALTH

Deborah Smith is a positive psychologist specialising in the science of happiness and mindfulness. She has more than 25 years' experience as a psychotherapist and is here to help, so email her at weightwatchers@seven.co.uk

Q I find it hard to switch off, even when I'm on holiday. I keep thinking about work and just can't properly relax. What can I do to help me unwind?

Natalie Grigg, Bristol

A This is a very common problem and it's such a shame to waste a chunk of our valuable holiday time trying to switch off. A holiday is a break from everyday life and should enable us to replenish our energy. So it is crucial to ensure you have a mental holiday, as well as a physical one.

You need to have the right mindset in order to be able to truly wind down. I recommend writing as a great tool that can help you let go of all the stress you're carrying with you on holiday. Every time you find yourself thinking about something you have forgotten to do, or need to do when you get back, note it down. How you do this is up to you – write it on a

notepad or type it into your phone. Personally, I prefer using good old-fashioned pen and paper. The point of this exercise is to offload any worries from your mind and let them go, rather than dwelling on them for days before you can relax. Tell yourself that you will deal with any non-holiday related issues when you return home, and until that time, give yourself permission to relax and enjoy yourself.

Also, try to bring your mind into the present moment and savour where you are and who you are with. Look around you, take in your surroundings and appreciate this precious time off from your daily life and work commitments.

Have a happy and relaxed holiday and enjoy every moment!



TALKING POINT

HOW TO STOP FEELING PRESSURED INTO ALWAYS SAYING 'YES'

1

THINK ABOUT IT FIRST

Don't rush to say yes when someone asks you to help out or take part in something. Instead, allow yourself time to really think about the question. Then, if you decide you don't want to do it, say no with confidence.

2

BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

Consider why you're saying yes – is it because you fear you'll receive a negative response if you say no? Or is it because you think saying yes will make you more likeable? Unless you say yes out of genuine willingness, don't say it.

3

MAKE YOUR OWN CHOICES

Don't focus on what others will think or say if you don't say yes. Friends and family will understand. And if someone doesn't, have a chat with them about how their expectations of you make you feel.

TRY IT
THIS
MONTH

MAKE MEMORIES

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...and as much time as you can.' Treasuring and enjoying every moment with them has far more value than anything money could ever buy.