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A Registered Investment Advisory Firm

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**Think of R&R²
Rest and Recreation, as well as Recovery and Rejuvenation**

Have you let the summer slide by without a vacation this year?

Well, autumn offers great opportunities for nature trips, winter ski trips, or a golf getaway. Whatever prevents you from thinking vacations are an unnecessary indulgence, throw that thought aside.

If you're back from a successful vacation, you know the true value of them. Look in the mirror and see that different person looking back at you. The person with a satisfied smile and bright eyes, confident and eager to take on challenges back at work. The person who also appreciates how much livelier and supportive the world looks.

Commonsense says we all need downtime to recharge and reengage. Of all the forms of downtime, vacations devoted to stimulating, motivating, and pleasurable activities must be the highest. In fact, health care professionals see vacations as a critical treatment modality for all kinds of stress related illnesses. Withdrawing from the pressure of work gives the mind a rest, and a rested mind is recognized as a very powerful healing force.

However, an Expedia survey a few years ago found that while Americans on average earn 18 vacation days annually, on average they only use 14 of them. Only 38% use all their earned vacation time. It's pretty obvious why. When our ancestors landed on American shores, they established a work ethic that is truly American, and over three centuries later, we still value hard work and productivity, seeing long hours as a badge of commitment. Ironically, European countries today favor much longer vacations and leaves of absence—and employees take them.

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Has the old Puritan work ethic finally bumped up against proof that work stress reduces energy, effectiveness, and creativity? Vacation time is good for your mind and body. And equally good for your emotions and relationships. Whether you plan it carefully or take off spontaneously, every vacation can bring great motivation along with great memories.

What are the most popular vacation themes? Beach resorts always seem to top lists, followed by adventure destinations, cultural experiences, sightseeing, family visits, theme parks, historical sites, nature encounters, food and wine, and of course romantic escapes. But not all great vacations are about long drives and flights, hotels and nightlife, tour guides, and foreign languages.

Staycations don't rely on long distances and new scenery, but put the value on wisely using time. For example, even from your home base you can discover unique daytrips and overlooked museums, and a wealth of cuisines you have never visited while in productivity mode. You don't need wilderness to find nature, and a hidden garden can challenge a distant horizon for beauty and inspiration. With a stack of books you can vacation back in time or forward in time or in real time, when you finally take the time for reading pleasures. Some that we have found most enjoyable are *Unbroken*, *Outliers*, *The Ultimate Gift*, *Richest Man in Town* and *Off Balance*.

Or, maybe the destination that you most want to reach is not outside but inside yourself, so long walks and spiritual exercise are your ideal choice. *Staycationers* simply advise that you give your electronics a rest, and break away from your housekeeping routines to make "staying" special.

Now that Labor Day has come around, you may think vacation time is over. Even though it sounds like a call to work, the holiday was never intended as a transition from escape to grind. And certainly it had nothing to do with putting white clothes away. So, if you had a special vacation this summer, instead of putting it away until the next one, dip back into the vacation mindset once in a while. It will energize your work success and lend greater meaning to why you do it.

Best Regards,

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