



# *Great Changes*

## **Mental Health Monthly**



**July 2026**

Vacations are frequently stressful due to high expectations for "perfect" memories, heavy planning, financial costs, and travel disruptions. Over-scheduling, navigating new environments, and difficulty separating from work also contribute to this anxiety, with 21% of adults reporting stress during time off.

<https://urnow.richmond.edu/features/article/-/21675/why-are-vacations-so-stressful.html>

### Key Reasons for Vacation Stress

- **High Expectations:** The desire for a "perfect" trip leads to disappointment if things go wrong.
- **Planning & Logistics:** The effort involved in booking and organizing, as well as navigating, can be overwhelming.
- **Routine Disruption:**  
Abruptly stopping work or changing daily habits can trigger stress.
- **Financial & Social Pressure:** High costs and managing group dynamics are significant stressors.



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- "Vacation Paradox": The anticipation of the trip is often more enjoyable than the reality.

### Tips for a Less Stressful Vacation

- Build in "Buffer Days": Schedule rest days upon arrival and before returning to work.
- Limit Activities: Avoid over-scheduling; focus on a few key experiences.
- Unplug: Actively disconnect from work emails and social media.
- Let Go of Perfection: Allow the trip to be flexible rather than strictly following a plan.
- Plan Ahead (But Not Too Much): Balance organization with spontaneous free time.