

Ep #49: Revisiting How to Truly Enjoy Your Time Away from Work



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With Your Host

Heather Branscombe

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Welcome to *Clinicians Creating Impact*, a show for physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists looking to take the next step in their careers and make a real difference in the lives of their clients. If you're looking to improve the lives of neurodiverse children and families with neurological-based challenges, grow your own business, or simply show up to help clients, this is the show for you.

I'm Heather Branscombe, Therapist, Certified Coach, Clinical Director, and Owner of Abilities Neurological Rehabilitation. I have over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, and I'm here to help you become the therapist you want to be, supporting people to work towards their dreams and live their best lives. You ready to dive in? Let's go.

Hi there, friend. I'm recording this episode along with a few other episodes at the very, very beginning of December knowing that this episode is going to come out just a few weeks before the end of the year. Now, if you're listening to this when it first comes out, many of us take off this time of year in the next few weeks. And even if you aren't taking time off in the next few weeks or if you want to and it's not possible, for so many of us at the end of the year there's minimally a couple of stat holidays coming up, which ultimately gives so many of us an opportunity to slow down and relax.

So I thought it would be helpful to share a replay of an episode I did earlier this year about how to truly enjoy your time away from work. As you listen to this episode, what was recorded in the late spring with summer holidays in mind, I'd invite you to think about the principles that I shared there that you could apply to this holiday season, if you're listening to when this episode comes out, or whenever you're listening to this podcast episode, even if your time away from work is short.

So, with that, enjoy the episode.

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Hi there, everybody. I just got back from an amazing two and a half week vacation. I want to tell you, it was everything I wanted it to be. And what it was, was super fun and I'm really happy to be back at work now.

My husband and I took a trip to Europe and we literally used all the modes of transportation. We used trains, planes, automobiles, as well as a massive cruise ship, again, to explore the UK, Spain, France and Italy. Doesn't that sound amazing? It sounds amazing to me, and I was there. It sounds amazing because it was amazing.

Even though I'm working through a tiny final bit of jet lag this week, it's caused me to reflect about how different this vacation was for me and I want to take some of my learnings and share them with you today. Vacation season is here. I mean it's always here really, isn't it? But I think with the summer just around the corner, I wanted to give you some tips to help you to get the most out of your next vacation, be it a day, a week, a month, or even longer.

So before we dive in, I first wanted to thank you so much for so many of you that have rated and reviewed the podcast. It is so helpful to spread the word. As you know, I really want to help clinicians and I know so many of you want to help your fellow friends and colleagues as well. And really, rating and reviewing this podcast is a great way to help to do this. So I wanted to read one of those today.

So, shout out to Beth who said this about the podcast. Beth says, "It's like Heather can read my thoughts as a therapist. She speaks her truth and genuinely wants to help other clinicians experience happiness and success." So thank you so much, Beth, for sharing that.

Ratings and reviews like the one that I just shared by Beth today really helps feed that algorithm so that when there is a clinician just like you who's doing a search because they really just need a little bit of help, this podcast can pop up as a resource for them. So please, again, go ahead and rate review this podcast so we can get the word out to help other clinicians.

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So, with that said, let's get back to the idea about vacations and how to maximize it, shall we? I don't know about you, but there was an earlier version of me that felt like it was almost super stressful to take time off from work. Does this ever happen to you?

What would happen to me is before I left I would feel this pressure to get reports out or other kinds of projects done. And I would feel anxious about what would happen when I was away. And maybe even feeling guilty about leaving. For me, really what that looked like was a pressure to make sure all my documentation was up to date, and if you've listened to the podcast, you know how much I don't enjoy documentation.

And things that I felt like I could just refer to the next day or maybe the next week suddenly felt like they all had a hard deadline because I had this last day of work before a vacation. So inevitably, when requests would come in from clients or other co-workers, especially in the lead-up to my vacation, I would feel this pressure to get it done right then and there or to add it to this list of what I needed to do before I left.

I'd also feel like I would need to do some kind of reading maybe, or listening to something that would help me to become a better clinician while I was actually away on vacation so that I could be a better version of myself when I came back from vacation.

And if I'm being truthfully honest, I used to check my emails all the time when I was away as well. So all of this resulted in a less restful vacation and I really, ultimately took away some of my own joy of going on vacation in the first place.

But let me tell you, this time was different. And let me tell you why. This time, I was so much more mindful and I actively coached myself through the preparation of the vacation itself. I noticed when I felt that stress and that anxiety that normally comes up before a vacation, and I even allowed it to be there.

It was a lot easier to both notice and to allow those feelings of pressure and anxiety because I decided ahead of time how I actually wanted to feel both

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before, during and after my vacation. Have you ever done that? If not, I totally invite you. This is your invitation to try that next time you're planning some time away from work.

How do you want to feel before, during and after your vacation? Really think about the feeling that you want to have. So for me, I wanted to feel peaceful before my vacation, rather than feeling pressured. I wanted to feel relaxed and present during the vacation. And then I wanted to feel connected after the vacation.

So once I figured that out, I then asked what I needed to believe about work to generate those feelings. So in preparation for my work, the thought that I had that really helped me to feel peaceful as I prepared for my vacation is that I work with an amazing team that can help me. Now, first, that was super easy for me to believe because I really do believe that to be true and I have a lot of evidence for that to be true. I really do work with some of the most amazing people. Again, they're not perfect people, but people who really do want to help others, including myself.

So that peaceful feeling allowed me to decide much more easily what really needed to get done before I left and what could be deferred until after I came back. And then finally, what could actually even be delegated to other people. And finally, what could be dropped entirely.

Have you ever heard of the four Ds of time management? It goes something like you either do, defer, delegate, or drop. I actually really love these and I use those kinds of strategies of the four Ds all the time. But notice how different feelings can make those kinds of quick hacks or action items feel easier or harder to do.

So if I was feeling something like pressure, using this kind of four D strategy hack would be a lot less effective. It'd be less effective because if I'm feeling pressure because I believe I need to do these things on my own and I need to do them at the end, it would be a lot harder to choose some of these items to

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delegate. Pressure might also make it feel more challenging to drop things or even to defer things.

So for me, pressure feels like everything needs to be done right now. Whereas peace allows me more space to see things about how they really are, what's actually true. So this is why choosing your feeling and understanding the thought that can really create that feeling can be so important for you.

So, peace might not be what you choose to feel as you prepare to leave work. You might choose to feel something like confident, excited, determined or something else. There's no wrong answer to this. I just want to offer that choosing that feeling in advance creates a higher likelihood that you're actually going to generate that feeling.

So while I was away, relaxed and present were the feelings that I chose to create. So what I decided that I needed to believe was there was no hurry and there was so much to learn. Both of those thoughts, they really helped me to generate those feelings. Even when plane flights were delayed, jet lag set in from the nine and a half hour overnight flight to my original destination. And even when it rained on our only day in Tuscany.

It really allowed me to give myself permission to sleep in, to experience all the senses in the new areas that I explored, and really to just roll with the unexpected. I also firmly believe that it allowed me the random opportunities of enjoying something like a free Uber ride to the airport in the UK from a complete stranger, to connect with a lovely couple of fellow Canadians on a cruise ship, and just to enjoy the time alone with myself and with my husband along the way.

When I got back, I generated that feeling of connection I was looking for with my team and with myself by setting myself up for success for the first day back. And I did that with the thought that there is no hurry. I shouldn't be penalized for taking a break.

So this first week back I've not over scheduled myself. I've allowed myself to be tired and to do work anyways. And I took time to slowly connect with the rest of

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the team, including you. I consider you part of my team as I record this on my first Friday back from vacation.

The result of all this planning, preparation and thought work is that I really did maximize the value of this vacation. I have come back relaxed and ready to create a bigger impact for both myself and those around me. And I want that for you as well.

We only have so much time away from work, what if you took some extra preparation to truly make the most of it? What if you asked yourself how you want to feel before, during and after your time away from work? And then asked yourself what you needed to believe to generate that feeling? And then what if you actually chose to believe it? How would that change the impact of your vacation, both on you and with those you work with?

I'd love for you to spend some time and think about that. Then give it a try and let me know how it goes. I would love to hear about it. And I can't wait to see the impact that you make with it. Thanks so much for listening, and I'll talk to you soon.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could leave a rating and review to let me know what you think and to help others find *Clinicians Creating Impact*.

It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I'd really want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. To learn more about me and the work that I do, visit my website at www.abilitiesrehabilitation.com/clinicianscorner to download your free Getting it All Done at Work process and to see what I'm up to. Thanks so much.

Thanks for joining me this week on the *Clinicians Creating Impact* podcast. Want to learn more about the work I'm doing with Abilities Rehabilitation? Head on over to abilitiesrehabilitation.com. See you next week.