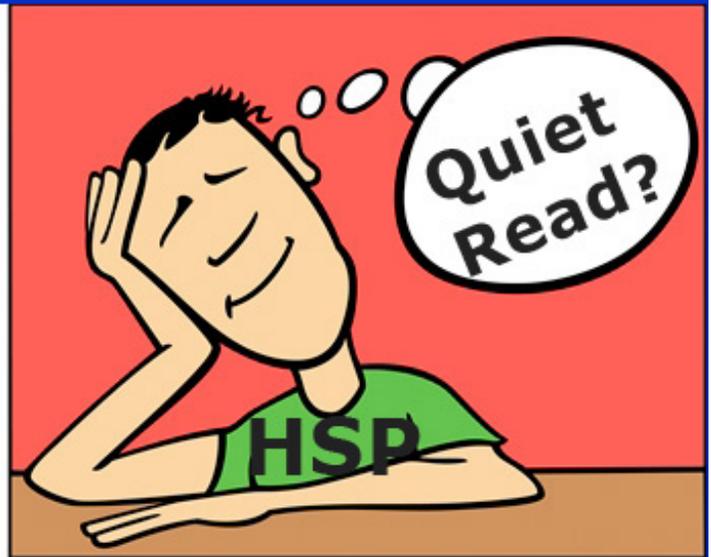


Summer Travel Tips for HSPs and Empaths

We found an excellent article about Sensitive Summer Travel on Elaine Aron's website, although it's meant for highly sensitive people, we think most of us can take a few pointers from it to assure an enriching, self-nourishing vacation.

What Does *Your* Perfect Vacation Look Like?



www.BioElectricShield.com

I hope you can take some time off this summer. You probably made your plans long ago, but this may help **you** for next year, or simply validate that you are already taking vacations that respect your sensitivity.

Let's begin with planning what's ideal for you, and later turn to the compromises you may have to make when travelling with others. Only some of these suggestions will suit you, but perhaps they will start you thinking.

Off to the Right Start

Plan a free day at home before you leave in order to feel relaxed and organized when you depart. More important, leave a free day after you return to make a smooth reentry. (Note from AnnaMariah - I've found the day after a trip to be critical for re-entry into the "real world" with a lot less stress. Besides, the suitcases get unpacked, and perhaps even the laundry done...or at least sorted.)

Do not feel obliged to plan an elaborate vacation.

Advertising can convince us we will be happiest in exotic places. This all depends on how much of a sensation seeker you are, plus how much risk you can tolerate should the exciting, exotic place turns out to be hot and buggy, and your room lacks air conditioning and window screens.

HSPs can also be high sensation seekers (HSSs)

(See Comfort Zone, [May 2006](#); [Vol 4, issue 3, 1999](#); Vol 6, Issues [2](#) and [3](#), 2001), but the HSP part does not like risks, disappointing surprises, or discomforts, so you may have an inner battle to see that the needs of both the HSS and HSP sides of you are met.

Simplicity is an old vacation tradition.

At one time people went every year to the same beach cottage, cabin in the woods, house at the lake, campground in the mountains, or resort hotel where they were treated as regulars. Family. This may be your year to repeat your favorite vacation and even to think of it as your yearly spot.

Prefer a little more variation?

Go to the same area but not the same place to stay. Try the new bed and breakfast you noticed last year. My husband and I repeat the same vacation year after year, sort of. We go on self-guided walking trips in France, but in a different area each year.

Locale may be all that matters to you.

Most people, but especially HSPs, like to be near water. Mountains and forests provide a sense of peace. Deserts can awaken the transcendent. Warm tropical nights can feel like Mother is holding you. If you love the setting, add some good food (perhaps simply your own cooking with local ingredients), and you may have the ideal vacation.

Finally, consider the HSP Home Stay program.

Try the HSP Stay at Home Program



www.BioElectricShield.com HSPs around the country have signed up to have other HSPs stay with them. It's like being at a B & B except it's quiet, you can be as introverted as you like, have your host inform you about what would appeal to you in the area, and pay only \$10, or a little more for couples and families. (sorry when updating in 2014, this link was no longer working)

Vote for Simplicity with Your Dollars

As soon as vacationers arrive at their tourist destination they are bombarded with opportunities to snorkel, bob sled, bungee jump, hang glide, balloon, ride old trains, go out in search of whales or rhinos, and tour everything from the weirdest-ever caves to doll museums. To me, it is as if people who already live at a killing pace are pulled into vacationing in the same way without having a chance to relax and reflect on their choices.

Of course, do not keep it simple if you are chronically understimulated the rest of the year - perhaps caring for a shut in or doing monotonous work in a cubicle. Live it up.

Usually, however, HSPs start their vacations overstimulated, and the last thing they need is to rise the next day before dawn for a bumpy ride into the hinterland by jeep to enjoy sunrise from the rim of a volcano, switching to mule back for reaching the top, and then bicycling down a steep road in order to go white water rafting so you can ride a camel just for the fun of it before getting on the bus for a tour of the local cheese factories. Try to resist.

Another reason to refuse all of this marketing is that you will spend more money than you planned, which can truly ruin an HSP's good time.

Sleep, Sleep, Sleep

Especially keep it simple the first few days, until you settle down into a less speedy pace. Make sleep your first priority. Most people are sleep deprived, and even if you are not, sleeping helps heal from the stress of the life you are taking a break from. If you keep things simple, you will probably begin to notice feeling sleepy after lunch. Go with that. Spend some afternoons just napping by an open window with the breezes playing across your lightly blanketed body. Now there's excitement - a different way to sleep!

When not sleeping, perhaps your next priority is just chilling in nature.

Maybe then your mind can finally wander where it wants to, or perhaps you will begin more deliberate reflections. This is meeting your "need to process." You have an entire year to digest, consciously or in a lazier, subconscious way. Nature provides the needed peace and perspective.

Play as Planned and Dreamed

Do your favorite activities. You might have a list of things that you normally do not have time to do. Turn to this list when you are ready to be more active, or when you want to resist the pressure from others that you simply must learn to water ski. Perhaps what you want is to sketch, knit, do wood carving, write real letters on real paper, play the guitar and find you have written a song, or meditate - or meditate more than you can back home.

Often all I want is day after day out of doors. Rain or shine, clouds or sun, for me it's all part of the Nature Cure. Yes, rain. In the right rain gear, you will enjoy having your favorite haunts to yourself while seeing their more introspective, modest side. By the way, getting soaked is not always such an awful thing if you can change into dry clothes later.

Consider the meaning of your dreams

(Comfort Zone, [Volume VI, Issue 4, November 2001](#); [Volume VIII, Issue 1, February 2003](#); [Volume II, Issue 2, May 1997](#)): As an HSP, yours are especially intense and interesting. All of your dreams are comments on your life, especially those in which you feel strong emotion. You'll remember more of them because you won't be waking to an alarm clock, and as you get more sleep, your dreams will become more vivid.

Read something special (Comfort Zone, [May 2007](#)). Browse for a couple of hours, yes hours, at a good old fashioned library, where there are people who will recommend books without needing to sell you anything.

Watch Out for Start-of-Vacation Gloom

The beginning of a vacation is not always as pleasant as planned. You are still tired, adjusting to a new environment, maybe distressed by whatever is not quite the way you hoped it would be, and getting used to spending extra time with your travelling companions.

Above all, if at home you are usually overstimulated, the first few days of vacation may involve coming down from an adrenaline-cortisol high. "Having nothing to do" can be a problem during this phase. Believe me, you will soon get used to your simpler life, and perhaps even change your behavior back home because of it. At first, however, it can be surprisingly painful even for some HSPs to stop the rushing around.

You also have to let go of the vision of the Perfect Vacation.

My husband and I have a saying for when the hike turns into a hot and dusty walk to nowhere or the most recommended restaurant for miles around is closed on the only day we can go. We call it "Luck of the trail." Around the next bend you may find the perfect sunset.

But Probably You are Not Alone on Vacation (and Would Not Really Want to Be)

Before setting out with one or more loved ones, be sure you have discussed what you and everyone else hopes will happen.

Listen, plan time and spending fairly, respect everyone's hopes, and point out when these are too high. Above all, however, figure out what you need and stand up for it, and stand up for it again as often as you must. You, too, need certain things to happen during this vacation too - maybe even more than the others.

Compromise of course.

A vacation with the less sensitive cannot be dictated by the most sensitive. At times you may have to split up or choose to stay behind by yourself. When you decide not to join the others and then they have a great time, try to be patient with yourself.

I remember traveling in France and Italy with my infant son, my husband, and two of my single girl friends. We were near Monaco, and they wanted to go to its glamorous casinos to taste whatever that is for one night of their life. My husband thought we could manage it by taking turns watching our son while he slept in the car.

I told them to go without me, knowing my son and I badly needed a good night's sleep. My son got it, while I lay awake in a strange hotel room, painfully regretting that I had stayed behind while they had this exciting, shared experience. I had to tell myself that mistakes will be made. In ten years - probably in one week - it will not matter. (I harbor no lingering desire to gamble at Monaco.)

If you go along with the others on something and it is even worse than you feared, remember it was your decision. Or it should have been. Take full responsibility, even if you went along for the sake of others. Remember the times when going along with some exhausting-sounding activity turned out to be one of your best memories.

Bon voyage.

Elaine Aaron

<http://www.hsperson.com/index.html>

[How can you make this vacation RELAXING, not one you need a vacation to recover from?](#)

Read More about [Highly Sensitive People and the BioElectric Shield](#)

Here's a test we found on another website - [get clear on your perfect vacation](#)