

# Cultural Daily

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## Tips for Managing Your Mental Health While Traveling

Our Friends · Thursday, February 20th, 2020

When planning a trip, we have a romantic idea of the perfect getaway, full of adventure and relaxation.

The thing is, traveling is just another bit of life. For those who struggle with their mental health, it doesn't stop at the plane door, so it is essential to be prepared when you go traveling.

Going on a trip or traveling can be chaotic and overwhelming, as much as it can replenish your soul.

You have to bring so many different moving parts together to organize a trip that one small thing beyond your control could throw everything off. And visiting new places, one never knows what stressors and triggers may arise.

While this could be off-putting, we have a few tips about how to manage and maintain your mental health during a trip. Read on to learn more so that you don't have to miss out.

### Plan Ahead

Many travelers love to embrace spontaneity when they are off on the road, but that's not true for everyone. For others, the unknown can be a source of anxiety.

Try to plan as much as you can. Plan what you will do each day, when the best time for specific excursions is, how you will get around, and where you will eat, for instance. Research before you go on your trip, which are the best streets to walk, or what are the best forms of public transport.

Reducing the unknowns can help you feel more confident and minimize the unexpected. There are also plenty of apps and travel agents out there if this kind of planning can get overwhelming.

### Emotional Support Animal

Emotional support animals are prescribed for a range of conditions such as depression, PTSD, panic attacks, and personality disorder. Once prescribed by a therapist, such animals offer comfort and companionship, helping to alleviate discomfort during challenging situations.

In the U.S., if you want to travel with your emotional support animal on a plane, you can! You don't have to put off your trip to the West Coast from the East Coast because you can't have your emotional support dog with you, for instance. To do this, you should apply for an [emotional](#)

[support dog letter](#), and then you will be able to take your dog into the cabin with you.

(Note, this often isn't recognized outside of the U.S.)

### **Stress-relief Toolkit**

Clinical psychologist Ryan Howes [says](#) what you rely on at home is likely to work on vacation, whether that's journaling, positive affirmations, clutching a stress ball, or deep breathing. Whatever you usually do to practice self-care at home will be just as useful while you are away.

Creating a stress-relief kit can help you when you are struggling and be a source of comfort, knowing that you have it with you to rely on.

### **Schedule Rest and Self-care**

Traveling can be tiring as you'll usually be more active than usual, and you'll be taking in new sights and places, so it is essential to plan downtime. If you plan to take that downtime in a cafe, park, or by the beach, that can still be a great way to see a new place, just at a more relaxed pace.

Tiredness and stress exacerbate many different mental health problems, so it is essential to take time to recuperate throughout your trip.

### **Talk to a Professional**

A mental-health-care provider will be able to help you before you head out on your trip. They may advise you on any medications you're taking, or suggest things to avoid when you are away. It would also be wise to set up a communication system with your therapist as part of your plan.

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