

# How to Create a Mental Health Break When You're Broke

By Sherilyn V. Anderson



Life is straight-up challenging for a lot of us right now. We need a mental break and would love to go on a luxurious vacation somewhere, but can't go anywhere because our money is funny and our change is strange. Although our finances can make us feel like options are limited, mental well-being should never be put on the back burner. Think about it. If we cut ourselves, we at least clean the wound and put a bandage on it. The same amount of effort should be

put toward our mental health. That's why we'll explore a few ways to create mental health days when there isn't much money to spare.

## **Have a Staycation At Home**

[A staycation is a fantastic way to relax](#) and rejuvenate without leaving your home or spending much money. Start by arranging your home like a hotel or resort. Make your bed with fresh sheets, tidy up, and create a vacation-like atmosphere ( if necessary put the extra clutter in another place, so that it doesn't detract from the vacay vibe). Then, plan some activities you enjoy but rarely have time for. Start reading that book you bought two years ago or pop popcorn and binge-watch that show your friends have been telling you about. If the weather is nice, have a leisurely meal in the backyard or on the balcony using real dinnerware just as you would at a nice restaurant. Lounging and relaxing at home can feel just like a real getaway without the hefty price tag.

## **Checkout Free or Low-Cost Resources**

Many cities and communities offer free or low-cost resources for relaxation and leisure. [Local libraries](#) have free access to books, magazines, and exhibits. Look online to see what they have scheduled. Explore nearby parks and nature trails to commune with nature, sing with the birds, and get a breath of fresh air. Museums and cultural centers often have discounted or free admission days. In my city, the Museum of Art has free general admission every day. Take

advantage of these resources because they can provide a budget-friendly mental recharge.

## **Practice mindfulness and Meditation**

Meditation is more than sitting with your legs crossed and repeating “Ohm.”

There are many ways to do it, but if you’re not sure how to begin there are plenty of free apps and online resources that offer guided meditation sessions in which you are given directions, so you won’t feel awkward. Find a quiet spot at home, in your car, or in nature. Close your eyes and focus on breathing.

[Mindfulness](#) can help you center yourself and reduce stress without spending a dime.

## **Explore Hobbies**

Engaging in hobbies you’re passionate about is a cost-effective way to unwind and clear your mind. Whether it’s drawing, playing an instrument, cooking, or gardening, [hobbies can provide a sense of accomplishment and joy](#). More than likely you already have the materials you need to do it, so not having money isn’t a problem. You just need some time. A friend of mine loves gardening but doesn’t get to do it often. She is at peace digging in the dirt and is peacock proud of any vegetables she gets to harvest. She posts pictures on her social media pages, even if it's just one carrot.

## **Connect with Supportive Friends or Family**

Spending quality time with loved ones can be incredibly therapeutic. Reach out to friends or family members who understand your situation and your need for a mental break. You can enjoy a picnic, go for a walk, or have a movie night together. One of my friends has offered to let me use her guest bedroom as a respite. She even said she wouldn't bother me if I didn't feel like talking. May your friends and family understand your personality quirks, but love and support you anyway as [social connections](#) are a vital part of mental health and don't require much money.

## **DIY Spa Day**

Treat yourself to a [spa day at home](#). Gather inexpensive spa essentials like Epsom salt, essential oils, and face masks. Run a relaxing bath, light a few candles, create a calming playlist and pamper yourself with a spa treatment. Add a little razzle-dazzle by purchasing a new nail polish in a color completely different from what you usually wear. The new color will make it feel like a new experience.

## **Delve Into Free Educational Resources**

You're already stressed out, so rather than waste hours comparing your life to the staged lives on social media, consider exploring free educational resources online. Many universities and organizations offer free courses on a variety of

subjects through platforms like Coursera,edX, and Alison. [Learning something new](#) can be intellectually stimulating and provide a sense of accomplishment. It's a definite plus because you could learn a new skill that helps you earn some extra cash.

## **Practice Gratitude and Reflection**

Finally, take time to reflect on your life and practice gratitude. Write down the things you're grateful for, set goals for your mental well-being, and consider what changes you can make to reduce stress and increase happiness.

Self-reflection costs nothing and can be immensely beneficial because it lifts your mood and changes your mindset when you can look at a list of things you can give thanks for.

Remember, your mental health is priceless and should always be a priority. The time you invest in [self-care](#) is always worth it. Now, go plan your regeneration.