

LIFE IN **BALANCE**

Your guide to healthy living.

No Cost Summer Fun

It's that time of year, when kids are out of school, and parents give thought to "what to do with the kids?" However, it's not always feasible to do family activities that cost money. Purse strings can be tight in the summer due to additional expenses of children not in school. So, we'd like to offer some suggestions on "No Cost Summer Fun"! Discover.com offered a wonderful selection of ideas.

GO ON A PICNIC

A picnic with family or friends is a way to have fun without spending money, and you can go to your favorite outdoor spot or use it as an opportunity to explore someplace new.



GO TO NO-COST MUSEUM AND ZOO DAYS

If you have museums or zoos in your area, check out their websites to see if they offer days when you can visit without paying admission.

GIVE GEOCACHING A TRY

It's based on a simple idea: People have hidden more than 3 million treasure stockpiles (known as geocaches) all around the world, and it's your job to find them using only a GPS on your smartphone.

LEVERAGE YOUR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Many towns and cities offer no-cost festivals, music nights and other events. This is an easy way to enjoy your hometown, socialize with friends and mix up your activities on evenings out—all without opening your wallet.

VISIT A FARMERS MARKET

If you're a frugal foodie, farmers markets in your hometown can offer affordable, fresh produce. You can also check out the market and turn it into a nice walk or outdoor picnic.

TAKE A HISTORICAL CITY TOUR

Did you know that no-cost historical walking tours are available in many cities? To find out if one is available, search for "walking tour" on the website of the historical society, city or chamber of commerce.



DO A PHOTOGRAPHY CHALLENGE

Google "photography challenge" to find lists of things to take pictures of each day for a set period of time. Items like "take a picture of something abandoned" can turn your photography into a real hometown treasure hunt.

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CHECK OUT BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY

It's a great way to spend time with family, as well as finding hidden reading or viewing treasures. In some locations, you can get access to free passes to museums and other local cultural attractions.



VOLUNTEER

There are tons of organizations in your area that can use your help right now. Your family could meet new friends, feel good about helping the residents of your hometown, and even develop new skills.

TAKE A HIKE

Hiking is a great way to see nature and get great exercise, even if you live in a large city. To find trails near you, check out websites like AllTrails, which provides detailed trail maps, trail reviews and crowdsourced trail photos. You can carpool with friends to save on gas and combine hiking with another fun outdoor activity like bird-watching or geocaching.



FIND A FUN "MEET-UP" GROUP

Speak a foreign language? Interested in home-brewing beer? How about spelunking? Meetup.com provides a way to find other locals with similar interests.

GO BIRD-WATCHING

Even if you're not a bird expert, with your checklist of all the birds you've ever seen handy at all times, this could be a new hobby and a fun thing to do without spending money.

There are so many more ideas if you just give a little thought. The idea is to spend time as a family, and enjoy the time together. Making happy memories is a treasure for your children. There's a nice list of ideas so far that offer a great opportunity to make those memories...so why not try a few of those mentioned here?



Are You Having Difficulty Setting Limits at Work?

Do you find yourself worrying about work, when you're not at work? Are you getting to the office excessively early or staying late? Do you feel guilty for taking vacation time? Here's some ways to set limits at work to avoid burnout.

Be realistic with your goals, as you make your "To Do" list at work. Getting everything done by yourself maybe unrealistic.

Identify what items are most important and need to get done within your designated time frame.

Let go of items that are able to be delegated.

Setting a time limit in order to get a project done will help you stay on task and not waste valuable time.

Don't say "yes" to every project or request, if you aren't able to fulfill the request. Declining won't make you look bad. What you can't do now, maybe you can do at a different time, or suggest an alternative solution.

Ask for help! You'll not only get what you need, but you'll also strengthen the team by being able to work together.

Lastly, when you're on vacation, resist the temptation to "check-up" on work. You've earned those days off, so work on enjoying them without the need to worry about work.



Flag Day is Celebrated on June 14.

Here are some interesting facts about Flag Day!

- In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation that officially established June 14th as Flag Day; in August 1949, National Flag Day was established by an Act of Congress.
- The first recognized formal observance of Flag Day was at the Stony Hill School in Waubeka, WI in 1885 where Bernard J. Cigrand was the teacher. He stuck a small American Flag in his inkwell on his desk and asked his students to write about what the American flag meant to them. He's considered to be the Father of Flag Day.
- Robert G. Heft designed the current 50-star U.S. flag in 1958. He was 17 years old at the time and did the flag design as a class project. He initially got a B- for his efforts. When he went to his teacher to ask for a higher grade, the teacher stated he'd reconsider when Congress adopts Heft's design for the new flag (somewhat as a joke). Heft's design was chosen & adopted by presidential proclamation in 1959—and his grade was changed from a "B-" to an "A."

Source: [wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_Day_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_Day_(United_States))

What is Emotional Eating?

Emotional eating (or stress eating) is using food to make yourself feel better—eating to satisfy emotional needs, rather than to satisfy physical hunger. You might reach for a pint of ice cream when you're feeling down, order a pizza if you're bored or lonely, or swing by the drive-through after a stressful day at work.

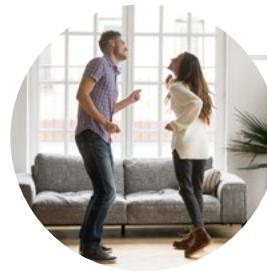
Occasionally using food as a pick-me-up, a reward, or to celebrate isn't necessarily a bad thing. But when eating is your primary emotional coping mechanism—when your first impulse is to open the refrigerator whenever you're stressed, upset, angry, lonely, exhausted, or bored—you get stuck in an unhealthy cycle where the real feeling or problem is never addressed.

In order to reduce emotional eating, you have to find other ways to fulfill yourself emotionally. It's not enough to understand the cycle of emotional eating or even to understand your triggers, although that's a huge first step. You need alternatives to food that you can turn to for emotional fulfillment.

ALTERNATIVES TO EMOTIONAL EATING:



If you're depressed or lonely, call someone who always makes you feel better, play with your dog or cat, or look at a favorite photo or cherished memento.



If you're anxious, expend your nervous energy by dancing to your favorite song, squeezing a stress ball, or taking a brisk walk.



If you're bored, read a good book, watch a comedy show, explore the outdoors, or turn to an activity you enjoy (woodworking, playing the guitar, shooting hoops, scrapbooking, etc.).



Use "mindful eating" techniques. Mindful eating is a practice that develops your awareness of eating habits and allows you to pause between your triggers and your actions.



If you're exhausted, treat yourself with a hot cup of tea, take a bath, light some scented candles, or wrap yourself in a warm blanket.

Emotional hunger can't be filled with food. You can find healthier ways to deal with your emotions, learn to eat mindfully instead of mindlessly, and finally put a stop to emotional eating.

Adapted from: www.helpguide.org/articles/diets/emotional-eating

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