

## Holistic holidays

The latest trend for busy workers is to take a 'well-being' holiday, combining the benefits of getting away from it all with activities ranging from yoga to life coaching. However, what is a heavenly break for some people would be a nightmare for others.

1 Work with your partner and check you know the meaning of these words.

yoga	pilates	spa massage	detox
life coaching	mudbath	floatation tank	

**Holistic:** based on the idea that you should take care of your whole body and mind, rather than just treating the part of the body that is ill.

(Definition from *Macmillan English Dictionary* © Macmillan Publishers Limited)

2 Scan the article and find words from exercise 1 in just one minute. Underline the words.

### A holiday in heaven ... or in hell

For today's stressed executives, there is no better way to forget the credit crunch than taking some kind of a break. The latest trend in the holiday world is to take a 'holistic' break, sometimes called a 'well-being' holiday. This type of holiday could include yoga, pilates, or a shiatsu massage, a Japanese-style therapeutic massage. There are weekend packages which allow you to detox, or even go in for some rather more way-out therapies, such as singing and tree hugging.

There are many choices for those wanting to escape. Visiting the medicinal waters at an old-fashioned spa town is, once more, fashionable. If you want to get back in control of your life, you can improve yourself on a so-called life coaching holiday. Such weekends might include physical workouts, and are even being used by companies to identify potential leaders. There are those who swear that the best stress-buster of all is a 'floatation tank' where you can relax in a salt bath.

Holistic breaks are all about taking care of both 'body and mind', and not just about pampering yourself. If you think these breaks are just for the girls, think again! There's even beauty treatments for men on offer.

This latest craze for going on a retreat is not without its critics. In the new and unregulated market of holistic holidays, companies can get away with murder. What's to stop them employing amateurs, throwing in a few vegetarian meals and then charging whatever they like? These critics point out the potential dangers of de-stressing; 'letting go' of too many negative thoughts without the supervision of a qualified psychotherapist could be dangerous. For many, the idea of lying for hours in a mudbath holds little or no appeal, and getting back to nature is pure nonsense. Still, whatever kind of break you want - enjoying good food or going on a diet, getting in touch with your inner being or reinventing yourself - one thing is sure: there are plenty of 'holistic holidays' to choose from.

3 Read the whole article. What are the benefits of a 'holistic holiday'? What do the critics say about these breaks?

4 Find words in the article from the following definitions.

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| (a) forms of treatment for an illness or medical condition                              | (paragraph 1) |
| (b) looking after someone well, making them feel comfortable or giving them nice things | (paragraph 2) |
| (c) something that suddenly becomes very popular, but for only a short time             | (paragraph 3) |
| (d) not controlled by a government or other official organization                       | (paragraph 3) |
| (e) having the education or experience to do a particular job                           | (paragraph 3) |

(Definitions from or based on *Macmillan English Dictionary* © Macmillan Publishers Limited)

5 Work in small groups. Your company has agreed to send all the staff on a weekend away and has given you the following options. Decide which of these three breaks you would like to take. Compare your choices with other groups.

#### Well-being holiday

Yoga - Shiatsu massage -  
Floatation tanks  
*Go on - spoil yourself!*

#### The 'natural way'

Includes a 2-day Detox  
Walk and sing your troubles away  
Will leave you bursting with energy!

#### Life coaching

Get back in control in the workplace  
Outdoor team-building exercises  
Picos de Europa, Spain