



Without A Trace

'Running away will never make you free'
Kenny Loggins

I was told a story about a woman who was the wife of an affluent businessman with political aspirations . She was always immaculately groomed, articulate and the mother of three children. Her home was orderly, active at her children's school and made sure every meal was home-cooked. One morning, after dropping the children at school, she disappeared. Extensive police searches, cellphone tracking and eyewitness reports revealed that she has gone to live in a monastery. She did not want to return home or to public life. I am not sure if she ever did.

As a psychologist, I often hear the words: 'I wish I could just run away from it all' or ' I wish I could just disappear'. Have you ever felt that way? I certainly have. There seems to be this desire to flee - in the hope that our troubles won't follow us. For those that have attempted this, they will tell you that you can't run away from yourself. They will attest to the fact that history does in fact repeat itself and old unresolved personality and life issues do surface once more.

Every escape story has a theme of simplicity – working in an ice cream shop, bookstore or bakery. A place of apparently simple choices and satisfied customers. People feel hindered by their circumstances and responsibilities.





Supermoms – caring for their homes, families, pets, colleagues, garden, neighbours, friends, etc etc. No wonder they declare a deep desire to run away – even if just for a single day!

Why is it that we fail to take a single day off from expected routines? My patients give me complete resistance? It seems easier for people to contemplate running away from busy lives than taking a day off for themselves. Worse still, whenever a person does take a day off, it is spent at the bank, licensing office and food store. This is not what is meant by a day off. Instead, two hours at the spa for a luxurious back massage, a long meditative walk in a nurturing setting, attending an uplifting talk or even a chat with a trusted friend , comes closer to a real day off. So does staying in your pajamas, surrounded by your favorite movies and comforting snacks. What will you do to nurture your soul and give your body the much needed rejuvenation?

Reflection

- **What would constitute a perfect day off in your life?**
- **What stops you from taking it?**
- **Just do it!**

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