

## **“A day at the beach”**

**By Andrew Freirich**

As our feet inhabit the soft smooth warmth of sand between our toes and our eyes glance out beyond the horizon, where crystal blue turns into soft white. Summer is here! Friends, food, fun, relaxation mixed with with some great beach activities, makes for a perfect day! As we continue our slow meander on the beach, looking for our special location, where we will call home for the day, there is much around us to influence our decision, and we all know what I am referring to. Most days like this, our five senses get a great workout. As we un-load our blankets, towels, beach chairs, coolers, and other assorted beach necessities, including the absolutely necessary sun protection, we begin to mentally get in the groove of the moment.

What a splendid way of spending the day. I like to start my day at the beach by taking a walk, near waters edge, absorbing the energy of the sun, salty air, while listening to the low tide crash down upon the shoreline. If you peer down the coast line, your path is already mapped for you, but much of the time, I usually just go with the flow, and allow nature to guide me as to how and what I will do along the way. At times, I like to find an elevated perch on the sand, and look out into the deepness of the sea, while becoming at one with the infinite royal blue water. I slowly take in mouthfuls of fresh ocean air, filling my lungs, I think of how peaceful this moment is. I am living in the present, just like the book “The Present” by Spencer Johnson. which says, one must fully engage in the “now” that is the “present“. I make a good effort to follow those teachings. Slow breaths, clear mind, take in the beauty of the moment and your environment.

After several minutes, I continue my walk, and somehow, go off in what one calls “environmental hypnosis”. Did you ever find yourself getting from point A to point B, and feel like time was lost, but you remember every detail of your thoughts. It happens to me on occasion, and still leaves me in awe. I find myself back to where I started, home base, two miles later. I am filled with a new energy, and encourage the others at their own leisure to do the same. What I love so much about a day or weekend at the beach is that, if prepared, you can virtually fulfill a plethora of many of your favorite past times. I settle in to my new beach chair, open one of the coolers, which is filled with the most delicious and succulent seasonal fruits. We prepared them earlier at the house. Each container is filled with an assortment of colorful mouth watering, kiwi, mango, papaya, melon, and strawberry’s that burst with savor onto your pallet Yogurt and honey is added on top. I am in heaven. There is absolutely nothing like a fresh fruit breakfast. Not only is it so healthy for you, but also it adds to the moment, whiling giving me the energy later on to accomplish some of my more strenuous activities, followed by a great summer book.

After a very satisfying breakfast, I engage in a some great conversation with my good friends. Relaxed in our beach chairs, and on top of blankets, at first we cover the typical topics, work, relationships and family, but then we find our selves talking about, things that we aspire to do, things we daydream about. We laugh and find comfort in the fact that we all are in search of peace and happiness all in our own way, and that we all share a perpetual journey in our lives. At that point I pull a football out of my bag, and toss it over to one of my more attractive friends. She responds by pointing the way for a pass. I go into a short jog, and she surprisingly, puts the ball squarely into my chest. I salute touchdown. This of course sends a spark to the rest of the group, and a variety of both genders join us. A good game of touch football, with a few soft tackles of the female players are always quite fun. After a half-hour of running up and down, sideways, forward and backward on the sand, I must say, that was a great workout. The best kind of workout, having fun and with your friends. As the sweat, and suntan lotion drip from my body, it seems that the cool, inviting waters of the ocean are calling my name. I reach for my swimming goggles, and before I know it, my senses are shocked by the still cool waters of early summer. My body stiffens a bit, as I gain temperature control, where the 67-degree water meets the 98 degrees of my body. This is refreshing, the feeling of weightlessness, the silky touch of the water against me, as I glide with each stroke. I find my rhythm, and set off for a short swim. I periodically will stop and take in my surroundings and how small I feel in the immensity of the ocean around me. Sometimes this is how it feels in my daily life. A short pause, of thought, and I continue my swim. How metaphoric this is to life. Swim and pause. I swim to a point down the shoreline, and decide to exit the water where and walk back. It seems I swam for about 15-20 minutes. On my way back I continue with my thoughts, and conclude that, we all find our rhythm in our lives when we are ready. The effortless stroke. Some find it in their 20’s, 30’s 40’s and some even later.

Much is written about “A Dream delayed is better then a dream not fulfilled”. Remember that.

On my way back to home base, I look around at all the people around me. I admire the well conditioned, and find a tenderness and lightness of heart seeing all the little ones, at play. It brings back great memories.

As does that indelible smell of suntan lotion, telling me it’s summertime. As I approach our little home base on the beach, and see my friends, all engaged in their own past times. I re-immense myself and find my chair, knowing that I have a great new book waiting to be read. I cherish days like this, an experience of the mind, body and spirit, while

sharing a small place on the beach with close friends. A moment in time, and I have the rest of the day to look forward to. My perfect day at the beach.

*Some things to keep in mind. Always travel to the beach with plenty of water-resistant sunscreen, I use no less than #30. Bring plenty of water and fluids, and remember that alcoholic beverages in excess can cause dehydration. Don't forget to check the water conditions, you can look in the newspaper or ask a lifeguard on duty. Too rough and too cold are no good. Always tell a friend you are going for a swim if alone, or have a friend join you. Activities at the beach in the sun should be incremental. If you are heat sensitive, keep in the shade, and bring an umbrella, and or hat. Always have someone be at your home base to keep a watch on any valuables. Bring plenty of your favorite past times. magazines, books, recreational activities, music, yes music is absolutely necessary. Bring a CD player, I POD or MP3, so you have the option, as well as a boom box. Let's not forget the great food of summer. It is best to plan ahead and prepare the food the night before. Go crazy with your favorites, secure them in an airtight container and keep in the refrigerator. The next morning, organize them in your cooler with ice, and your refreshments, and your ready to go. Enjoy!*