

WALK AWAY FROM YOUR STRESS

Workshop led by Megan Saraceno

Why Nature?

Nature exposure practices can enhance feelings of connection, instill a positive sense of beauty, allow a person to exercise, and to experience the full breadth of perception that the human body is capable of.

One researcher, Stephen Kaplan suggests that nature can help to replenish our mental and attentional capacity. Through interactions with the outdoors we can lower our blood pressure, strengthen our immune systems, and even ease muscle tensions.

Why Mindfulness/Meditation?

Mindfulness and meditation both help people create mental and emotional space between them and their stressors. Studies have found mindfulness to be helpful with daily stresses as well as more serious stresses experienced by those with a chronic or life-threatening illness.

Through mindfulness, the relaxation response is activated causing:

- your heart rate to slow down
- slower and deeper breathing
- stable or low blood pressure
- relaxed muscles
- higher blood flow to brain

Walking Meditation:

Walking is a great way to relieve stress. Physical exercise is proven to decrease the stress response hormone, Cortisol, while increasing the levels of the “feel-good” chemicals, endorphins. *Tip: try to notice your body during this exercise.

Sensory Sit Spot:

We are often out of touch with our sensory delights, mainly because today's world is so packed with information that we are bombarded by visual and auditory stimuli.

A sit spot will allow you to get in touch with the world around you. *Try to find a spot that is comfortable and tune into your environment.

Selhub, Eva M., and Alan C. Logan. *Your brain on nature: the science of nature's influence on your health, happiness, and vitality*. Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, Ltd., 2014. Print.