

Getting Outdoors: The Science of Nature

Have you ever wondered why you tend to feel more relaxed while in nature? Well, it turns out there is science behind it!

Nature is known to be a source of calm and inspiration. Research suggests it helps connect us to ourselves, to each other and to the planet. People who live in neighborhoods with green space reported knowing more people, having strong feelings of community and belonging, as well as a desire to support one other. Research also supports the cognitive benefits of nature. One study reported that participants who walked in nature performed better on a memory test than those who walked down urban streets.



Indoors, people tend to underutilize their senses and rely mostly on their eyes and ears. While outdoors, people can often hear the birds chirping, see the blue sky, feel the wind blowing, smell the aroma of the woods and touch the cold crisp water. This could be part of the reason stress levels tend to drop while outdoors in nature. Research suggests that even viewing nature scenes can help reduce anger, fear and stress. Lots of studies have associated nature with improved mood, a sense of calm and overall psychological wellbeing.

In Japan, there is a practice called forest bathing, which basically translates to bathing in the forest atmosphere or taking in the forest through your senses. It is simply connecting with nature through seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching. It is thought that by opening your senses to nature, it bridges the gap between you and the natural world. Forest bathing improves mindfulness by bringing you to the present moment. The key to success is to savor each sense – listen to the breeze rustling the leaves, watch the birds soar through the sky, feel the warmth of the sunlight on your skin, smell the fragrance of the flowers and embrace the relaxed state of mind you have accomplished.

Appreciating nature and everything it has to offer can help us feel more grateful and appreciative. Magna Wellness challenges you to give it a try! Get out and explore the wonderful world we live in and see for yourself how nature can help improve your health and wellness.



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