World Mental Health Day 2022
Nature

Be honest: How much time do you spend in front of a screen each day? For many of us, that number exceeds 10 hours, according to recent reports. Our increasing reliance on technology, combined with urban living, means we are spending ever less time outdoors.

Psychological research is clear: Time in nature increases happiness and subjective well-being, lowers stress, improves mood and positive social interactions, and even enhances a sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Those who consciously retreat into nature for contemplative practice provide further insights into nature's gifts for the human mind. Immersing ourselves in a new environment, away from the home and office, breaks our propensity towards the auto-pilot mode. Our awareness is called into action, and we can start to think creatively and see new possibilities.

Being outside in nature for just

20 minutes per day

significantly boosts vitality levels. (Journal of Environmental Psychology)

Sitting or walking in nature for 20 minutes lowers cortisol

21.3% per hour.

(Frontiers in Psychology)

Taking a

90 minute walk

in a natural setting decreases both rumination and neural activity related to depression. (Stanford)

TIPS

1

Go on retreat in nature. A sunset, an open field or a misty lake activate the conscious brain. You can begin to tackle big questions about your life and purpose, which you don't find the space for among normal daily routines.

2

A city dweller? Parks and trees also produce positive outcomes. Just like a little exercise is better than none, take advantage of green spaces wherever and whenever you can, even if it is for a short while.

3

Cultivate a connection with nature. Recalling outdoor experiences can increase feelings of happiness and health even when you are stuck at a desk.

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