

In Nature a Day Takes the Doctor Away

By Annette BoVee-Akyurek

Individuals can be seen as beings of body, mind, and spirit within their ecosystem. This ecosystem includes our surroundings, including our natural environment. Our natural environment can be described as that which is alive; that which comes from nature. In the hustle and bustle of life, we are often indoors, with the addition of available modern technology. But what happens when we no longer connect to our natural environment; to that which comes from the aliveness of nature?

The human spirit can be thought of as the source of all functioning; commonly called our core, inner power, inner strength, and self. The human spirit is systemically and relationally connected to all. The human spirit can have influence to how we feel physically, psychosocially, emotionally, and how we function in our surroundings. It thrives when stimulated by that which we perceive as fulfilling; that which nourishes the system. I have found personally and as a clinician, that individuals thrive from stimulation by that which is alive. This may include the nature in our backyard, our beaches, lakes and canals, forests, animals, children, and even our skies. I'd like to also offer art, music, and dance as a stimulating force of nature.

Feeding our human spirit is essential to continue to shine and maintain our strength both physically and psychologically. This would include anything that naturally and organically facilitates attention and connection to self. What stimulates each of us is unique to our internal nature and being. There are several experiences that can assist individuals to connect to self, utilizing the nature that surrounds our world. This requires a level of attention, mindfulness, and awareness of the present moment. In addition, adding breath in a manner that is not only essential for function, but also essential to expand an awareness of breath within and throughout our mind and body in our environment. Intentional attention to breath on its own facilitates awareness of our physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual being.

In practical terms, this may be sitting on the back porch over looking the garden, observing the birds, the dog moving about, and the sky filled with glorious clouds. By breathing, noting what is in the present moment, and allowing the mind to sit in silence in

that which it experiences around you; allows a level of attention to self. This may also include a time on the beach or in a park or forest--noting the color of the water, the movement of the waves, the seagulls flying above, the children playing by the seaside, the movement of wind in the tree branches and in the clouds—and breathing with attention to what is in given time. Perhaps your daily walk or exercise includes a level of wind, colorful grass and flowers, and even a squirrel or hawk in the distance. In addition, perhaps seeking out a tree that stands in its fullness: standing nearby with your feet planted to the earth, your upper body attentive to the sky, and breathing with full intention to the ground in your power as well as your connection to the upper winds.

These are just a few ideas of moving into nature as part of your daily routine. Even a look out the window may spark a bit of light. Perhaps the next time you feel down, a bit lost, or even craving the simplicity of aliveness; you may turn to nature to once again remind you who you are in your ever so state of greatness. Within this greatness comes ability to better function within our busy world, and adding a spark of color that brings forth joy.

Annette BoVee-Akyurek, Ph.D.,MFT, LMHC, NCC, PT
annetteak@yahoo.com
www.intouchtherapyforyou.com