

NATURE CONNECTION

CREATING TIME AND SPACE

In order for Nature connection to be a part of your life it has to be a daily and eventually a constant process in the same way that we need food, drink and sleep. It is a natural part of who we are and all that is needed is to firstly create a space and a time where you will not be disturbed. Initially this may be just ten minutes a day and can be lengthened accordingly.

This can happen in a small room or a small space within a room in the centre of a busy city. This does not sound as glorious as living in the wilds or going on a mountain retreat but a deep connection to nature is not dependent on dramatic or temporary solutions but simply in creating the space for that one pure moment that can infiltrate your entire life.

A trip to a wilderness area of course will be a wonderful way to top up and reflect but to then bring that experience into your daily life is the essence of Nature Connection

FIND A SACRED TEXT

This sudden splash into pure wildness--baptism in Nature's warm heart-- how utterly happy it made us! Nature streaming into us, woingly teaching her wonderful glowing lessons... Here without knowing it we still were at school; every wild lesson a love lesson, not whipped but charmed into us.

Young hearts, young leaves, flowers, animals, the winds and the streams and the sparkling lake, all wildly, gladly rejoicing together!

John Muir

Nature connection is personal to you, it is what resonates with you and cannot be prescribed by anyone else. In all traditions you have sacred texts, in the earlier traditions they are oral and remembered rather than written down. I have found the amalgamation of written texts with oral traditions is a potent mix to instigate Nature Connection.

The chanting or recital of sacred texts from a book is an age-old practice of focusing the mind and as the text is memorised it becomes a part of you. It is important the text that you choose resonates with your inner being. You will know if it is the right text for you by reading it aloud with feeling.

Notice if it invokes anything within you. Do you feel more peaceful or alive? If to start with it is an intellectual appreciation then that will be enough. We are all different, there are no prescribed rules, there is no rush and nothing to achieve, just enjoy, play and explore!

You may wish to start by reading the opening text above aloud which was written by John Muir, a pioneer of wilderness protection who was immersed in Nature Connection.

CONNECT TO YOUR INNER LANDSCAPE

Sit in a comfortable upright position on a chair or on the floor in your designated area where you will not be disturbed.

Begin by reciting your sacred text, feel free to use the John Muir quote above which I have found very effective.

Recite your text with focus and feeling being aware of any sensations and feelings arising in your body.

After your recital simply sit and breathe quietly focusing on peace and a connection with yourself and nature. This is your time, give yourself permission to indulge in this space where no demands or pressures are being put upon you.

Visualise a landscape you are familiar with, breathe quietly and make it as real as possible. If your mind is busy please do not worry just focus on the breath and a love for nature.

Imagine sitting on nature's floor whether it be a woodland or meadow, feel the texture of the ground, imagine the scents, the bird song and the extravagant outpouring of plant beauty. Just be still and quiet and give yourself this time of peace. Relax.

MEET NEW FRIENDS

*Always fond of flowers, attracted by their external beauty and purity. Now my eyes were opened to their inner beauty, all alike revealing glorious traces of the thoughts of God, and leading on and on into the infinite cosmos....
my eyes never closed on the plant glory I had seen.*

John Muir

The next stage is to connect more intimately with the plants themselves. Once you are familiar with your meditation practice you will begin to recognise when you feel connected. My experience is when I breathe I feel a peaceful joy flowing through my body which can be quite a subtle or a more dramatic feeling. This same sensation arises when we feel love for a person, place or thing. If we can hold that experience without needing to do anything with it we are connected in a place beyond desire, this is the ideal state to connect with nature, and it is that simple.

'SEEING THE PLANT'

Once you have arrived at your favourite place and approached it as a threshold you can then observe your surroundings. Allow yourself to be drawn to one of the trees or plants. Approach it as you would a shy child or a wild animal with awareness and care.

Soak in its external form and beauty and then allow time for its inner essence to be known. If it is a tree you may wish to touch its bark and feel its texture and colour. If it's a plant you can touch its leaves and admire its form.

Please note if you have handled the plant please make sure you wash your hands before eating or touching yourself or anyone else and do not touch the sap.

When you are ready, sit with it and just be. Enjoy its company and meditate. This is all that is needed.

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