



## Ways to (re) Connect with Nature

During this time of isolation and change, the natural world offers great ways for us to pause, adapt, and reconnect. Here are ten ways to connect with nature to refresh and reinvigorate yourself:

- **Watch.** Whether you are watching from a window, you're on your porch, or you're on your favorite path, spend your time simply taking in what is around you. Watch the clouds roll by, the birds flit from branch to branch, the water as it flows downstream, or the stars as they scroll across the night sky. Taking just a moment to watch our world can remind us to be present in the moment and appreciate the delicate nature of the world around us.
- **Rest.** In a world of go, go, go, we have been forced to stop. One thing we do have now is time. These have been stressful times and studies have shown that connecting with our natural world improves short term memory, helps us to de-stress, reduce inflammation, and even fight depression and anxiety.
- **Listen.** Taking a moment to focus in on one of our senses can help centre yourself. In listening, we often find some peace and quiet. The birds are singing, bees are buzzing and if you give yourself long enough to sit in outdoors you may even hear the gentle wind.
- **Play.** When days feel heavy and there are uncertainties all around, laughter can truly be a good medicine. Can you take a moment to play? Whether you're throwing the ball for a pet, breaking out the old hula-hoop, or simply relaxing into a sweet smile, lightness can bring with it a sense of hope and happiness.
- **Read.** Once your fingers are frozen and you simply must head back inside, connecting with the world around us doesn't have to end. Books provide a great way to visit another place and learn all about its natural history. Try choosing a book from a new author with a different perspective.

- **Walk.** Getting outdoors doesn't always mean summiting mountains, climbing rocks, or doing the extreme. For many of us, getting outdoors is as simple as taking a stroll outside. Going on an 'urban hike' or strolling your neighborhood can help you notice things you may never have noticed before.
- **Start Fresh.** Spring is here, and the hopeful new leaves and buds are making us hopeful for new growth. Learn how you can plant blossoms in your own backyard to help butterflies, bumblebees, and other pollinators to keep your local area healthy. Whether you are tending to healthy plants, creating healthy soil, or pulling invasive weeds, gardening is a great way to connect with the land and help create a healthier community.
- **Write.** Bringing a pen and notepad into nature is a great way to train yourself to notice things more closely. It's also a great opportunity to reflect and jot down hopes for the future. Whether drawing, writing, or taking quick notes, you'll have something to look back upon and remember how much you, the places you write about, and the moments you've recorded have changed.
- **Create.** No art experience necessary. Creating art is a great way to connect with the land and yourself in a new way while taking in the beauty that surrounds us. Whether you are making a painting, taking a photo, or doing a simple drawing, capturing the beauty of our land helps us to fall more in love with this place. (Even if no one else ever gets to see your creation.)
- **Breathe.** Whether it is a minute or an hour, breathing in our clean air is good for the body, mind, and heart. Simply step outside and take it all in.