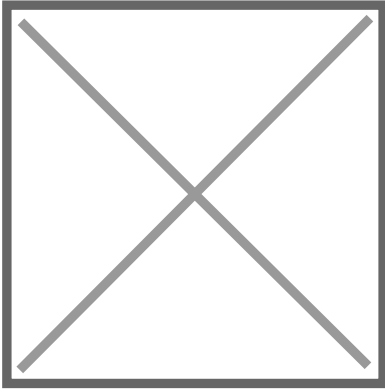




Senses in Nature

Description

One of the best ways to help your mental health is by just being in nature and using your senses. Find a place to just sit outside and focus on one of your senses at a time.

Sense of sight



First look around and notice what you see. Maybe it's the wind blowing the leaves on the trees or grass. It could be a squirrel chasing another squirrel around a tree. Notice the different shapes of trees or their leaves. What different colors do you see? Give yourself at least five minutes just noticing what is around you. Then try focusing on a different sense like hearing.

Sense of sound

Close your eyes and just listen to what sounds you hear. Maybe you will hear different birds singing. You might hear the rustle of leaves being blown by the wind. A cicada making its high pitch buzzing sound. If you are near a road or houses, you might hear cars driving by, doors shutting and people talking. Give yourself another five minutes just listening and thinking about what youâ??re hearing. Next move to your sense of touch.



Sound



Sense of touch

I would start by keeping my eyes shut and feeling around where Iâ??m sitting. How do the things youâ??re touching feel? Are they rough, smooth, wet, or dry? How does the breeze or sun feel on your face? Now try doing this with your eyes open. Did it help to try it with your eyes closed first?

Finally, use your sense of smell.

Sense of smell

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Start using your sense of smell with your eyes closed first. Then try with them open. Do you smell the damp air, campfire smoke, ocean water, or a certain flower blooming? Maybe it's a musty, earthy smell or freshly cut grass that you're smelling. This one might be harder for you to do and think about for a full five minutes. Just try as long as possible to do the smelling one.

Sense of taste



Tasting is the sense I would skip for this activity, unless you brought a snack with you. Instead, I would think about how you feel at the moment. Do you feel calmer, happier, and less stressed out?

When, why, and how often

This is not something you do just one time, but anytime you want a break from life. Anytime, you feel yourself not enjoying life or feeling overwhelmed; that is when you need to get in touch with the outdoors and nature. This could also be done as a preventative activity. Once a week or even once a day this activity could help prevent you from feeling overwhelmed and stressed. Some people need to do this more than others, but everyone is different in what helps them.

This activity can be done in all four seasons. The key to being outside is being dressed properly for the conditions, so you are comfortable.

Hints for adding variety to this activity

- Do this in different types of places. Don't always go to the same spot. Try the beach one time. Another time try a city park. Sit near a stream or waterfall. Try sitting next to a garden or certain flower blooming. Find unique places to try this activity and see if one place provides better results with feeling calm than other places.



laying on stomach



laying on back

- Instead of sitting on the ground, try bringing a blanket, mat, or towel and lay on the ground. Maybe one time you try laying on your stomach and another time lay on your back. See how your perspective changes depending on if you’re sitting or lying down.

Category

1. Healthy Habits

Tags

1. #hear
2. #senses
3. #sight

4. #smell
5. #touch
6. mental health
7. nature

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