



The American
Institute of Stress

Summer: The Best Time for Eco-Therapy

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Thomas Jefferson's "Desk-Stress" and Eco-Therapy.

Thomas Jefferson, who penned a draft of the Declaration of Independence in just 18 hours, lamented over "desk drudgery." His cure for "desk stress:" Go outside. Today his just "go outside" stress cure is called "eco-therapy".

There are countless millions of Americans laboring at computer desks daily. Echoing Mr. Jefferson's advice, Go Outside.



Eco-Therapy (i.e. Nature Therapy)

In 2007 at the University of Essex, researchers discovered 90% of a group of depressed people felt higher self-esteem after a walk through a park. (Taylor, 2012)

Other researchers have found that five minutes in a natural setting improves mood, motivation and self-esteem. John F. Kennedy University even offers graduate level training in Eco-therapy, focusing on stress management. (Sorgen 2010).

Eco-Therapy Activities

Mostly Free as, the air that you Breathe: Take a hike, ride a bike, fly a kite

“Nurture” Nature

Feed something (birds, wet pets, and your dog); Grow something (lawn, flowers); Be “pet friendly”, even to your “backyard” pets (at a distance). Wait for the “critters” to come back out, after you’ve ruffled their feathers (hiding is their main defense). Face the sun; take a plunge.

Develop “nature appreciation”

Take snapshots and “soundbites” with your mind- of both small (crickets chirping) and large – (clouds, rainbows, trees, canyons, stars.) “Bank” these memories for later withdrawal from your memory. Breathe in “Sea-Breezes” when possible. Ocean air is enriched, providing healing tranquility for mind and body. On a clear night, enjoy fireflies and stars. On a clear day, be amazed by hummingbirds and watch the sky as crows lazily fly by (Crows are considered one of the smartest birds (Audubon 2016) even crafting and using tools.

Rain-Checks

Check in on EarthCam- live! (elephants in Bali, Hawks nesting in North Carolina etc). Savor sound soothers, during the day use indoor “natural sunlights” (astronauts do) to help you sleep at night (your brain has invisible “light wave” sensors).



Natural Resources

This land IS our land. More than 84 Million acres are preserved for your enjoyment in our national park system (All gov.; <http://nps.gov/> 2016)

“From the Redwood Forest to Gulf Stream waters” (Woody Guthrie, 1940) Our redwood forests have sequoias dating back at least 2,300 years in age. Our

“Gulfstream waters” are home to “stress relieving” beaches enjoyed by millions.

Our Truly Grand Canyon; A Natural Wonder of the World- Our mile deep, 2 billion year old Grand Canyon is one of the “seven natural wonders of the world.”

In summary- So with all this in mind, remember – as Thomas Jefferson showed us, when you experience “desk-drudgery,” simply GO OUTSIDE. Even five minutes in a natural setting will help! Happy Trails.

Go to drronrub@aol.com for more information. The author spent an entire summer in Tahiti, gathering “research” for this article. Someone had to do it!