



Peer  
Education  
Project



Mental Health  
Foundation



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MHF Tips for Young People Series

**“Over the past year, I have learned how important it is to connect with the natural world around us. Whenever I start to feel stressed about school, I now decide to go on a walk to reconnect with myself.”**

Peer Educator from the [Peer Education Project](#)



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## Start small

Connecting with nature is about building a relationship with nature by noticing and becoming sensitive to what is around us. It can take time to find ways to connect to nature that we enjoy and feel the benefit from.

Start small. This could be paying attention to nature as you walk home from school or looking out the window at the different shapes you can see in the clouds.



Read [WWF's](#)  
[five top tips](#) for  
connecting with  
nature to help our  
wellbeing.



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**“It helps just being outside because it’s fresh air, everything’s relaxing. Just outside is probably the best place to be when they’re stressed out.”**

**[Mental Health Foundation](#) Supporter**

Listen to the full vlog [here](#).



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# Find your personal connection to nature

We will each build our own personal connection with nature through doing things we enjoy and support our mental health and wellbeing. The activities we engage in may be different to others, and that's ok.

Try a few different things and see what you like – you can always try something new!



Try out the seasonal activities to connect with nature, listed in this [booklet](#).



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## Switch off

Having a phone is very handy, especially when exploring new places. Yet we can find it difficult to switch off from our devices and social media, especially if we receive notifications!

It can be hard to do but, pop your phone on “silent” and enjoy the sounds of nature instead. Even if you want to use your phone to take pictures, set your notifications to “mute” so you won’t get distracted.



**“Over the past year, I have realised just how vital it is for me to spend time away from screens and work. It allows me to clear my head and breathe freely, without worries of pending assignments, even if it is just for a short while. This gives me time to reflect on my thoughts and feelings.”**

Peer Educator from the [Peer Education Project](#)



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# Ask for company

Natural environments can be good places to connect with others, as well as with nature. Sometimes, it can be fun to explore new places with friends or family.



Try out some of these [nature-based activities](#) with friends and family.





# Use all your senses

Try and use all your senses when exploring your environment – this will help you feel more connected to nature.

Run your hand along the bark of a tree, smell the scent of a rose, listen to the rain, notice the way the tree branches move with the wind, or even catch a raindrop on your tongue and see what it tastes like.



Try these [fun 'make-it' activities](#) to explore your local area and connection to nature.



Follow along with this [mini-meditation](#) to connect with nature.



# Slow down and pay attention

Sometimes we forget to slow down and appreciate the nature around us. Practising being in the moment, without judgement, can help us to reconnect with ourselves and our surroundings.

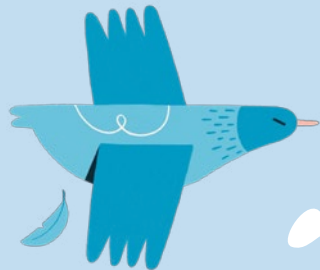
Sometimes you may miss the wonders of nature simply by not paying attention, or giving yourself the time to look.



**Photography is one way to be present in the moment and capture the nature around you. Read these [tips](#) on taking wildlife photography.**



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# You don't need to go far

Often exploring nature is linked with being outdoors. But there are many ways to connect with nature from home such as sitting at the window and watching the clouds, to growing indoor herbs and plants.



Explore these [nature-based activities](#) that can be done from home.



Watch live cam updates of animals based at [London Zoo](#).



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# Stay safe

When we explore the nature around us, it is important that we feel comfortable and safe, which not everyone is able to feel in all settings.

Think carefully about the natural spaces available to you and where you would enjoy and feel safe to explore.

If you don't feel safe, that's not your fault – think about what would make you feel safer. You could take a friend or family member with you, and you could even sign or start a petition to make your local area safer.



Watch this short [video](#) about staying safe when outdoors.



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# Take action



You have the potential to make a difference to the nature around you, and beyond, by getting involved in activities that create positive environmental change. There are many simple ways to make a real difference and give nature a helping hand.



Read

[WWF's Youth Ambassadors top 21 planet-saving tips and actions.](#)



Listen to [WWF's podcast series,](#) with each episode digging deeper into environmental threats we are facing.



Download [WWF's app](#) providing practical advice on how you can introduce positive changes to your life to reduce your environmental impact.



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# People who will listen



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## Shout

Trained Shout Volunteers are here for you if you need to talk, 24/7.

Text **SHOUT** to **85285**

## Samaritans

If you need someone to talk to, Samaritans Volunteers are there to listen, 24/7.

Call **116 123**

