

Good morning and happy Monday team!

I hope you all had a great weekend. We have had a few warm days even in the midst of all of this winter weather. I have heard many people around campus say that the weather has definitely impacted their mood. I think that this is the best time to talk about **self-care related to being outside.**

What if there were a miracle drug that could relieve stress almost instantly – would you take it? What if I said you don't even need to pop a pill; all you need to do is step outside? This week, **get outside.** That's it. Go to a park or a forest or your backyard or the playground.

According to Florence Williams (2017), when you are stuck indoors, we are actually harming our mental and physical health. Instead, we should remember this: **the more nature that we feel and experience, the better we will feel.** Even as little as fifteen minutes in the woods reduces the stress hormone cortisol.

This week's invitation: Get outside for at least fifteen minutes per day (On nice days, of course!)

**Walk:** Take a walk in the morning, during your lunch hour, or after school. Leave all of your devices behind. Walk by yourself or grab a walking buddy.

**Rest:** Sit in the grass against a tree or simply lie down. How does resting outside feel?

**Eat:** Take your morning coffee outside or eat a meal outside, picnic-style

**Notice:** Keep your eyes open and notice the minute details all around you. Then try closing your eyes in order to engage your other senses. What do you hear, feel, and smell around you?

**Breathe:** Take some deep belly breaths.

**Experiment:** Experiment with parks, forests, beaches, mountains, and country roads. Do you enjoy somewhere close, or do you like to get in your car and drive to another location?

"Nature holds all the answers – go outside and ask some questions – open your heart and listen to the response."

- Amethyst Wyldfre