

Breathe, love, and laugh: Natural ways to treat depression

Thursday, April 05, 2018 by [Jessica Dolores](#)

Modern technology is a two-edged sword. It makes our life more convenient. But it also makes living more complicated. We multi-task, deal with higher stress levels, and go to bed thinking of a thousand and one things.

It's a far cry from pre-smartphone days, when our ancestors looked up in a sky awash in moonlight and contemplated their next moves. They woke up to the chirping of birds instead of a cell phone's ring tone. They went to the beach to while away the time instead of surfing the Net for the latest Netflix movies.

Always on the go and under stress, many people feel depressed, even if they live amidst the most modern conveniences and the most stylish of homes. They forget that the solution is simple — reconnecting with oneself and going back to where it all began: nature.

Lucinda Bakken White found this out by herself when she suffered from a bout of depression. Ironically, this employee in a psychiatric office found the final solution, not in her office, but in [nature's soothing arms](#).

“When I take time to pause in nature, without the distraction and noise of a cellphone or even music, I find the space to hear my

inner voice — and I'm able to connect deeply with everything around me," writes White.

Below are her recommendations for a calmer, stress-free life.

- **Meditate outdoors** — Find a good spot to sit, close your eyes, and listen to your surroundings. Open your senses to the sights, sounds and smells of nature. Recharge your body, mind and spirit.
- **Bring nature home** — Why not collect those plants, flowers, driftwood, seashells, rocks and feathers you see on the beach and take them home with you? Bringing nature home to look at, smell and touch, soothes the mind and feeds the spirit. It keeps you connected with nature and boosts the spirits, especially on a cold and lonely winter night.
- **Learn from the moon** — Take a cue from our ancestors. Let the moon and its rhythms guide you and feel the connection to something larger than yourself. Observe how the moon waxes and wanes like life itself. By tradition, new moons are a sign that one should start making plans. You may start your to-do list for this 29 day-and-night cycle. Rejoice over your progress when the full moon appears. Go inward, review and renew your plans when the moon turns dark. This way, you can come up with an entirely novel action plan by the next new moon comes around. This allow you to focus and forget about your anxiety, worries and fears. Needless to say, it helps you fight depression. (Related: [How to beat depression without prescription drugs.](#))

- **Learn from the animals** — They, too, can teach us a lot of things about patience, wisdom, and life. The deer's gentleness and gracefulness remind us to stay positive in times of stress. The rabbit symbolizes fertility and prosperity. Even the humble spider that weaves a web in your bedroom can encourage you to step beyond your limits and create something new. Its web reminds us how connected we are with all creatures of the world.
- **Discover new places in nature** — Try going to a beach you've never been to. Climb that mountain you've long been dreaming to conquer and set camp on. Dare take the road less taken.

Nature will reward you in ways you never imagined. A study involving *University of Michigan* students found that those who walked around trees in an arboretum scored 20 percent better in a memory test than those who did not. A similar study on depressed persons showed that nature walks improved memory more than walks in the urban areas. Still another study revealed that a person's mental energy improved after they saw pictures of nature. City-scapes, on the other hand, failed to achieve this effect.

Seeing the *beauty of nature* inspires awe, one of the best ways to get that much-needed mental boost. Nature is one gift you need not spend a fortune on. And it keeps giving back, as long as we take care of it.

Sources include:

LifeZette.com