



THE GREAT OUTDOORS & MENTAL HEALTH

(thread)



Sanctus.

Why is being outdoors in nature good for you?

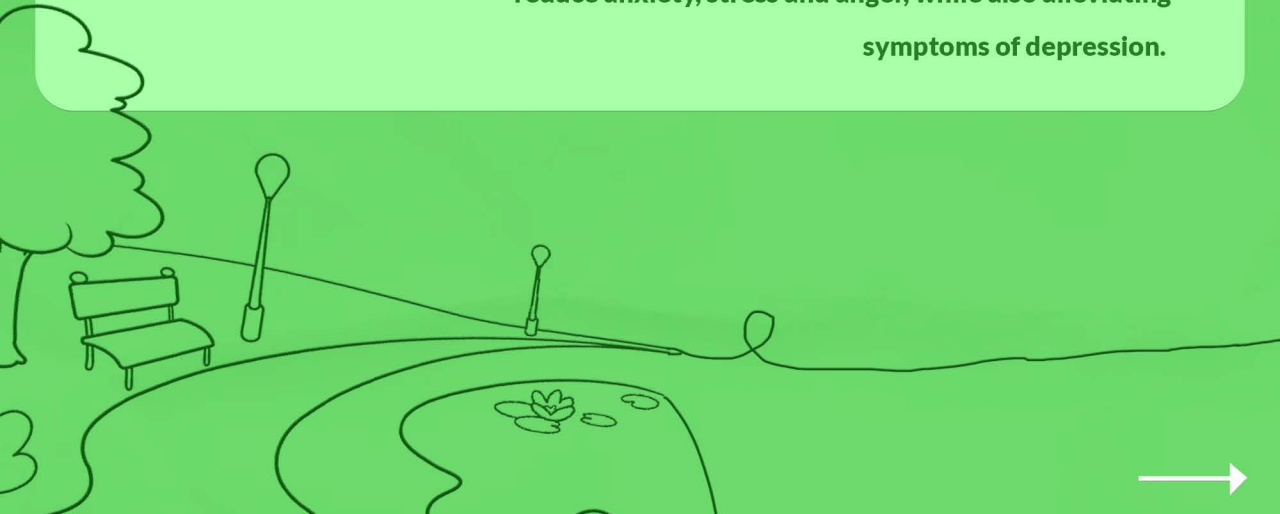
It feels good & is backed by science!

Physical health benefits.

There has been plenty of studies that show being out in nature helps to regulate your nervous system, while relieving muscle tension and reducing your heart rate, blood pressure and stress hormones

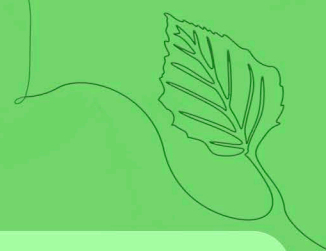
Mental health benefits.

There has also been more than enough studies showing the impact that nature can have on our mental health. By releasing healthy immune cells, being outdoors helps to reduce anxiety, stress and anger, while also alleviating symptoms of depression.



Why is being outdoors in nature good for you?

It feels good & is backed by science!



Nature plays a fundamental role in us living a healthy life.

One study from the 1970s found that patients who were treated in hospitals with a view of nature recovered quicker than those without a view of the great outdoors.

Just being around nature calms and grounds us.

There have been studies to show that even just seeing nature, or listening to sounds of it, can replicate a similar effect to actually being in it. So for those who aren't near nature, or who don't feel ready to go out into it, you can still enjoy the benefits that it'll have on you.

We have evolved as social creatures to live outside or be in an outdoor environment.

Think of it like this: your body is an app with 3 million years of R&D behind it...it's an app that's designed to work best outside!



Ways that companies can implement more of this into their working lives?



Organised team hikes or walks.

A walk out in nature has the double benefit of combining nature with exercise. At Sanctus, we do a monthly walk & talk where we pair up team members with someone else for a chat & a walk. The added bonus of a chat is that it brings in connection with another human being - another important element of maintaining positive mental health.

Lunch outside.

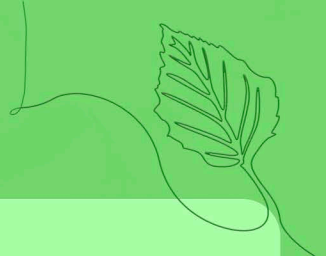
Taking a break outside with lunch can be a great way to relax in the surrounding nature. Be mindful of people who do not have access to a garden or outdoor space, however you can encourage people to visit their local park or greenspace.

Bring the outdoors, indoors.

Even just having some form of nature around us, such as with indoor plants or by listening to natural sounds, can help to replicate the benefits of being outside. We encourage partners to have plants in the Sanctus safe space they use for coaching sessions (in the office) for example.



Ways that companies can implement more of this into their working lives?



Zoom free Walk & Talk.

When you don't need a screen share or spreadsheet at the ready, encourage staff to book zoom-free from old school meetings and do them outside for a walk & talk. You'd be surprised at how productive these can actually be. Also think about what TYPE of meetings can be more productive outdoors - studies show that brain storming outside for example will often reap more creative results.

Tee up company volunteering efforts with a cause that is outdoors.

This can have the dual benefit of not only feeling the impacts of nature, but of also giving something back through volunteering. Is there a local community garden? Canal & River Trust etc? GreenGym

If you're going to be in nature, BE in nature.

Try going for a walk and leaving your phone and/or other devices at home. Focus on being in the moment and noticing what's around you; the sights, sounds and smells. Try not to use the time to think over the work you need to do or the emails you need to reply to - it can wait. Getting out into nature isn't just about being outdoors, it's about getting back in touch with your mind and body's natural rhythms.

