

LIFE MOVING TOO FAST?

go slow for a mo'

REJUVENATING COMMUNITIES ONE MOMENT AT A TIME

It's no longer just a walk in the park!

Transforming greenspace into a rejuvenation place

As modern life keeps speeding up so do modern health issues.

\$220BN

Cost of mental illness in Australia per year

1 IN 5

Australians have experienced mental illness in a given year

20%

of Australia's disease burden is due to poor mental health

A body of research too large to ignore^{1,2} is confirming what we have all known for a long time; nature has a profound effect on our resilience and wellbeing. However, the types of activities we do in nature matter more than the amount of time spent. The latest science shows that the more meaningful the engagement is the more profound the health benefits.

Time to Go Slow for a Mo'?

The Go Slow for a Mo' Trails are an innovative community installation designed to help people spend more meaningful moments in nature to better refresh mood, community care and resilience. Drawing on the latest scientific knowledge we create short slow moments for big health impacts! Moments in nature:



Improve sleep, happiness, wellbeing and life satisfaction



Improve learning, creativity, sustained attention and child development



Respect and appreciate the natural environment



Improve blood pressure, pain control, immune function, diabetes and allergies



Reduce stress, depression and anxiety, improve resilience



Enhance feelings of gratitude and care for ourselves and our community



Living Lab Program

It's proven, it's easy and it's free!



Located at Macquarie University campus, this Stress Regulator Trail has been designed to help target mental restoration and repair. It takes students and staff through six rejuvenation stations designed to increase positive mood, emotional regulation, attention restoration and support greater resilience to anxiety and stress.

1 Breath Easy

Time Required: 2-4 minutes

3 Relax the Eyes

Time Required: 2-4 minutes

2 Listen Up!

Time Required: 3-7 minutes

4 Sensory Switch

Time Required: 2-4 minutes

5 The Tree & Me

Time Required: 2-4 minutes

6 Beautiful Things

Time Required: 3-10 minutes



Rejuvenation Exercise	Nature Contact Benefits
Breathe Easy: Abdominal breathing exercise to increase pleasantness, vigour, alertness, and reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, anger and confusion ³ .	Inhaling negative ions from running water and sunlight improves relaxation, boosts immunity and metabolism. ⁴
Listen Up!: This listening exercise breaks sensory habits to increase connection with nature and also includes a placemaking element.	Listening to nature sounds restores attention and reduces muscle tension faster and more effectively than listening to urban sounds ^{5,6} .
Relax The Eyes: MRI and EEG scans show that peripheral vision stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system leading to feelings, mindfulness and calm awareness ⁷ . Using peripheral vision in nature creates feelings of awe.	Using peripheral vision in nature enhances stress reduction and restoration through “soft fascination” a key component of attention restoration theory ⁸ . Experiencing awe of nature increases wellbeing and community spirit ⁹ .
Sensory Switch: This exercise uses sensory experiences to create moments for pausing, stopping and noticing nature in difference ways.	Sensory engagement with nature has well-documented beneficial effects on connection mental restoration, calm and creativity. ¹⁰
The Tree and Me: This mimicry exercise is used to trigger mirror neurons to creates empathy and compassion. This exercise helps to create a stronger connection between the person and the place.	Standing near trees increases access to phytoncides, adiponectin and anti cancer T-cells ¹¹ Looking up and out on nature has a range of neurological benefits ¹² .
Beautiful Things: This exercise helps individuals to notice and enjoy beautiful things.	Noticing the beauty of nature has a particular effect on increasing pro-community behaviours such as agreeableness, friendship and helping behaviours ¹³ ; it is also a diver of nature connection which is linked to overall increases in life satisfaction ¹⁴

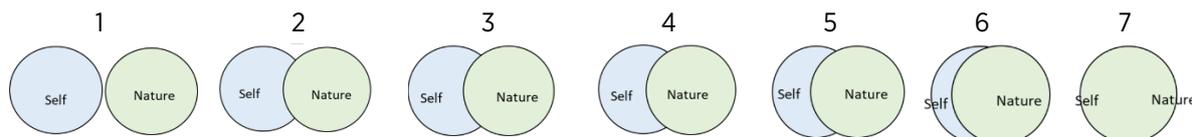
The Benefits

“I personally came away with an increased appreciation of the incredible power that nature can have on my wellbeing - lowering my stress levels, increasing relaxation. It had a profound effect on me and I would encourage anyone to just try it.”

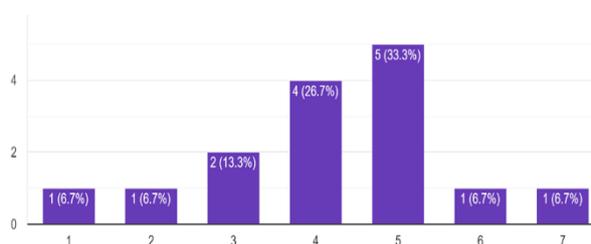
Medical Student Participant

Increasing Nature Connectedness: Early Results

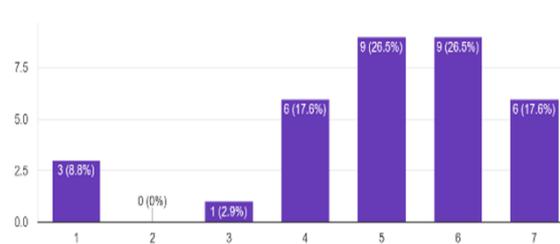
Self-evaluation using validated nature-connectedness scale. 1=low connection, 7=very high connection



Walk with no exercises



Walk with nature wellness exercises



Average scores increased 34.04% (to the right) after doing the nature wellness exercises

Students also showed a significant increase in pre-post trail completion for:

1. Vitality scale ($p = .034$)
2. PANAS - Positive subscale –positive affectivity (emotions and feeling $p = .016$)
3. Nature related affect scale ($p = .008$)

This includes significant increases in specific states for ‘Relaxed’, ‘Awe’, ‘Alert’, and ‘Awake’. These states have a strong association with depression and anxiety.

Why is this important?

Increasing nature connectedness – ‘tuning nature in’ helps to:

1. Tune anxiety and depression out¹⁵
2. Increases overall life satisfaction (4 x greater than an increase in socio economic status)¹⁶
3. Increase actions on climate change and conservation behaviours^{17,18}.
4. Increase the care for others and the community¹³.
5. Support a greater resilience to disasters and faster disaster recovery¹⁹.

Disaster Recovery: An ongoing longitudinal study after the 2009 black Sunday fires stated that many people found watching the bush recover helpful for their own wellbeing and that nature attachment had a protective effect in terms of health, resilience, and post traumatic growth.

Watch our short Video:

Learn more about how the trails work and what the student users are saying about the trails:

<https://vimeo.com/507402876>

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The Go Slow for a Mo' trails help to deliver on the social, economic and environmental targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and other related reporting frameworks.



Goal 3: Trails increase mental, physical and social wellbeing



Goal 13: Trails increase awareness of the benefits of the natural environment and actions for climate change



Goal 4: Trails can be linked to education and learning from primary to tertiary



Goal 14: Trails connect and builds a sensory relationship with water; with increased awareness and care for



Goal 9: Innovative use of green infrastructure, amplifying health benefits



Goal 15: Trails connect and builds a sensory relationship with natural environments; with increased awareness and care for.



Goal 10: Trails used across gender, all age groups and can support cultural diversity applications



Goal 16: Trails increase the care for self and others in the community (and cross - community engagement)



Goal 11: Trails enhance placemaking and actively increase social and conservation behaviours



Goal 17: Trails provide a global strategy and movement to #goslowforamo

“One of the simplest things that you should do if you get the chance, when you get the chance, is just naturally to stop. Sit down. Don’t move. Keep quiet. Wait ten minutes. You’ll be very surprised if something pretty interesting didn’t happen within ten minutes.”

Sir David Attenborough, February 2021

More Information Visit: www.goslowforamo.com

References

1. Frumkin, H. *et al.* Nature Contact and Human Health: A Research Agenda. *Environ Health Perspect* **125**, 075001 (2017).
2. Chaudhury, P. & Banerjee, D. “Recovering With Nature”: A Review of Ecotherapy and Implications for the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Front. Public Health* **8**, 604440 (2020).
3. Zaccaro, A. *et al.* How Breath-Control Can Change Your Life: A Systematic Review on Psycho-Physiological Correlates of Slow Breathing. *Front. Hum. Neurosci.* **12**, 353 (2018).
4. Jiang, S.-Y., Ma, A. & Ramachandran, S. Negative Air Ions and Their Effects on Human Health and Air Quality Improvement. *IJMS* **19**, 2966 (2018).
5. Gould van Praag, C. D. *et al.* Mind-wandering and alterations to default mode network connectivity when listening to naturalistic versus artificial sounds. *Sci Rep* **7**, 45273 (2017).
6. Ferraro, D. M. *et al.* The phantom chorus: birdsong boosts human well-being in protected areas. *Proc. R. Soc. B.* **287**, 20201811 (2020).
7. Nan, W. *et al.* Dynamic peripheral visual performance relates to alpha activity in soccer players. *Front. Hum. Neurosci.* **8**, (2014).
8. Basu, A., Duvall, J. & Kaplan, R. Attention Restoration Theory: Exploring the Role of Soft Fascination and Mental Bandwidth. *Environment and Behavior* **51**, 1055–1081 (2019).
9. Greater Good Science Centre. *The Science of Awe*. 50 https://www.templeton.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Awe-White-Paper_distribution.pdf (2018).
10. Franco, L. S., Shanahan, D. F. & Fuller, R. A. A Review of the Benefits of Nature Experiences: More Than Meets the Eye. *IJERPH* **14**, 864 (2017).
11. Twohig-Bennett, C. & Jones, A. The health benefits of the great outdoors: A systematic review and meta-analysis of greenspace exposure and health outcomes. *Environmental Research* **166**, 628–637 (2018).
12. Kerr, F. & Maze, L. *The Art & Science of Looking Up Transforming our brains, bodies, relationships and experience of the world by the simple act of looking up*. www.lookup.org.au (2019).
13. Zhang, J. W., Piff, P. K., Iyer, R., Koleva, S. & Keltner, D. An occasion for unselfing: Beautiful nature leads to prosociality. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* **37**, 61–72 (2014).
14. Zhang, J. W., Howell, R. T. & Iyer, R. Engagement with natural beauty moderates the positive relation between connectedness with nature and psychological well-being. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* **38**, 55–63 (2014).
15. Martin, L. *et al.* Nature contact, nature connectedness and associations with health, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviours. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* **68**, 101389 (2020).
16. Pritchard, A., Richardson, M., Sheffield, D. & McEwan, K. The Relationship Between Nature Connectedness and Eudaimonic Well-Being: A Meta-analysis. *J Happiness Stud* **21**, 1145–1167 (2020).
17. Whitburn, J., Linklater, W. & Abrahamse, W. Meta-analysis of human connection to nature and proenvironmental behavior. *Conservation Biology* **34**, 180–193 (2020).
18. Hatty, M. A., Smith, L. D. G., Goodwin, D. & Mavondo, F. T. The CN-12: A Brief, Multidimensional Connection With Nature Instrument. *Front. Psychol.* **11**, 1566 (2020).
19. Block, K. *et al.* The role of the natural environment in disaster recovery: “We live here because we love the bush”. *Health & Place* **57**, 61–69 (2019).