

USING MOTHER NATURE TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

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- B.kin (Hons), Certified Holistic Nutrition Consultant, PN Level 1, PTS
- 12 years of personal training experience at World Health.
- 7 years working as a nutrition coach, presenting to fitness professionals and the general public.
- Online coach.
- Competitive Obstacle Course Racing and Trail Running Athlete.

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The focus of this presentation is not to convince you to move to the forest, grow your own food, avoid technology and modern day comforts.

The point is help you become more aware of the role of the natural environment in our overall health.



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One intensive study of 280 participants in Japan found that along with decreasing stress hormone concentrations by more than 15%, a walk in the forest lowered participants' average pulse by almost 4% and blood pressure by just over 2%.

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In another Japanese study they found that students sent into the forest for two nights had lower levels of cortisol — a hormone often used as a marker for stress — than those who spent that time in a city.

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A Chinese study showed a decrease in systemic inflammation.

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Preliminary studies have shown a potential in the bodies ability to increase anti-cancer proteins.

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Nearby green space seems to be especially important for residents of urban environments, according to a Dutch study of 250,782 people, which found a strong positive connection between green space and health.

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Does this surprise you?

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There are many studies pointing to the same conclusion:
<https://www.businessinsider.com/why-spending-more-time-outside-is-healthy-2017-7>

The forest is our natural environment.

It provided us with shelter, food, and clean air for centuries.

As a result there is a natural draw for it.

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Changes In How We Live

For most of human history we have spent the majority of the time outside breathing fresh air and getting regular direct sunlight.

The body sleeps much better in cool environments as room temperature was uncommon for most of our history.

Only in the past century have we been exposed to artificial light and only recently an influx of blue light which was only seen during the day through sun light exposure.



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Nature has always provided us with food in the perfect form often limited and seasonal that has sustained us and kept us naturally thin before industrialization.

Soil was rich and full of nutrition. Food was not referred to as organic. It was referred to as food.

Organs and fatty meats have always carried the highest nutrient density. This was especially important in times when food was scarce. Especially in the winter. Most of the animal was used for it's food.



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Fresh greens grew in the ground from the beginning spring into fall during very active times. This food source not only contained energy rich nutrients but phyto-chemicals which aid processes in the body.

Water flowed from mountains and glacier's collecting minerals along the way and being uninterrupted by farm irrigation or the disposal of waste.

Fruits grew seasonally and they were not as sweet as modern day fruit.

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Health Experts Recommend Standing Up At Desk, Leaving Office, Never Coming Back



Less automation exist. People were naturally active with physically demanding jobs. Less mental stimulation which didn't drain the brain's glucose as much as a physically demanding lifestyle. This resulted in better fat burning.

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Average Day for Someone in a Big Canadian City

Wake up with artificial lights in a warm house eat mostly processed carbs for breakfast and enter their vehicle in a heated garage.

Average commute time of 26 minutes each way.

Satisfy a caffeine addiction.

Park underground and take an elevator to their office.

Work on a computer most of the day doing mentally demanding task.

Eat a lunch of mostly processed food, high in sugar to satisfy the need of glucose by the brain.

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Return home still having access to work emails.

Look at screens most of the night.

Less than a 1 in 2 chance this person will exercise.

Potentially drink alcohol.

May eat out or cook something easy as energy levels are low.

Go to bed stressed and too overstimulated not hitting all adequate sleep cycles.

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How do you think this individuals health is going to progress over the years?



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What can we do each day or week to bring some of the natural world back into our lives?

At minimum:

Go for walk each day. At lunch, before work, in the evening. If you need a motivated there's no better solution than a furry friend. This is the best form of mindfulness.

Even better try to plan a mountain escape once a week to get away to experience complete silence. There are many groups on meet up as well as courses offer through numerous organizations if you don't know where to get started.

Once you get the ball rolling, you won't want to stop.



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Sunshine

Vitamin D supplementation is important in Canada regardless if you go outside on a regular basis or not.

How can you reduce in blue light from your visual field each day?

How much Vitamin D should one take?

What is D is important for?

Does skin shade play a role?

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Fresh Air

Keep windows open when possible.

Try to get outside as much as you can.

Dress warm in the winter and brave the cold.

Try adding some breathing routines to your day if you spend a lot of time inside to improve oxygen flow. 5 in, hold for 5, 5 out, hold for 5 x10.



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Sleep

Dark room.

Cool temperature.

Quiet environment.

Similar sleep and wake time.

Ideal sleep is 7-9 hours uninterrupted.

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Diet

Paleo? Ancestral? Blood type? Keto?

What is wrong with modern day food?

Within reason try consuming more organic food and meats from animals in the wild or who have been fed their natural diet. Do your research and find some trust worthy suppliers.

Limit chemical exposure when you can.

Occasionally chemical and toxin exposure will not kill you. Homeotic stress.



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Technology

Still too early to confirm. But we can likely expect an increase in mental health issues, increased ADHD, a reduction in motivation, sleep quality, eye & postural issues, and a decline in cognitive abilities to name a few.

Technology can enhance our life if used in moderation and put away from time to time

What would that look like?

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07503-w>

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Digital detox?

How to optimize your phone to minimize distractions: disabling notifications, removing unnecessary apps, organize home screen, social media breaks or locks, grey scale, setting work emails to business hours.

What are some other things you can do to make your phone work for you?

No phones at the dinner table, no tech in the bedroom, night shift option on your phone in the evening.

Leaving your phone at home during certain activities like dog walks and when working.

Other ideas? Personal stories?



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Goal

- Reduction in Cortisol.
- Better sleep.
- Improved mood.
- More energy.
- More calm less erratic behaviour.
- Improved immune function.
- Saving money if you don't buy too much gear.

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What You Can Do in Your Gym

- Host part of your workout outside.
- Try to encourage as much outdoor light as possible. Mirrors can help reflect more light.
- If it is a small gym use an air purifier.
- Keep windows open.



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What You Can Do at Home

- Plants!
- Lighter colours and open the blinds first thing in the morning.
- Make the house as dark as possible before bed.
- Start a garden outside.

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Thank You!
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