

Ecotherapy

Dr Abi Tarran-Jones

Clinical Psychologist

abitarranjones@gmail.com



Objectives

What is Ecotherapy?

What is Ecopsychology?

The benefits of being in nature

How I use nature in my therapy

Outcomes for me and the client

Ecotherapy

Umbrella term - activities that involve nature with aim of reducing suffering and enhancing wellbeing and health

Horticulture, forest bathing, adventure therapy, surf therapy, wilderness skills, equine assisted therapy

Walk and talk - psychotherapy outdoors

Ecopsychology

We are fundamentally connected to and influenced by nature

Human-nature connections can improve our wellbeing and interpersonal relationships

Humans habitually live and work in ways that are destructive to the other-than-human world

Interested in conscious practices that promote reciprocity of healing between humans and the natural world.

Psychological benefits of nature

Reduce stress and promote calm, healing and regeneration

Increases feelings of health and happiness

Reduces depression and anxiety - Vit D

Boosts positive emotions and mood

Promotes production of "happy hormones" and neurotransmitters

Improves and restores attention

Increases social connection and reduces social isolation and loneliness



Physical benefits of nature

- Lowers blood pressures and blood sugar levels
- Decreases prevalence of lifestyle diseases
- Boosts immune system
- Reduces inflammation in the body



Restorative environments

Four principles:

1. Awe, fascination and curiosity
2. Getting away from the daily hustle and bustle
3. Feeling part of a greater whole
4. Compatibility with one's one natural inclination



How I use nature

1. Take therapy outside
2. Bring nature inside
3. Set nature-based homework



Nature as a co-therapist

Grounding using 5 senses

Coming back into the body

Metaphors

Developing relationship with nature



Outcomes

I am: Restored, inspired and refreshed

They are: Engaged, motivated, moved

