

MOTHER NATURE

In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks. – John Muir

It is officially spring, and here in the shadow of the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, we are living with the erratic weather patterns as proof! While most of us probably did not give Earth Day a second thought, we may be feeling our spirits lift with the increased opportunities to spend time *outside*.

While any kind of exposure to the outdoors has been found to be beneficial for our health and well being, the practice of *deep nature connection* has been found by a U.S.-based initiative called 8 Shields to have benefits far superior to that of simply riding our bicycles or taking in a mountain vista without conscious engagement. Deep nature connection entails a mindful and reciprocal interaction with one's local ecology. Experiencing this kind of connection is the ultimate form of "natural health".

As we move further into spring, I hope that many of you will throw off the blanket of winter, and re-connect with the natural world – not just for your own immediate benefit, but to see and feel how you are but one part of the web of life. Our ability to preserve the gift of life in all its beauty for future generations as well as all other earth inhabitants depends on this kind of deep knowing.

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