The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a body of water, likely a lake or river, with green trees and foliage on the far bank. The water is in the foreground, showing gentle ripples. The text is centered in a white rectangular area.

Minutes without moments: Does being distracted in nature vs. aware of nature influence well-being?

Sarena Sabine
September 10, 2022



Time in nature is a simple operationalization of one's amount of nature contact (e.g., *How many hours per week do you spend in nature?*)



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“

“Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own).”

— Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*



To Get Out of Your Head, Get Out of Your House

Spending time in nature can help relieve stress and anxiety.

However, the ways in which we spend time in nature in recent times may be radically changing...





The growing prevalence and use of technology, as well as its integration into our lives, allows for much more distraction. It is now easy to be oblivious to our surroundings.



Many people are
coming of age
disconnected from
nature...

Perhaps if you haven't
experienced the
beneficial impacts from
nature, then you might
not be as inclined to
look up and be aware of
the nature around you.



There is a lot that time in nature
does not capture.

When we are spending time in nature but are distracted, not fully aware of it or paying attention to it, we may receive fewer positive benefits.



Thus, it is of great importance to study the issue of whether the well-being effects from nature experiences differ depending on one's attention towards nature, and there is already evidence to suggest that this may be the case.

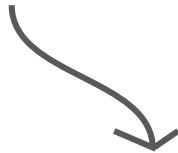
Preliminary Evidence

1. NNI - Noticing Nature Intervention by Passmore and colleagues
2. “Moments, not minutes: The nature-wellbeing relationship” by Richardson and colleagues (2021).

Nature connectedness &
engagement in simple
activities in nature

VS

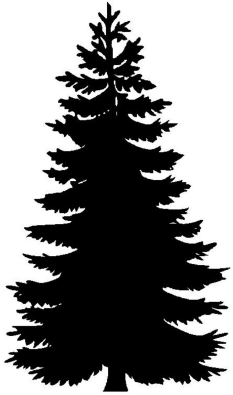
Time spent in nature (*measured by the
number of days that one spends over 1
hour in nature per week*)



Greater predictor of Well-Being than Time spent in nature

Current Study: Research Question

If individuals are
in the **same**
nature space...



...for the **same**
amount of time...



...does their **well-being** and
restoration differ depending on
whether they are **more or less**
aware of their nature
surroundings?

Research Question

If individuals are in the same nature space for the same amount of time, does their **well-being and restoration** differ depending on whether they are more or less aware of their nature surroundings?

What is meant by **well-being**?

We are taking a multi-faceted approach and including: *Positive & Negative Affect, Meaning, Vitality, Elevation, and Satisfaction*

We are also measuring aspects of ill-being: *Anxiety and Stress*

Research Question

If individuals are in the same nature space for the same amount of time, does their **well-being and restoration** differ depending on whether they are more or less aware of their nature surroundings?

What is meant by **restoration**?

Feeling restored means that one feels renewed and no longer has mental fatigue.

Measures

DVs:

- Positive & Negative Affect
- Meaning
- Vitality
- Elevation
- Satisfaction
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Restorativeness

Other measures

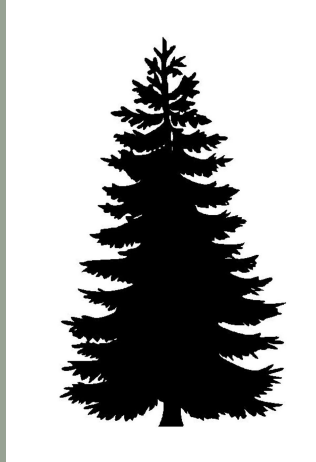
- Trait connectedness to nature
- Trait mindfulness
- How engaged were you in the task/environment
- Demographics

Study Design

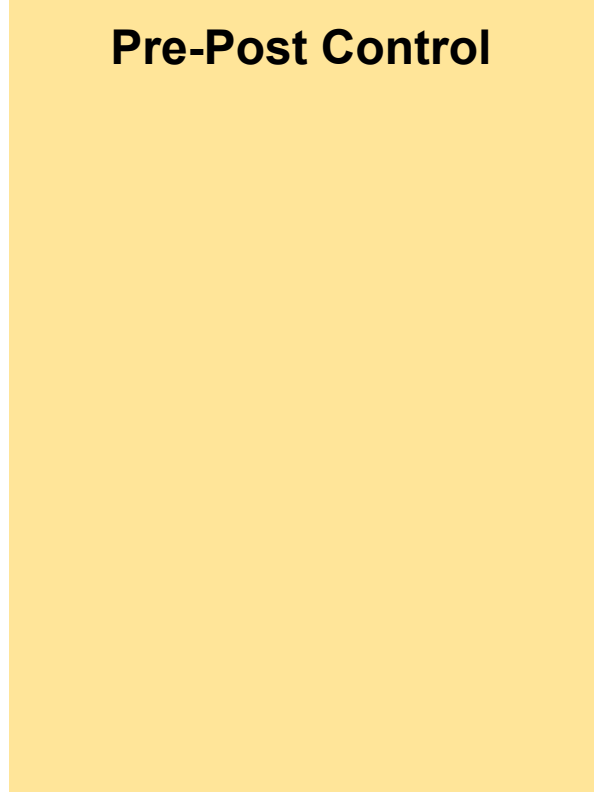
Nature Aware



Nature Distracted



Pre-Post Control



Study Design

Nature Aware



15 minutes

Be aware of the nature around you, such as what you see and hear.

If you want to interact with the natural environment you can, but please don't walk around.

Nature Distracted

Pre-Post Control

Study Design

Nature Aware



15 minutes

Be aware of the nature around you, such as what you see and hear.

If you want to interact with the natural environment you can, but please don't walk around.

Nature Distracted



15 minutes

Watch a How-To Video on phone while in Nature.

Be aware of the video, including what you see and hear in the video.

You may be asked questions at the end.

Pre-Post Control

Study Design

Nature Aware



15 minutes

Be aware of the nature around you, such as what you see and hear.

If you want to interact with the natural environment you can, but please don't walk around.

Nature Distracted



15 minutes

Watch a How-To Video on phone while in Nature.

Be aware of the video, including what you see and hear in the video.

You may be asked questions at the end.

Pre-Post Control

Waitlist control/business as usual

Next Steps

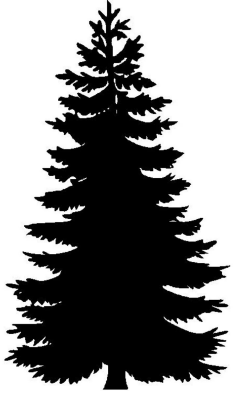
- Finalize materials and logistical things.
- We want to wait to run this in Spring/Summer.
- Most likely in Seattle, WA or potentially in Edmonton, Alberta.

Prioritizing an in-person study design allows us to select and control for type of nature location.

UW South Campus
(Anderson Hall in Orange)



Implications



If we find that being distracted in nature does not improve well-being or restoration as much as being aware of nature...

We should do more to specify the need for more time in nature when one is not distracted but can be aware of the nature around them. Set distractions aside and just be.

Individuals have the power to decide how aware they want to be of the nature they spend time in. It is easy to be distracted but knowing findings from this research might help inform behavior.

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a body of water, likely a lake or river, with green trees and foliage on the far bank. The water is in the foreground, and the trees are in the background, creating a sense of depth.

Thank You

A special thank you to **Dr. Holli-Anne Passmore**, who has been working closely with me on developing and designing this study and to **Ashley Krause**, who joined one of our project meeting and provided helpful feedback.

Questions?