

Interdependence, Interconnectedness and Community

As I write this, looking out of my window at the food garden I'm lucky enough to have, I sense much life beating out there, way beyond my comprehension. I don't take mind enhancing drugs but sometimes as I walk around my garden it feels like I imagine that might be.

There's so much life going on that it's overwhelming, and yet, I only get this tiny glimpse of it, the lizards scurrying away, the bees buzzing in the flowers, the spiders carrying their eggs in haste to safety, the snails making their way slowly across the path, the big centipedes, all over the place, moving a little faster than the snails, their concertina of legs flowing in a wavy rhythm of their own, curling up at a touch, and the birds singing from every tree, a symphony that happens each early morning, and to a lesser extent throughout the day - and yet, all this is but a tiny part of the life that's going on, most of it happening underground. Life, given a chance, beats incessantly, everywhere. The complexity of it is as difficult for us to grasp as the concept of infinity. We can only learn to tune in.

Evidence shows that we are all more connected when we go outside and interact with our natural surroundings. (See Rosa, C.D., & Collado, S. (2019). "Experiences in Nature and Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors: Setting the Ground for Future Research," *Frontiers in Psychology* 10, no. 763, 1-9.)

An invitation: take a break from what you are doing and walk outside. Look at and listen to the world around you.

Last year during the pandemic, I spent more time outside. It was a way for me to feel relaxed and connect to the nonhuman world around me. I watched the different seasons ebb and flow. I began utilizing community science apps to monitor and map plants and animals living around me. The apps have made it easy to notice so much more about the natural world.

Many modern religious beliefs are based on nature worship--theism, panentheism, pantheism, deism, polytheism, animism, totemism, shamanism, paganism, and sarnaism. I find that fascinating.

I often have to remind myself that just because the industrialist culture I live in emphasize quickness and brevity doesn't mean that I have to live that way. I force myself to slow down and look around. As a result, I feel more connected and living congruously with the nature of the Earth. It has made me appreciate all that is around me and do things to give back to the planet, like not buying products with a lot of packaging, picking up litter, and cutting back my energy use.

People expect the government to act but the government thinks people don't care about climate change enough. We need to break 'climate silence' and normalize discussions on the issue.

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