

# NATURE BATHING

*Creativity applied to loneliness (Activity 12/12)*

## DESCRIPTION

Spending time in nature has been repeatedly shown to improve wellbeing and boost positive mood. Through connecting with nature and the living things within it, we can be reminded of the beauty of the world in which we participate. We are not alone and can take solitude in knowing that. This activity guides the experience through nature, both in the moment and on reflection afterwards. and is thus designed to reduce feelings of loneliness and enhance wellbeing.

## OBJECTIVES

The objective of this activity is to alleviate loneliness that may be felt by the elderly by having them actively reflect on the nature around them and their part in it, their sensory experiences as well as discussing their associated emotions with others, such as the carer with them. This is also a mindfulness exercise that can focus the mind on the present and the experiences in nature and take the mind off feelings of loneliness.

## RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

No materials are necessary, though a camera (e.g. on a smartphone) and a pen and paper can be useful for reflection and discussion later when back indoors.

## IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

1. Put on suitable clothing for going outside and find somewhere outside and nearby to sit. It could be in the garden directly outside, or somewhere nearby such as in a forest, in a park, by a pond or lake, by the coast.
2. Encourage mindfulness and reflection by saying that you're going to sit in silence for 2 minutes and focus on what's around you while breathing slowly and deeply. Use all senses to take in your surroundings.



<https://creatingwellbeing.eu/>



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

Disclaimer: The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

3. Identify an element of nature that makes you feel calm, at peace, happy, interested, etc. Talk about it.

4. Sample questions:

- How do you feel? (both physically and emotionally)
- What do you see / smell / hear?
- Tell me two things that you like about this.
- Tell me two things you are grateful for.

5. If available, take a photo or draw a picture of something you see that you like, for further discussion later or telling others.

## POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

1. When returning inside, take a moment to reflect on the experience and what was gained from it. If photographs were taken outside, these can be discussed and reflected up, and notes can be written if a pen and paper are available. Reflection questions, such as those above could be provided.

2. The nature scene experienced, or an element of it, could be drawn if coloured pens or crayons are also available.

3. During bad weather days, the activity could also be done by looking through the window if there is some greenery visible outside.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

Interaction with nature can take away feelings of loneliness through the experience of being in nature and part of it, as well as the act of discussing it with another person (the carer).

We expect to see the symptoms and signs of loneliness ease and lessen as a result of this activity both in the short term during and after the activity, and also in the medium term when the activity is regularly repeated.

Note that time spent in nature is highly personal and will therefore lead to different results with different people. Also, people may react to different elements of nature more positively based on their preferences, such as in the forest versus by the sea.