

Nature is Natural

When I was growing up, my brother and I spent a great deal of time on our grandparent's farm. In addition to running a large farm, our grandmother and granddad taught in the local school. Therefore, summer break was the ideal time for us to enjoy an extended stay in the country while we were all free from the cares of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Farm life was different from the city life we normally led. We learned to rise with the morning sun and settle into bed when it lowered out of sight while on the farm. The hours in between were spent helping with chores like bailing hay, weeding the garden, gathering eggs, canning fruits and vegetables, and snapping peas. We fished in the pond, rode bikes on dirt roads, and explored barns and trails. Some of our best memories include eating all that farm fresh food with our grandmother's homemade biscuits. At night, we fell asleep listening to crickets and tree frogs. Those were good times.

Contrast that lifestyle with the one many of us endure in congested cities. Most of us in modern society must be intentional about disconnecting from technology and the busyness of work demands in order to experience the peace and simplicity of life in an agrarian society. Living a hectic paced lifestyle with a wide variety of demands can negatively affect our emotional and physical health, as well as the ability to maintain positive relationships.

There are some who consider being excessively busy something to be desired. There can be a perception that an esteemed individual is in constant demand. While that may be true in some cases, it's also true that elements under constant pressure must have a release valve to avoid the imminent explosion. Humans tend to have emotional explosions and/or develop serious health complications when pressure builds over time.

What's the answer for those of us with work demands and busy schedules? Moving to the country is not the worst solution, but it's not a viable solution for most. Scheduling breaks from a busy lifestyle is more likely the solution.

Light is your body's cue to be alert. Light is the primary controlling factor for regulating our body's internal clock, the circadian rhythm. Light also stimulates the production of the hormone melatonin. It's secreted late in the day to induce sleepiness.

Spending time outdoors also helps relieve stress from tired eyes and a fatigued mind. Sitting or walking outdoors can have many health benefits. Take time for a mental health break and step outside, leaving all electronic devices behind.

A brief ten-minute stroll, without technology, allows for creative thinking and relaxation. Fresh air and movement increase the flow of blood and oxygen throughout your body relieving tension and developing strength.

Spring is upon us! Take an extended break and spend time away from the hustle of city congestion. This just might be the most effective pressure release of all. Do yourself a favor and make a plan to get back to nature. Exhale as the noise and tension melt away under the brilliance of the sun.

