

Building Resilience: One Step at a Time

Take Your Meds Outside

Get outside to build your good side. Check out these super strategies for shedding stress and increasing resilience and wellbeing.

Move naturally – move naturally by walking, biking, swimming, or going for hikes can improve health markers in a person, like blood pressure, heart rate, blood chemistry, sleep, and weight. In addition, moving naturally positively impacts mental health, reducing depression and anxiety symptoms, clearing the mind, and giving you thinking time.

Park the car and use your feet more – walk, bike, blade. Many trips we make in a vehicle can be made walking or riding, but it takes a little pre-planning. Leave earlier and adjust plans to daylight hours. Wear a helmet if biking or blading, and put lights on your bike.

Pro-tips – Use the stairs more, park at the far end of the lot, and plan walkable destinations.

Sources – check out www.wellnessMN.org for more information. Search Blue Zones for info on moving naturally.

Go green – green spaces are good for our mood, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms. This works for kids and adults, so it is a solution for the entire family. Treed spaces with green plants are the key – parks, nature trails, state and national parks, and natural play spaces. Hike, bike, explore, play, listen, and breathe deeply when in the trees.

Pro-tips – Make it a daily experience with spouse and kids for mood and relationship “shot in the arm.” Remember that you can double the impact by moving naturally to and from the green spaces.

Micro-burst the outdoors – Add outdoor time to every day if you can. It will take some calendar work to get there. More than that, it will take some habit-busting to change from being indoors and always using a car. Commit to walking one mile outside daily (as much as possible). If you can, do it twice a day. Take the family and visit new and sound spaces. These twenty-minute micro-bursts can add up to a lot of good things. The more you do them, the better you might sleep and feel.

Pro-tips – Make it routine, even in the winter. Most of us can stand even deep cold for 20 minutes. However, if it is a daily routine, the impacts will add up quickly and be easier to do.

Look up – Turn off, turn away from the screens, and start seeing and interacting with your surroundings. Social media and the constant negativity on the news wear down your cognitive and emotional capacities, contributing to more significant anxiety and depression. Watching movies or shows does not restore or rejuvenate. It simply uses time in which you could be restoring and rejuvenating.

Pro-tips – Put the thing down and walk away for a while. Plan “no digital zones” into your schedule every day.

Check out the “nature bathing” info at www.wellnessMN.org for more. See you outside!