Bringing Nature Into Your Life

Strategies for creating calm and well-being

Our ancestors intuitively understood the deep connection between humans and the natural world, relying on it for sustenance, shelter, and protection. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to feel disconnected from this bond. Incorporating nature into your living space and daily routines can enhance your sense of calm and improve your wellbeing, creating a harmonious environment that fosters relaxation, creativity, and balance.

Your Physical Space - Biophilic Design (People/Nature Connection)

- **Colors:** greens, blues, pinks, rusts, browns and neutrals… green is in the middle of the spectrum and can help induce a sense calm. Think about colors of a forest, beach, sunset, desert or garden.
- **Pictures:** viewing scenes of nature… plants, flowers, ocean, forest, meadow, etc. can have a pleasing and calming effect on our brains.
- **Natural Materials:** organic cotton, rattan, woven grasses, bamboo, wood, stone
- **"Hygge"** or Danish coziness especially during the wintertime… warm spectrum LED lights, flameless candles, throw blankets, warm tea, yummy food, friends and laughter.
- **Plants:** live plants can filter pollutants and increase oxygen in your space… caring for plants can be relaxing as it can increase serotonin levels and decrease cortisol levels
- **Sound:** the sounds of birdsong, wind and water are the most calming.
- **Fragrance:** essential oils in a diffuser or herbal sachets… some relaxing scents to try are lavender, bergamot, pine/hinoki (can boost immunity), chamomile, ylang ylang, and frankincense.
- **Brighten Up:** open shades and clear the clutter as much as possible.

Wellness & Mindfulness - Tune In And Notice

- **Nature-based visualization meditations**
- **Nature journaling:** make it a regular practice.
- **"Forest bathing" & "Sit Spots":** sitting or walking outdoors while opening each of your senses to all that is around you.
- **Windows with a view:** get the long, distant view - your eyes and brain will thank you.
- **Therapeutic Horticulture:** plant propagation, flower arranging, herbal sachets, etc.
- **Phenology:** develop a relationship with a plant and observe it throughout the seasons… choose a tree or shrub and visit/look at it regularly, journal or use your phone to document.
- **Cooking:** use fresh, locally grown plants if you have an opportunity to make food for yourself or with friends, be aware of gratitude for all involved in getting that food to your plate.
- **Gardening:** grow microgreens in your room, join a community garden, volunteer to grow food for a food shelf.
- **Awe:** welcome curiosity and "awe" into your life…both can help you move beyond thoughts of self and into the larger world around you.

Easy Care Plants For A Relaxing Space

House plants can be the perfect addition to your space, especially when you're busy. These low-maintenance varieties thrive even with minimal attention, offering numerous benefits like purifying the air by removing toxins and boosting oxygen levels. This is a list of easy-care house plants that not only enhance your environment but also contribute to a more relaxing and healthy living space.

Snake Plant (Sansivaria trifasciata)



- **Light:** likes low to bright indirect light
- **Water:** when the soil is mostly dry to the touch, likes well drained soil
- **Habit:** grows tall and narrow on a shelf or on the floor in a corner

Spider Plant (Chlorophytum comosum)



- **Light:** likes low to bright indirect light
- **Water:** when top inch of soil is dry... about one time per week and a little less during the winter
- **Habit:** arching leaves like to cascade and will produce baby plantlets to share with friends, works well as a hanging plant

ZZ Plant (Zamioculcas Zamiifolia)



- **Light:** likes low to bright indirect light
- **Water:** when soil is fully dry... about every 2-6 weeks
- **Habit:** glossy leaves... comes in a green or purplish color

Pothos (Epipremnum aureum)



- **Light:** likes low to bright indirect light
- **Water:** about every two weeks, leaves will wilt or turn yellow if not enough water
- **Habit:** trailing and works well as a hanging plant or trailing up (with supports) or down a wall

Peace Lily (Spathiphyllum walisii)



- **Light:** likes low to bright indirect light
- **Water:** about once a week... keep soil moist but not saturated, leaves will wilt if too dry, sensitive to chlorine... can leave a cup of water out overnight so chlorine evaporates before watering
- **Habit:** grows produces white flowers a couple times per year