



Workbook, CPD & Reflection Log

Episode 126: Using Nature to Answer Your Big Questions

with Henri Stevenson

Taking a break from your busy schedule is essential for doctors and other medical professionals. One fantastic way to do this is to use this time to go out, take a walk and connect with nature. You may find that you feel calmer and think differently when you're in a green or blue space.

As you spend time in nature, keep an open mind. Don't think too hard — connect with nature, and let your brain relax.

Making time for a walk in the park can be quite challenging, especially when you're a busy professional. But if you take a quick 5 minutes outside, you'll find that your mind works differently and that nature presents metaphors you can use to overcome the challenges you face. Find out how nature can help and benefit your busy lifestyle.

Podcast links

[Find out more about](#) our 'Off Air, Off Grid Thinking Retreat' in nature in September

Check out the [Shapes Toolkit](#) and join the [Resilient Team Academy](#)

Look into David Pearl and his book, [Wanderful](#) and podcast, [Street Wisdom](#)

[Grounded](#) by Dr Ruth Allen

[F**k It](#) by John C Parkin

[Bird songs](#) from RSPB Nature Reserve

You Are Not a Frog Podcast Episodes:

- [Episode 15](#)
- [Episode 94](#)
- [Episode 117](#)

[Green and Blue Spaces and Mental Health](#) by WHO

[Email Rachel](#) or reach her on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).



Guest links

Connect with Henri:

[Website](#)

[One-Day Thinking Nature Retreat](#) in Hertfordshire this July

Quote to remember:

'I think there's just lots of lessons from nature and it's just completely individual... You might notice something that gives new insight.'

What You Will Learn

You can find new ideas or make new connections by choosing to rest outside or even bringing your work into nature. You might find that taking your thoughts for a walk can give you a new perspective and inspire solutions. Aside from that, over a hundred studies have shown that being in natural spaces benefits your health. Not just physically but mentally as well.

The activity helps you to explore the difference between being inside and outside. You might find that being in the confines of your room or office can magnify your problems; being in nature helps you see things differently. You may find that the thoughts you've brought with you don't seem as big a problem when you connect with nature.

Nature is also full of life, and you might be surprised how much you can relate to a tree on the path or a stone in a river. Noticing life happening naturally all around you can remind you of your strength and your potential. It can also deepen your connection not just with the world but with others around you. As you go on a walk with your colleagues, friends or family, allow nature to inspire you.

Let this activity help you start the habit of connecting with nature. The natural world has much to offer you if you can accept it. Invested in the outcome. By bringing them in and valuing their opinions, you're one step closer to a more open workplace.



Activity: Growing Like a Tree

Taking the Step Outside

When you go out, notice how your perception shifts. What thoughts come to mind when you're outside vs when you're inside? How do you feel?

How You Are Inside	How You Are Outside

Think about a problem you were worrying about and take it for a walk. Looking at the vast expanse of nature around you, how do you feel and think about this problem?

Taking Your Thoughts on a Walk

At the beginning of your walk, take 30 seconds to ponder questions or thoughts that have been on your mind recently. Write these questions down.

- _____?
- _____?
- _____?

a) During those 30 seconds, listen to your body as well. How do you feel? What is your body trying to tell you?



You can also let nature inspire your thoughts. Note what drew you in and the insights they gave you. Once you get back home, write them down below.

Nature Mirroring Life

Match your life experiences to the seasons we observe in nature. When was the last winter or autumn in your life? Go through all the seasons. You can choose to view your life as a whole, or pick a specific period.

Winter	
Spring	
Summer	
Autumn	

b) You don't always have to walk on your own. Walking side by side with someone else can give you an opportunity to connect. Who could you walk with?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Go ahead and ask one of them to take a walk with you. Write down your reflections on here your conversations and what you observed as you walked through nature.



Find your favourite green and blue spaces to explore and immerse yourself in nature. Put a picture of the place here, or better yet, a photo of you in that space. Take this opportunity to go there again!

If you don't have a favourite place yet, that's okay. All you have to do is go out — leave your house, take a walk, and just connect with nature. Remember: the earth beneath your feet is part of nature too!

To make this a habit, make it a part of your schedule. This coming week, slip in two 5-to-10-minute walks: around a park, by a river, or even just down the road. Write down that schedule here.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday



As you get comfortable taking this time to connect with nature, you can try spending more time outside. Turn your five-minute walks into ten minutes or longer. Enjoy your walks and take this time for yourself and your development.

CPD time claimed:

For more episodes of You are not a frog, check out our website www.youarenotafrog.co.uk follow Rachel on Twitter @DrRachelMorris and find out more about the [Permission to Thrive](#) CPD membership for doctors and online and face to face courses on surviving and thriving at work at www.shapestoolkit.com