

Nature Connection as a Preventive Crisis Intervention

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Nature Connection Research

- Gregory Bratman (2015) – A 90 minute walk in nature vs. a city reduced activity in area of the brain linked with depression. “These findings support the view that natural environments may confer psychological benefits to humans.”
- Hordyk, Dulude, Shem (2014) – Studied how nature nature experience nurtures children and promotes attachment behavior.
- Interdisciplinary: Counseling, Psych, Social Work, Biology, Public Health, Urban Planning

Psychological Preparedness Research

- Hannah Zulch (2014) – Developed Psychological Preparedness for Disaster Threat Scale

One culture's crisis is another culture's status quo...

- Netsilik film series

General Questions:

- Were the Netsilik thriving?
- What can we know about the mental health of our evolutionary ancestors?
- How did we lose our native survival skills, including the community aspects, and are we happy with the change?

Survival vs. Thriving Exploitation vs. Connection

- Modern Survivalists
 - Often isolated, anti-social individual
 - Goal is return to or avoidance of modern society
 - Rely on imported technology/gear
 - Nature seen as obstacle/threat/resource

Survival vs. Thriving Exploitation vs. Connection

- Native Survivalists (in general)
 - Communal living, collectivists
 - Goal is sustained harmonious immersion
 - Rely on skills/knowledge, self-generated tech
 - Nature seen as attachment figure, familial

Encyclopedic Knowledge of the Environment

- Inupiat 100 words for snow
- Knowledge of names, patterns and uses of all plants, animals, stones, fungi, weather phenomena
- Books/media as traditional elders/teachers
- Knowledge of Hazards
 - Field guide to venomous and poisonous

Shelter

- How long can you live without shelter?
 - Can die of hypothermia in 60 degree weather
- Use layers to create dead air space
 - Heat is trapped in air pockets
- Stuff clothing with any shredded material
- Wool, silk, leather, NEVER COTTON
- Debris Hut Survival Shelter
 - Can be made water & cold proof





Water

- How long can you live without water? 2-4 days
- Giardia/Cryptosporidium/chem. contaminants
- Unless directly out of spring must boil
- Containers: Coal burn, folded bark, clay, found

Grapevine



Sycamore



Fire

- Needed to purify water in most cases
- Stages of material:
 - Tinder
 - Pencil lead, pencil, finger, wrist thickness
- Tipi construction



Food

- Most people can live without food for at least 30 days = lowest priority
- Can be psychologically important
- Hurricane Katrina deaths

Tree Identification

- Conifers are fewer
- Deciduous Trees more numerous
- Opposite branching
 - Maple, Ash, Dogwood, Horse Chestnut & Buckeye
 - MAD HORSE
- Alternate branching
 - ALL OTHERS (except Florida)
- 100% positive ID only by BUDS in winter

Plant Identification

- 100% positive ID only by flowers
- Examine leaf shape and arrangements
- Examine flower type, # of parts and color
- KNOW POISONOUS LOOK-ALIKES
- AVOID MUSHROOMS UNTIL YOU MASTER PLANTS



Wild Carrot =
Tasty

Poison
Hemlock =
Deadly



LEAF TYPES



Use Newcomb's Guide to Wildflowers

FLOWER TYPES



From: <http://www.arctic.uoguelph.ca/>



LET'S GO PLAY!

Research Questions

- How do modern people feel about not having the skills and knowledge to thrive directly from the earth?
- What personality, socioeconomic, lifestyle factors are related to interest in nature connection/practical nature connection?
- What barriers prevent or inhibit modern people from seeking out traditional survival knowledge?
- What factors promote knowledge seeking?

References

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