

## Join Us for the ReWild Your Life Challenge in April

30 minutes outdoors, without electronic interruption (except for a camera to photo-document your experience), for 30 days straight...that is the premise of the ReWild Your Life challenge, developed by the not-for-profit We Are Wildness and running through the month of April. We love this idea! Spending time outdoors offers huge benefits for those who partake. For instance, research has shown that spending being outside is associated with decreased levels of mental illness, especially depression and anxiety, and increased self-esteem. Spending time in nature is also linked to positive effects on physical health.

If you need a little motivation to venture out into the mud and melting snow, here are some reasons (from the Harvard Health Letter) to consider taking up the challenge with us:

- **Your vitamin D levels rise** – Sunlight hitting the skin begins a process that leads to the creation and activation of vitamin D. Studies suggest that this vitamin helps fight certain conditions, from osteoporosis and cancer to depression and heart attacks.
- **You'll get more exercise** – If you make getting outside a goal, that should mean less time in front of the television and computer and more time walking and doing other things that put the body in motion.
- **You'll be happier** – Light tends to elevate people's mood, and there's usually more light available outside than in. Physical activity has been shown to help people relax and cheer up, so if being outside replaces inactive pursuits with active ones, it might also mean more smiles.
- **Your concentration will improve** – Children with ADHD seem to focus better after being outdoors. If you have trouble concentrating, outdoor activity may help you as well.
- **You may heal faster** – In one study, people recovering from spinal surgery experienced less pain and stress and took fewer pain medications when they were exposed to natural light. An older study showed that the view out the window (trees vs. a brick wall) helped recovery in the hospital.

And here are some reasons just from us:

- **Spending time outdoors will enrich your life**
- **You will learn new things**
- **If you spend time outdoors with children, you will be modeling habits that will put them on the road to a happier, healthier future**

Join the Challenge: [Sign up officially](#) with We Are Wildness, or just participate along with us! From April 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>, commit to spending 30 minutes outdoors without electronic distraction. Our April photo contest will be following your progress so bring your cameras along and share your experiences with us. If you want to submit photos to our photo contest, either via Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter, tag your images #ReWildVT, or email them to us at



Photo Credit: Shannon Morrison

[anr.info@state.vt.us](mailto:anr.info@state.vt.us). Whether you choose to journal, take pictures, draw, paint or just immerse yourself in nature unfettered by any distractions, time spent outdoors is time well spent. See you out there!