

RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

The aim is to understand and reflect upon the human relationship with nature and its impact on the environment.

THREE AREAS OF CONNECTION

Our connection with nature plays a vital role not only in survival skills but also in our health and how actively we engage in environmental protection. According to Schultz, our relationship with nature can be understood through three areas:

Cognitive – how integrated we feel with the natural world.

Affective – our sense of care and concern for nature.

Behavioural – our commitment to actually protecting the environment.

Accessible Forest Practice is one of many approaches that can strengthen our connection to nature across all three areas.

TIPS

Cognitive: deepen your knowledge

- Make a list of plants and places you'd like to know better, then explore them through study, sketches, poetry, or music. Get closer to nature using different ways of sensing and understanding.

Affective: build a relationship

- Find a nearby natural spot where you can spend at least 20 minutes regularly. Simply be there and pay attention—let a real relationship develop between you and that place.

Behavioural: take small acts of care

- What if you developed activities that care for the environment? Perhaps tending a garden, picking up litter in the woods, or cleaning dust off public plants. What would your personal act of care be?

EXPLORE

Assess your nature connectedness—and that of your participants.

The following is based on the Connectedness to Nature Scale by F. Stephan Mayer and Cynthia McPherson Frantz. Please indicate how you generally feel about nature. The closer you place x to a statement, the more you agree with it.

When I think of my place on Earth, I consider myself to be a top member of a hierarchy that exists in nature.



I feel as though I belong to the Earth as equally as it belongs to me.



I prefer to spend time at home, even when the weather is nice.



I like spending time in nature, regardless of the weather and other conditions.



I often avoid contact with nature, especially wild nature.



I often feel a kinship with animals and plants.



I often feel disconnected from nature. My personal welfare is independent of the welfare of the natural world.



I have a deep understanding of how my actions affect the natural world; therefore, I follow pro-environmental practices.



REFLECT

- What might be your way of connecting with nature?
- What do you notice in yourself and others as your connection with nature deepens?