

CONSERVANCY

FOR CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

— CUYAHOGA CONNECTIONS —

JOURNAL VOL. 12

Healthy Parks,
Healthy People

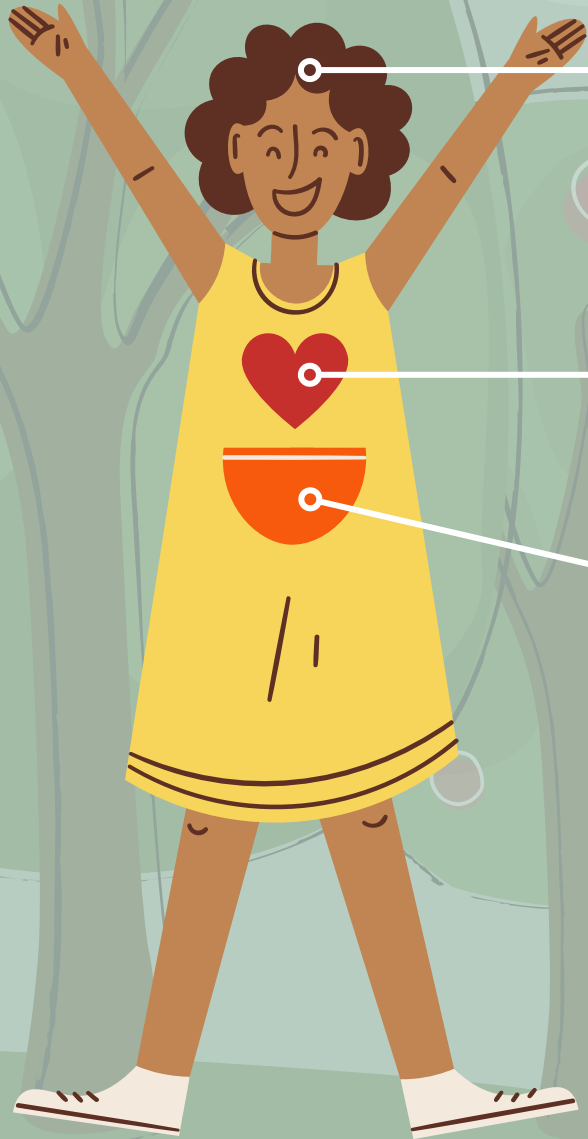


VOCABULARY

Look for these words throughout our journal!

- **Fractal**: A never-ending pattern that repeats itself at different scales
- **Mindfulness**: Slowing down in order to pay attention or fully notice something. It is the opposite of rushing or multi-tasking.
- **Sediment**: Materials such as stone and sand.
- **Self-similarity**: A quality of fractals.
- **Stimulate**: To make active or more active.

HOW NATURE HELPS OUR HEALTH



Being in nature helps reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. It can increase brain function and stimulate our creativity.

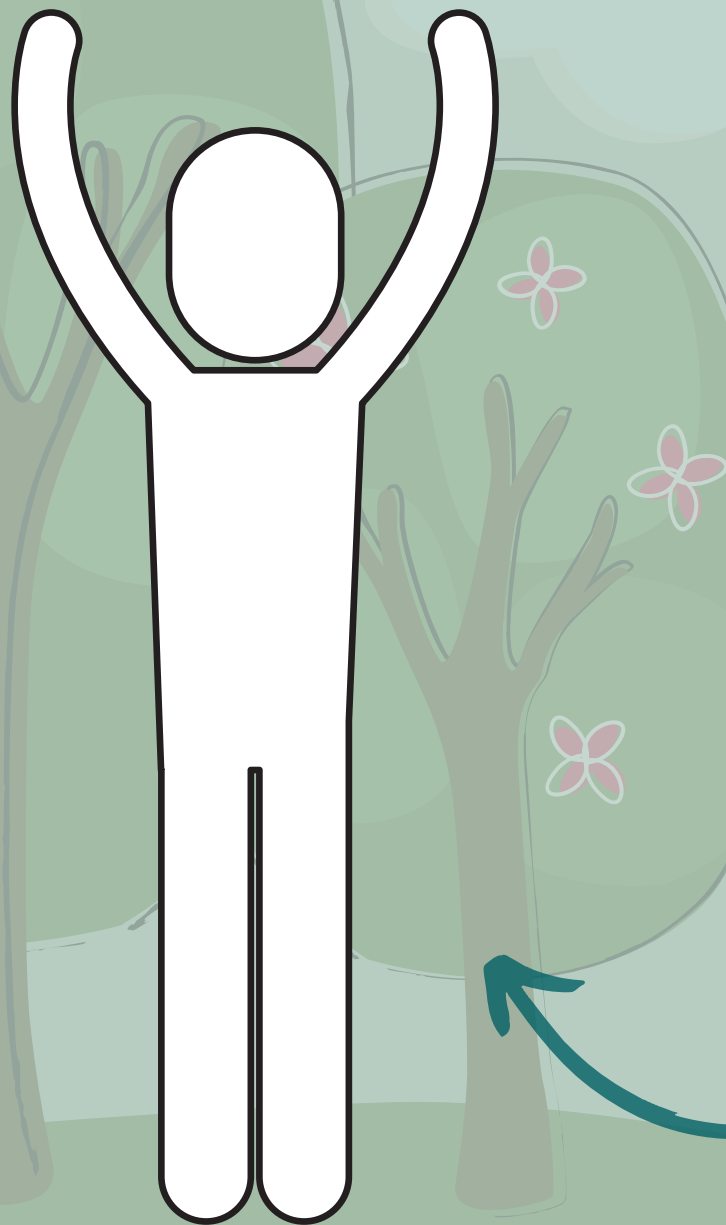
It can reduce anger, fear, and anxiety, and increases happiness and pleasant feelings!

It can reduce blood pressure, boost our immune system, promote heart health, and help treat and prevent obesity.

For mental, emotional, and physical wellness, one of the best things to do is **GET OUTSIDE!**



HOW DOES NATURE HELP YOU?



Circle all of the words that are true to you!

When I am in nature, I feel...

CALM

CREATIVE

AWAKE

HAPPY

PEACEFUL

FULFILLED

HEALTHY

ACTIVE

STRONG

Why else do you like to be in nature?

Color in our nature-loving figure to look like you!

I AM HEALTHY LIKE A...

Compare yourself to the different natural elements of CVNP. How are you healthy like them?



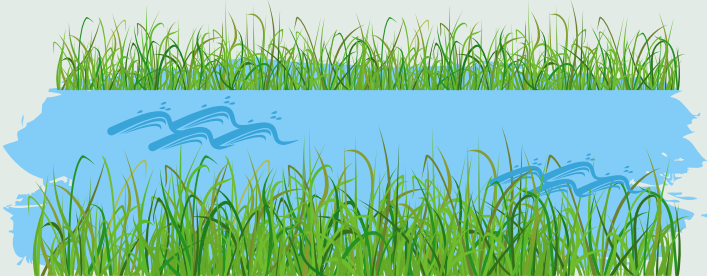
Trees in the Cuyahoga Valley stand tall and strong. They use sunlight, air, and water to grow. They provide a safe place to live for animals.

I am healthy like a tree because I also _____



Squirrels find and eat lots of food like nuts and fruit. They jump and run quickly, and will chase and play with their siblings. They like to climb trees.

I am healthy like a squirrel because I also _____



The Cuyahoga River bends and moves. It gives life to plants and animals. It carries things like sediment from one place to another with its strong current. It brings joy to the people who live near it. It flows swiftly in some places, and slow in others.

I am healthy like a river because I also _____

FACTS ABOUT FRACTALS

WHAT IS A FRACTAL?

A fractal is a never-ending pattern that repeats itself at different scales.

HOW CAN FRACTALS HELP US?

According to scientific studies, looking at fractals for one minute or longer can stimulate your brain similarly to the way listening to music can (The Atlantic).

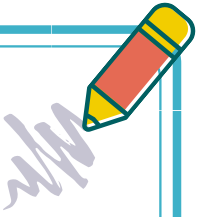
Scientists have even used fractals to help restore brain function in the elderly and in patients with neurodegenerative disorders (Zueva 2015).

WHERE CAN I FIND FRACTALS?

Natural fractals can be branching patterns like trees, rivers networks, lightning bolts, and blood vessels. They could also be spiral patterns like you see in seashells, hurricanes, and galaxies.

CREATE A FRACTAL

Use these fractals in nature to inspire you and draw your own fractal pattern!



Can you find a fractal in Cuyahoga Valley National Park? Share a photo with us!

Tag us: @forcvnp



#MyCVNPfractal

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?



BREATHING & COUNTING

Breathing helps calm us. We always carry our breath and our heartbeat with us. When we take the time to be still, we can hear and feel both. This helps us focus on the moment.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR THOUGHTS & FEELINGS

Acknowledge all of the things that are weighing on your mind. State how they make you feel. Once you have acknowledged these thoughts and feelings, let them go.

ATTUNING TO OUR SENSES

Focus on each of your senses one at a time. What can you feel underneath you? What is the temperature like? What do you see? Close your eyes... What do you hear? What do you smell?

STAYING IN THE MOMENT

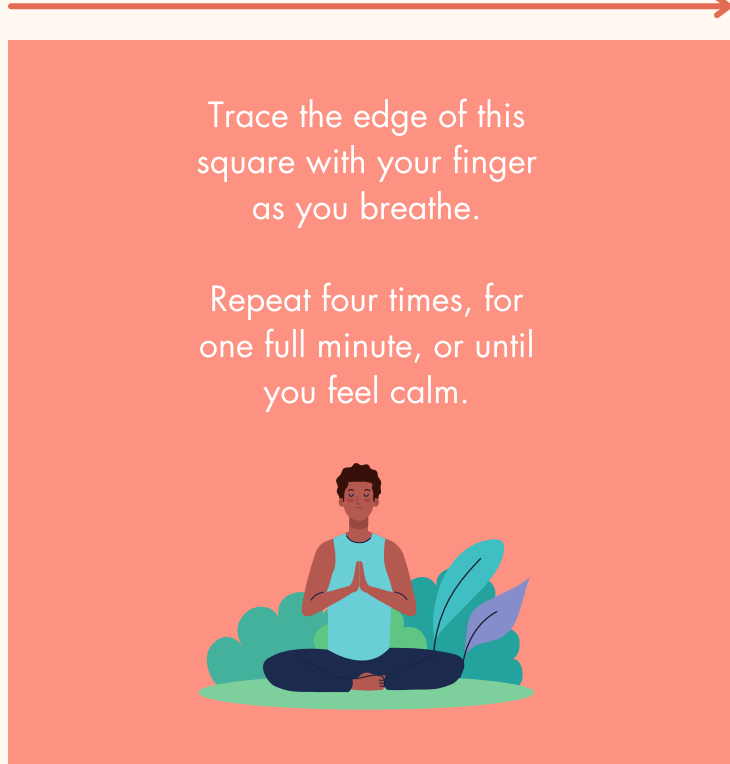
Breathing, focusing on our senses, and practicing grounding exercises help us to stay in the moment and be mindful of the beautiful environment that surrounds us.

TAKE A MOMENT TO BE MINDFUL

BREATHING EXERCISE



Breathe in 4 counts



Hold for 4 counts

Hold for 4 counts

Breathe out 4 counts

GROUNDING EXERCISES

List all of the circles or rectangles you can see.

Pick a color and list all the things you can see of that color.

Use Your Senses & List...

- 5 things you can see.
- 4 things you can hear.
- 3 things you can feel.
- 2 things you can smell.
- 1 thing you can taste.



WAYS TO BE MINDFUL IN CVNP

SPEND TIME NEAR WATER

Scientific studies show that being near bodies of water promotes mental health and happiness.

TAKE A WALK

Walking is scientifically proven to benefit both physical and mental health and can reduce depression and anxiety.

WATCH THE SUNRISE OR SUNSET

Watching the sun rise and set increases alertness and creativity, can boost our immune system, and decrease stress.

GROUNDING EXERCISES

Pay close attention to your senses and practice breathing exercises to help ground you in the moment.

DRAW OR JOURNAL

Bringing this mindfulness hobby into nature can evoke new feelings of inspiration.

WAYS TO BE MINDFUL IN CVNP

RECOMMENDED LOCATIONS

TAKE A WALK

- More than 125 miles of hiking trails in CVNP
- The Towpath Trail

QUIET SPOTS FOR GROUNDING, DRAWING, OR JOURNALING

- Howe Meadow
- Oak Hill
- Furnace Run
- Everett Road Covered Bridge
- Terra Vista Natural Study Area
- Pine Grove Trail

WATCH THE SUNRISE/SET

- The Ledges Overlook
- Valley Bridle Trail

SPEND TIME NEAR WATER

- Cuyahoga River
- Indigo Lake
- Beaver Marsh
- Brandywine Falls
- Horseshoe Pond
- Kendall Lake
- Haskell Run
- Furnace Run
- Tinkers Creek



Photo: Jerry Jelinek



The entire page has a repeating background pattern of stylized green leaves and flowers, resembling hydrangeas or similar garden plants. The pattern is light green and covers the entire surface.

JOURNAL IN NATURE

Take this journal with you to a peaceful spot, like the ones listed on the previous page.

Journal about what you see, what you feel, what you smell, what you hear...

Write about what's on your mind. We hope this experience brings you some peace and joy!

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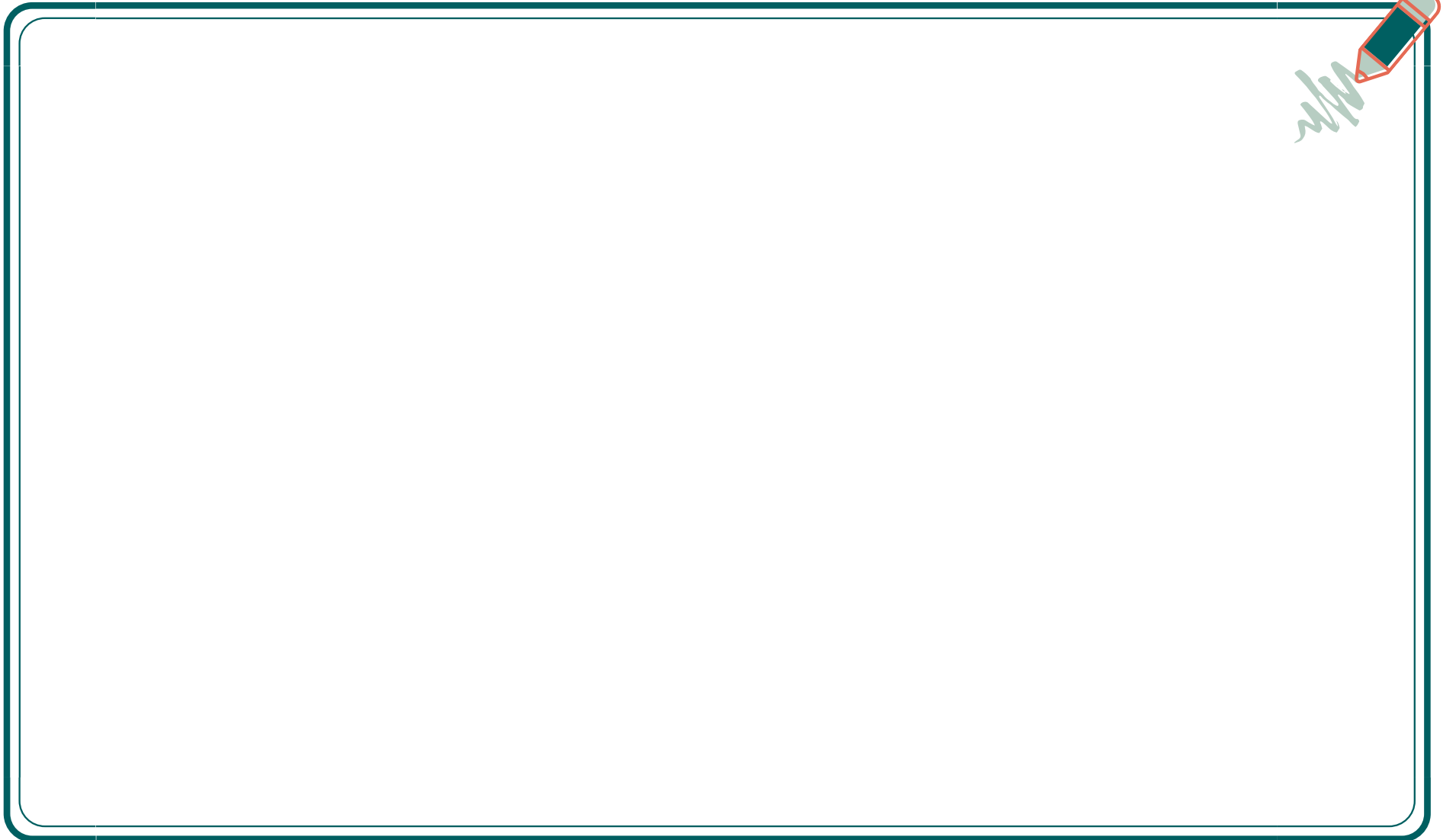


NATURE DRAWING



Take this journal with you to a peaceful spot, like the ones listed in this journal.

Draw what you see, maybe even find a fractal to copy!



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