

Self-Guided Nature Walk

...do what moves you...

Find something beautiful.
Sit with it for 5-10 minutes.

Look at something green, and then look closer... notice if there are actually many types of green.

Find a leaf. Notice what it looks like, and then notice what else is there beyond your first glance. Texture? Smell? Color?

Imagine a child is walking with you. What would the child stop to look at? Find something the child might find interesting and look at it through their eyes, with wonder and joy...

Walk slowly and silently. With each step you take tap your heel then your toe, then a full stride on that foot. Feel every part of your feet touch the ground.

Imagine anyone could walk here with you. Who would you want to share this moment with?

God, grant me the ability to be alone;
may it be my custom to go outdoors each day
among the trees and grass, *and water*
among all growing and *flowing* things,
and there may I be alone,
and enter into prayer,
to talk with the One to whom I belong.
May I express there everything in my heart,
and may all the foliage of the field
(all the grasses, trees, and plants)
and *may the life of the river*
(*water, rocks, twigs, sand, fish and insects*)
may they all awake at my coming,
to send the powers of their life
into the words of my prayer
so that my prayer and speech
are made whole
through the life and spirit of all growing things,
which are made as one
by their/*our* transcendent and *imminent*
Source.

—attributed to Reb Nachman of Bratzlav
(with a few respectful additions by Kit Turen of Washington, D. C.)

Looking, Walking, Being (Denise Levertov, Poems, 1960-1967)

"The World is not something to
look at, it is something to be in."

-- Mark Rudman

I look and look.

Looking's a way of being: one becomes,
sometimes, a pair of eyes walking.

Walking wherever looking takes one.

The eyes

dig and burrow into the world.

They touch

fanfare, howl, madrigal, clamor.

World and the past of it,

not only

visible present, solid and shadow

that looks at one looking.

And language? Rhythms

of echo and interruption?

That's

a way of breathing.

breathing to sustain

looking,

walking and looking,

through the world,

in it.

WALK DON'T RUN (Rob Bell)

Walk, don't run.

That's it.

Walk, don't run.

Slow down, breathe deeply,
and open your eyes because there's
a whole world right here within this one.

The bush doesn't suddenly catch on fire,
it's been burning the whole time.

Moses is simply moving
slowly enough to see it. And when he does,
he takes off his sandals.

Not because

the ground has suddenly become holy,
but because he's just now becoming aware that
the ground has been holy the whole time.

Efficiency is not God's highest goal for your life,
neither is busyness,
or how many things you can get done in one day,
or speed, or even success.

But walking,

which leads to seeing,
now that's something.

That's the invitation for every one of us today,
and everyday, in every conversation, interaction,
event, and moment: to walk, not run. And in doing so,
to see a whole world right here within this one.

**“To Look at Any Thing” (John Moffitt, in Teaching With Fire, edited by
S. M. Intrator and M. Scribner)**

To look at any thing,
If you would know that thing,
You must look at it long:
To look at this green and say,
"I have seen spring in these
Woods," will not do - you must
Be the thing you see:
You must be the dark snakes of
Stems and ferny plumes of leaves,
You must enter in
To the small silences between
The leaves,
You must take your time
And touch the very peace
They issue from.

“Walk Slowly” (Danna Faulds)

It only takes a reminder to breathe,
a moment to be still, and just like that,
something in me settles, softens,
makes space for imperfection.

The harsh voice of judgment drops to a whisper
and I remember again that life isn't a relay race;
that we will all cross the finish line;
that waking up to life is what
we were born for.

As many times as I forget, catch myself charging forward
without even knowing where I'm going,
that many times I can make the choice
to stop, to breathe and be, and walk
slowly into the mystery.