

# Nature Rx

The Conservation Foundation

Jan Roehll, DuPage County Program Director





- Half of the worlds population resides in urban environment
- Next several decades 86% urban life
- 2 billion people considered obese
- Increase in heart disease, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes



# Childhood Obesity

- Increase in childhood obesity ages 2-5 years
- Ten times more children and teens obese than 40 years ago
- Children as young as 7 years old Type 2 diabetes



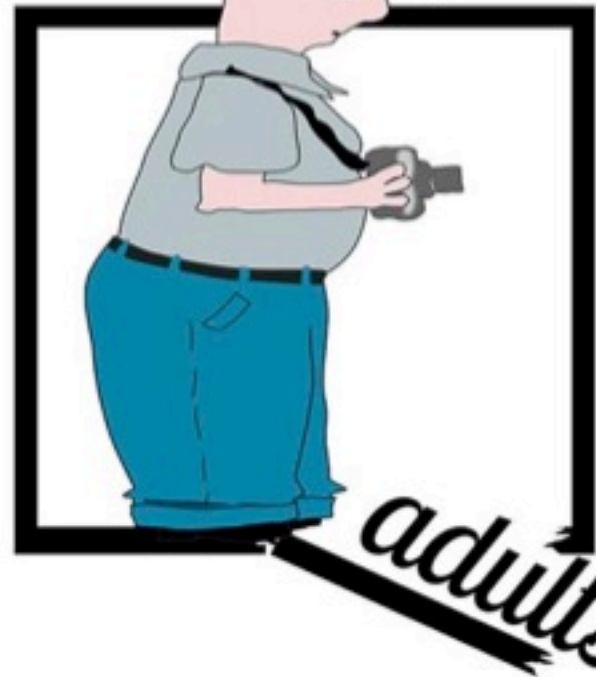
*overweight*



*kids*

*become*

*overweight*



*adults*

**Hyperactivity**

**Disinhibition**



**Disorganization**

**Forgetfulness**

**distractedness**

**Inattention**

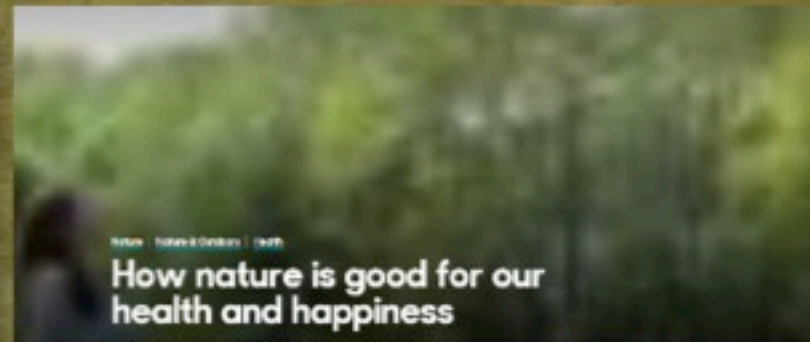
# Why Is This Important?

## This Is Your Brain on Nature

When we get closer to nature—be it untouched wilderness or a backyard tree—we do our overstressed brains a favor.



<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2016/01/call-to-wild/>



<http://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20160420-how-nature-is-good-for-our-health-and-happiness>

## The Science Behind How Nature Affects Your Health



**Bill Frist**, [CONSERVATION](#)  
former global and domestic health care and health care reform. [FOLLOW HIM](#)  
@billfrist on Twitter

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billfrist/2017/06/15/the-science-behind-how-nature-affects-your-health/#1c61177015ae>

# Disconnect with Nature

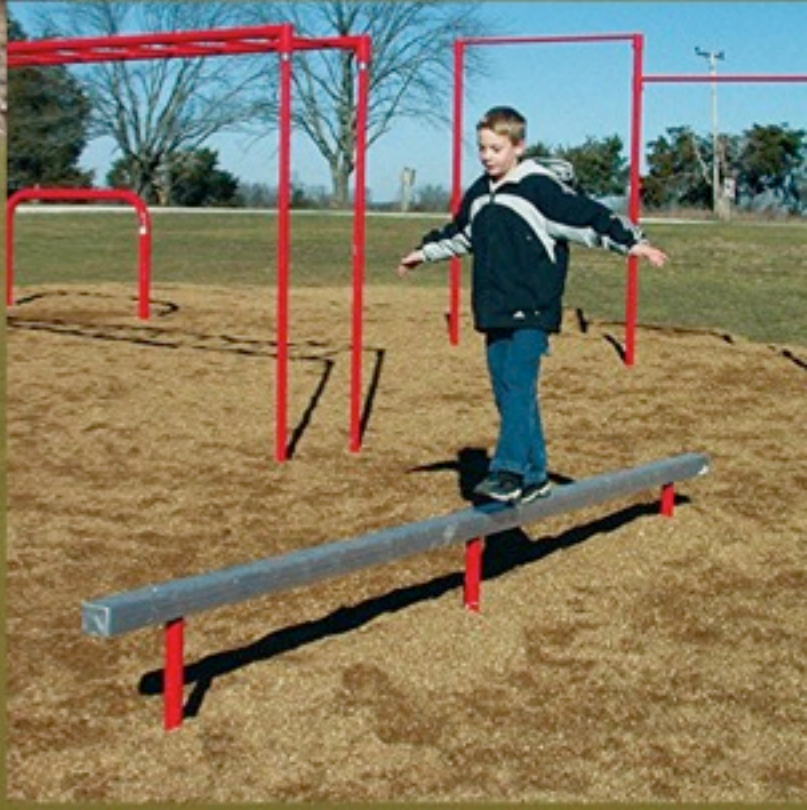
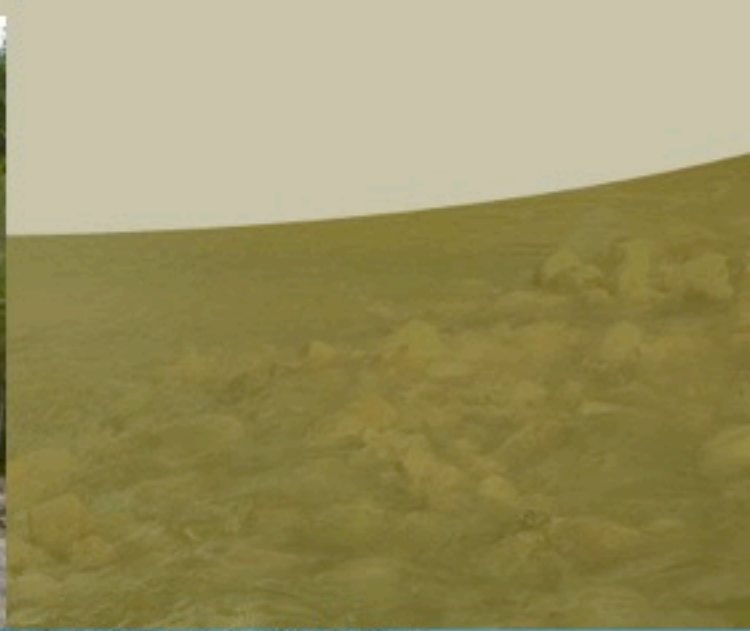




A row of young cherry blossom trees in full bloom, with vibrant pink flowers, stands in a grassy clearing. In the background, a dense forest of taller, mostly bare trees is visible under a clear blue sky. The scene is bright and sunny, with shadows cast on the ground.

In order to  
connect with  
nature, we need  
to protect it.

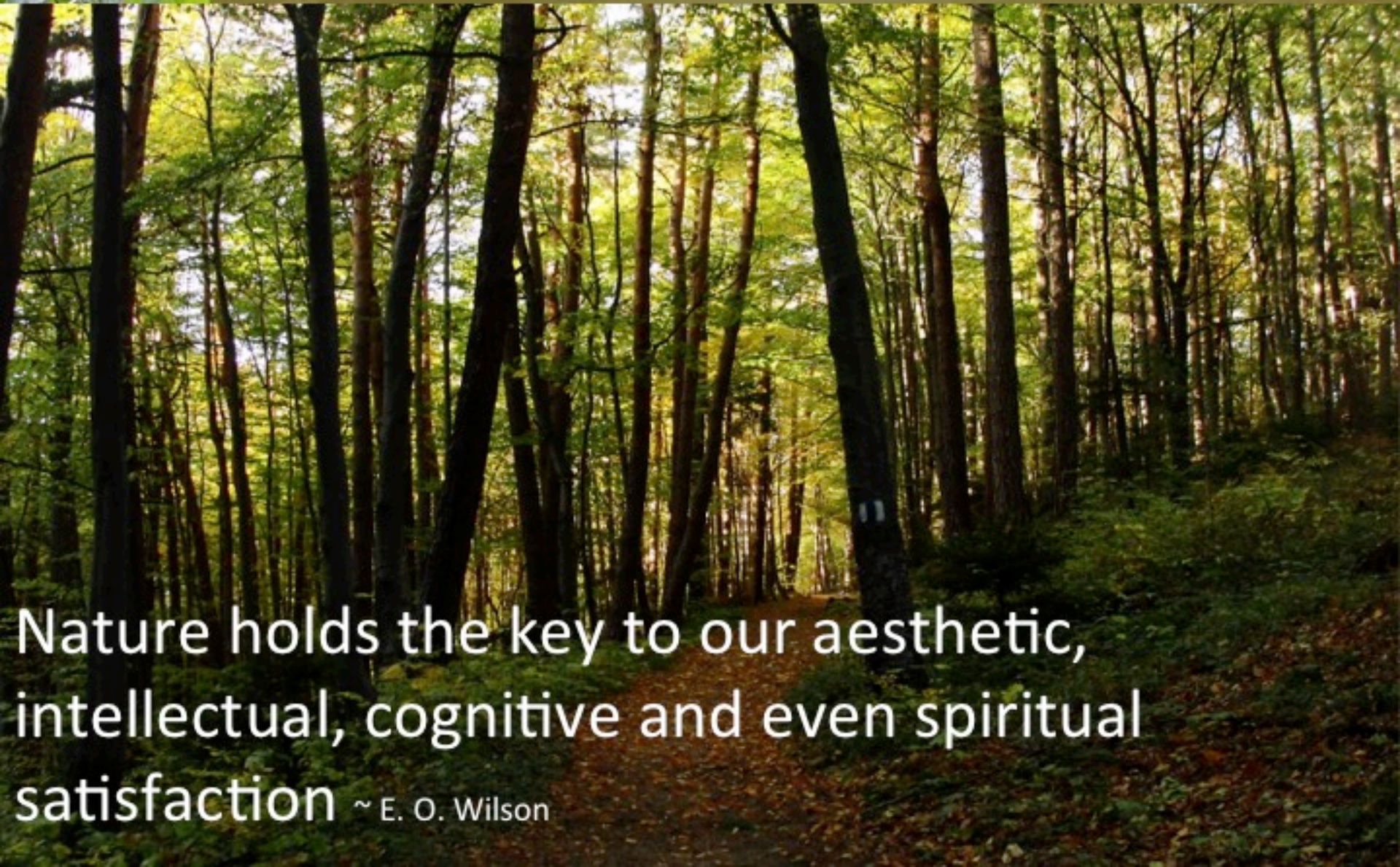
*~Paul Hubson/The Wildlife Trust*







# Biophilia




Nature holds the key to our aesthetic,  
intellectual, cognitive and even spiritual  
satisfaction ~ E. O. Wilson



**“Nature is but  
another name  
for health...”**

- Henry David Thoreau

- 
- 15 minute nature nap
  - Reduces stress levels
  - Reduces anxiety
  - Increased concentration
  - Improved mood

# Nature – Anti-Depressant



# Shinrin-yoku

Forest Bathing

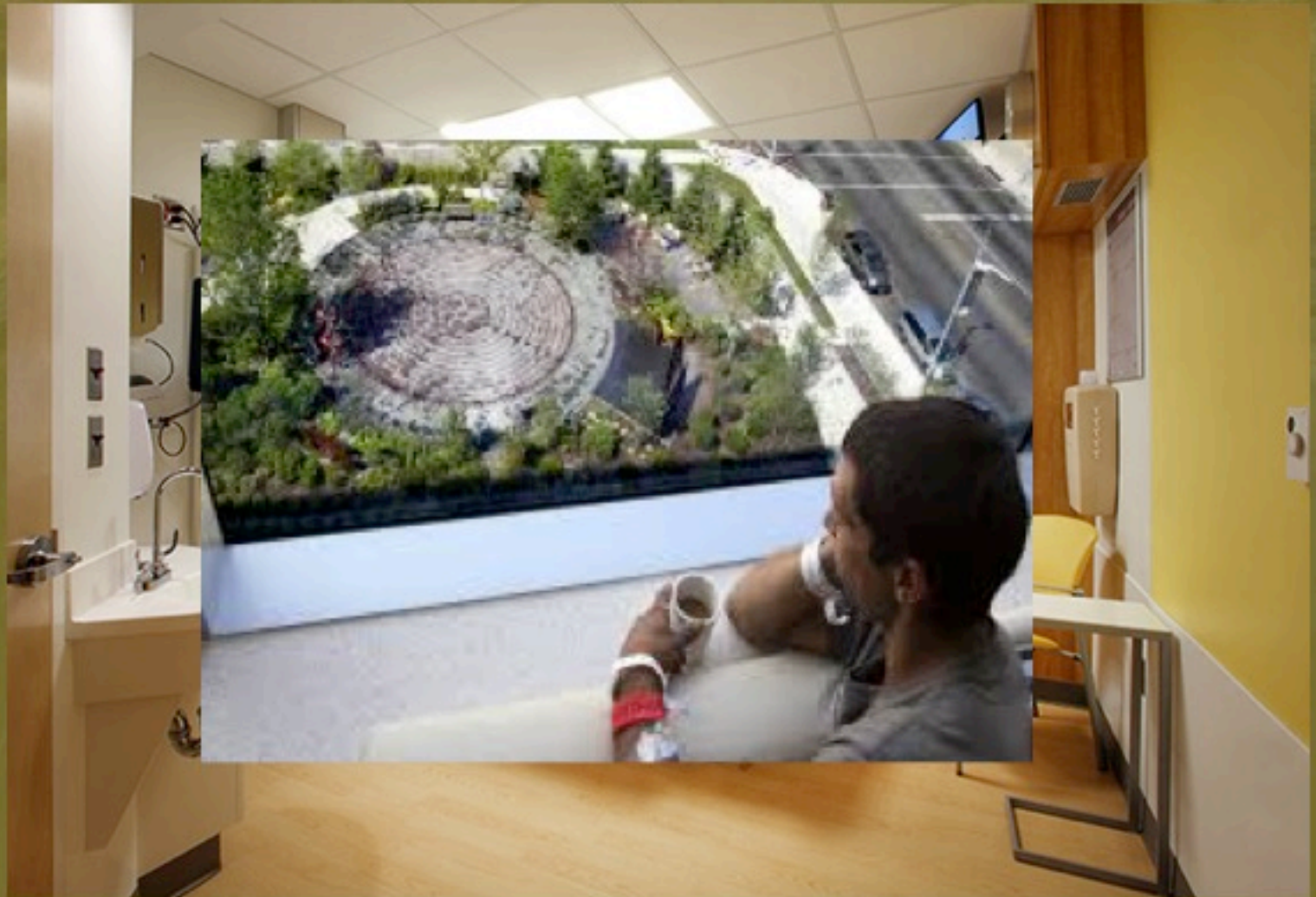


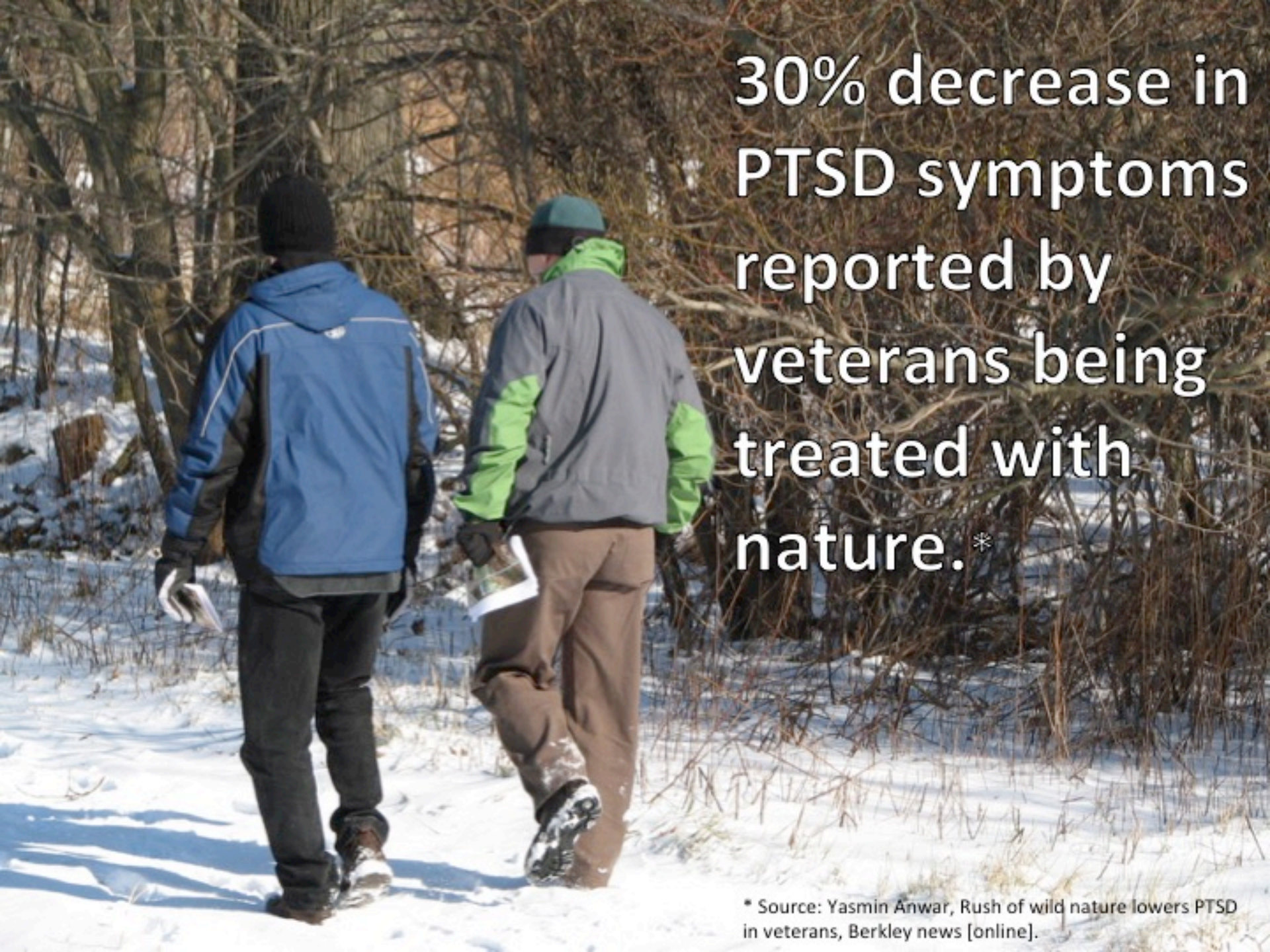






# Hospital Research



A photograph of two people walking away from the camera on a snowy path in a forest. The person on the left is wearing a blue jacket and dark pants. The person on the right is wearing a grey jacket with green accents and brown pants. The ground is covered in snow, and the trees are bare and brown, suggesting a winter setting. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

30% decrease in  
PTSD symptoms  
reported by  
veterans being  
treated with  
nature.\*

\* Source: Yasmin Anwar, Rush of wild nature lowers PTSD in veterans, Berkley news [online].

# Rx for Health: Walking in Nature

## Lake County, Illinois



- Initiative began in 2014
- Partnership between the Lake County Health Department, the Lake County Forest Preserves, NorthShore University HealthSystem, and Live Well Lake County
- Naturalist-Led Community Walks
- A Case Study in Community Engagement



# PARK Prescription

Healthy  
Habits for a  
Healthy Life



Name

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Birth Date

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Date

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> walking          | <input type="checkbox"/> ice skating     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jogging          | <input type="checkbox"/> kayaking        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hiking           | <input type="checkbox"/> fishing         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bike riding      | <input type="checkbox"/> tennis          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> horseback riding | <input type="checkbox"/> playground time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____            |  |

Notes

Unlimited Refills

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Signature

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For more information, visit:  
[MontgomeryParksPrescription.org](http://MontgomeryParksPrescription.org)



# What next?

- How can we combine forces with business innovators, healthcare leaders, insurance companies, scientist, and advocacy organizations to promote wellness and reduce healthcare costs?
- How can we influence a cultural shift to value outdoor open space and parks for health?



- **Wilderness is not a luxury, but a necessity of the human spirit**

- ~ Edward Abbey

