



Nature Nurtures



Spending time in nature helps me feel grounded, connected, and calm.
For me, this means a forest. A good hike settles my thoughts.

I like to go off the trail (where allowed). Not only does the solitude help me connect, but I find surprises that awaken wonder, and release me from the shield of my mind: a hemlock ravine, speckled with white trillium; a curious stack of stones constructed where someone thought no one would ever see; two older hippies on a tie-dye blanket, making sweet, enchanting love.



How to Play “The Color Game”

When in nature, can you find all the basic colors of the rainbow? Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple? *Each color is two points, and no doubling on variants of a single color! Black and white are one bonus point each. Get ten points or more to win! Colors must be natural, so trail signs, litter, and attire don't count. Hints: the sky can provide an easy blue and white; briar patches can be a reliable source of purple.*

This game is a favorite with children, and works well solo, too.

The Color Game is a great way to connect with nature. Looking for colors among the logs and leaves forces me to take in the world around me, instead of the anxious, weary world inside my head. I notice how the underside of tree leaves glow when sunlit from above. I rub my fingers over the many textures of tree trunks. I inhale the rich, sweet scent of soil. I feel connected to the forest, and the universe, a spiritual sense that feels good and pure and more real than anything. *Plus, it's fun!*

I also like to close my eyes and just listen. It's amazing how I didn't even notice birds were singing, or the burbling of a nearby creek, until I stopped to listen. *Thank Gaia!*

If you do not have a forest or beach or desert or other natural place, is there somewhere else you can go to feel inner peace?

Forest Floor, Forest Door

Can you find:

- 1. A snail shell
- 2. Four pillbugs
- 3. Two buckeyes
- 4. One four-leaf clover
- 5. An ironworm, coiled
- 6. Two violets
- 7. A hemlock cone
- 8. A hemlock sprig
- 9. An oak leaf
- 10. A maple leaf
- 11. A sassafras leaf
- 12. White pine needles
- 13. Two maple “helicopters”
- 14. Thirteen partridge berries

What else did you find?

