

Excerpts from...**THE ATLANTIC**

HEALTH

How Walking in Nature Prevents Depression

A study finds that wild environments boost well-being by reducing obsessive, negative thoughts.

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“When we walk, we naturally go to the fields and woods: What would become of us, if we walked only in a garden or a mall?” wrote Henry David Thoreau in *The Atlantic* in 1862.

“Thoreau extolled (and extolled and extolled—the piece was more than 12,000 words long) the virtues of walking in untamed environments. In the decades since, psychologists have proved him right. Exposure to nature has been shown repeatedly to reduce stress and boost well-being.

“But scientists haven’t been sure why. Does it have to do with the air? The sunshine? Some sort of evolutionary proclivity toward green-ness?”

Researchers at Stanford University published this week in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the Stanford scientists examined whether a nature walk could reduce rumination in 38 mentally healthy people. Their conclusions support the idea that walking and conjoining with natural environments improves moods and reduces “ruminations.” Their conclusions should encourage the preservation and enhancement of open spaces for people to enjoy.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/06/how-walking-in-nature-prevents-depression/397172/>

