



Walking Mindfully Plants Seeds of Wonder

by Wendy Nadherny Fachon

As a daily practice, mindful walking feeds the soul. This means being present with one's surroundings—feeling, seeing, listening, smelling and sensing the surrounding magic. By walking with all the senses activated, one becomes aware of the unusual and miraculous occurrences one might ordinarily overlook. After all, it is easy to get caught up inside one's own head, preoccupied by pressing thoughts and worries, and mindful walking outdoors can transport the soul outside of one's physical and emotional circumstances.

Before picking a white dandelion head, making a wish and blowing, one might pause and look closely at the perfect geometry of the delicate geodesic dome held together by the threads of life. That is a wonder to behold ... as is the delicate pattern of a wild carrot flower, better known as Queen Anne's Lace, or the intricate symmetry of dragonfly wings. It is all so fairy-like, so surreal.

Walking past a patch of butterfly weed, one might pause to admire the flower shapes in their various stages of growth, count the busy bumble-

bees buzzing around the bright orange blossoms and observe their activity. Later in the season, one might notice the seed pods that split open to release a profusion of parachuting seeds to a passing breeze. That is magical. And, beyond this, such experiences are all reminders that life goes on. After all, nature is both teacher and healer.

As a practice, keeping a walking journal allows one to reflect upon the spirit of nature and the unfolding magic of life. The act of nature writing can even help one to transform and release the ongoing physical, emotional and spiritual challenges inherent in living within a physical world. Further, the walk itself is a way to receive the metaphysical messages from Spirit in physical form: the whimsical shape of a cloud, the appearance of a particular bird, a dropped object of significance, a printed word on a piece of trash, the symbols on a candy wrapper or, perhaps, a sequence of related objects that draw one's eye during a single stroll.

Such mindful walking is a form of therapy that is free and freeing.

Wendy Nadherny Fachon hosts the Story Walking Radio Hour on the Dreamvisions & Radio Network. Immerse yourself in wonder, and read her "Walking Journal" at StoryWalking.com. See ad on page 20.

Tips for Reconnecting With Childhood Wonder

- Without a set plan, get in the car with a friend and see where the day takes you. Pack a picnic and stop for lunch somewhere off the beaten path.
- Regardless of artistic ability, begin a nature journal and record small bits of the seasons throughout the year.
- Check out a book or two from the children's section at the library and be young again.
- Create a daily practice of daydreaming about something delightful that has nothing to do with the past or the future.
- Start a local meet-up with others that share a common passion: books, healthy baking, trains or thrifting.
- Revisit a childhood or teenage interest and don't explain why.

Tips courtesy of Marlaina Donato, author, painter and composer. Connect at JaguarFlower.art.

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