

Susquehannock Trail Club News – 02-23-2023

By Bill Boyd

Seeing as it is a bit early for most of us to hit the trails, this might be a good time to consider just why we should get out there. The following was pointed out to me and is well worth having a look at. It is called "Five ways hiking is good for you", and is by Jill Suttie, at [GreaterGood.Berkeley.edu](https://www.greatergood.berkeley.edu/).

1 - Hiking keeps your mind sharper than many other forms of exercise. It involves something many other forms of exercise don't: trails. That means navigating in a world not totally predictable. All of the things that you might encounter on a trail require micro and macro adjustments to your route which is good for your brain.

2 - Hiking keeps you calm and happy. Studies have found that, compared to walking in a cityscape or along a road, walking in green spaces helps us recover from "attention overload" - the mental fatigue that comes from a world where computers and cell phones are a constant.

3 - Hiking helps your relationships. Research suggests that exposure to nature can help our relationships by making us more empathetic, helpful and generous.

4 - Hiking can increase our creativity. Young adults tested in an Outward-Bound program before and after they spent three days in wilderness showed increased creative thinking and problem-solving after the experience.

5 - Hiking helps cement a positive relationship with the natural world. Hiking benefits our planet indirectly because it increases our connection with nature. Developing a positive connection with the natural world can help us care about its fate. That means hiking can be mutually beneficial, helping people and the earth.

One very important thing to consider if you do indeed decide to take a hike, or for that matter even walking around town - that is, get some proper-fitting comfortable shoes, and put some mileage on them. We get so many reports of hikers getting blisters, and you can't enjoy it if your feet hurt. Also remember that your feet may swell a little after a few miles, so consider that when checking sizes. And consider the soft cushiony type socks. And if on a trail, sooner or later you are apt to get wet feet - and if you walk very far with wet feet you are more apt to get a blister. So, take extra socks, maybe large Band-Aids or even duct-tape, and cover the hot spots before they become a blister. Happy Trails.