

Nature-Based Therapy FAQs

How does it work?

Our first intake session is held virtually. During this session I will gather information about what you are struggling with, contributing factors to your struggles, and what your goals for nature therapy will be. This first session is where we develop a healing plan to meet your specific needs, which can include walking or nature-based therapy. We will spend some time talking about best-practices to maintain confidentiality while taking our sessions outdoors, locate an outdoor spot that works best for you, and establish a backup plan for inclement weather.

What if walking isn't an option for me?

Nature-based therapy is not limited to walkers only. I always bring with me two portable chairs for those who want to enjoy nature-therapy with minimal walking. We will locate an area with the appropriate accommodations for you.

How will we keep things private and confidential?

Your privacy is very important to me. When we go for a walk or choose an outdoor location, I will always do my best to select a path and area that is mostly private or that has low pedestrian traffic. If we see someone we know (which is always a real possibility), we can simply smile and continue or say, "I am with a friend." I will follow your lead on whatever you are most comfortable with. I am committed to keeping our conversations as private and uninterrupted as possible.

What equipment or gear do I need?

It is important that you are comfortable in order to be fully present and bring your best self forward. If we are walking, it is recommended clients wear comfortable, closed-toed walking shoes. I encourage you to wear loose and comfortable clothing which is weather-dependent. You may need a rain jacket or coat, umbrella, sweater, hat, boots, sunglasses, or gloves depending on the weather that day. You are welcome to bring a snack in case you get hungry. I will keep extra supplies on hand such as sunscreen, bug spray, and water. I will have a First-Aid kit with me at all times.

Where do we meet? How long are the sessions?

I meet with clients at local parks and trails - we can determine a location that works best for you within the 20-mile radius in Dubuque, IA. A few location possibilities are Heritage Trail, Swiss Valley Park and Trails, Dubuque River Walk, Eagle Point Park, and Mines of Spain. There are accessible bathrooms and parking available at each location. Our sessions will last 50 minutes in length. If we are walking, we will go out on the trail for approximately 20 minutes before turning back around to ensure we end our sessions on time. We will go at your pace and take breaks along the way as needed. If you would prefer to minimize walking or movement, we can pick a spot to sit and have our session.

What about the weather?

I am open to holding sessions in light rain and reasonably cold weather as long as you are comfortable and it is safe. For hotter weather, we will make sure to stay hydrated and take frequent breaks as needed. I will make the decision to reschedule or go virtual with our session if there is severe weather such as icy roads, heavy winds, or thunderstorms.

Can I bring my pet?

As much as I enjoy the company of a cute and furry friend, I ask that you please leave your pets at home. It is important to take this time during our sessions to solely focus on caring for yourself and being fully present in the moment. Pets can be adorably distracting at times!

What about safety precautions?

Safety is always a top priority. I take the time to explore and familiarize myself with all offered nature therapy locations. This is important so that in the event of an emergency, I can give clear directions to emergency professionals. We will discuss safety precautions and a safety plan for our outdoor sessions during our initial intake session. Everyone's sense of safety is different. It is very important for you to let me know if you ever are not feeling safe at any point during our outdoor sessions. We may need to explore an alternative location for your sessions or you may determine that nature therapy may not be the right fit for you.