

Frequently Asked Questions

How is a Mindful Outdoor Experience or Retreat any different than hiking or camping?

So often, we go hiking or camping to be in nature. We frequently have other or additional agendas while there, like getting exercise, playing games, drinking by the fire, or socializing. We see nature as a spectacle or destination.

In a MOE, Retreat, etc., you will be guided in a very intentional and purposeful way through invitations to reconnect with nature, not just visit. We are a part of the natural world, and it a part of us. We are life, just like everything we witness in the wilderness. Many of us have lost touch with this connection, due to the comforts within walls and screens.

When you see, touch, smell, hear, and taste a hemlock, your relationship with it changes. It's no longer another tree in passing en route to the end of a trail. It's a familiar friend. You'll recognize its presence from a distance, and perhaps, slow down to greet it, rather than simply snapping a quick pic to show you were there.

That's a lot of money to pay, when I could just go out on my own.

Think about the last time you went camping or hiking. How fast were you traveling? How many thoughts did you have about what's next after this is over, or what you'll be returning to? Did you bring obligations, worries, stress, etc. into the woods with you? Did you have an agenda to stick to? When is the last time you entered the forest, and were simply there... in mind, body, and spirit? How many times have you intended to get on the trail, but something came up? How likely are you to blow off a trip in the wilderness when you've invested a few hundred dollars?

What we're offering is protected time and space for you to connect with nature, connect with a few new friends, and reconnect with self. No obligations, notifications, or expectations. Just open invitations to be fully present, letting go of anything you don't need, in order to allow everything you do.

I don't have time. My schedule is so busy, and if I don't do these things, they won't get done.

All of that may be true for you. We certainly cannot invent more time. What we can do is teach you how to reach deep, meaningful levels of peace and connection through mindfulness, gratitude, awakening of senses, and feeling your connection to the land and people who've come and gone before us. We can show you how to do all of that within an hour and a half. Imagine integrating 1.5 hours into your week. Research has shown that as little as two hours in a forest has health benefits lasting up to 14 days. That's a huge return on your investment. Are you worth investing in? I think so.

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Do I need a lot of gear?

No gear is needed for MOEs. Just bring yourself, and maybe a water bottle. You'll want to dress for the weather and terrain, so check the forecast, wear layers, and wear comfortable shoes for walking in the woods.

For Retreats, you'll need a few staple items: small tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, reusable water bottle, and comfortable clothes and shoes for the weather and terrain. A complete list of what you'll likely want to bring with you can be found on the retreat page.

Should I have previous meditation or mindfulness experience?

No previous experience in mindfulness or meditation is necessary for experiencing the great benefits of MOEs and our Retreats. We welcome all levels of experience, from experts to folks who've never meditated before.

Do I have to be in great shape?

No. For MOEs, you'll just need to be physically capable of walking short distances in wooded terrain. The total distance walked will be minimal.

For Retreats, you'll want to consider whether or not you can walk on varying terrain for anywhere from 3-5 miles. The hikes will be divided into sections, between which we take plenty of breaks for mindful invitations.

What if I have allergies?

Please bring medications (over the counter or prescribed to you) that you would normally take for being outdoors for a prolonged period of time. Depending on the season, different flora and fauna are in bloom, so you'll want to take note and be prepared. There is poison ivy in some parts of forest. We'll help you stay vigilant. Staying on the trail will help you avoid encounters with these types of plants.

How many people will be there?

There are three guides for retreats. We limit the number of participants, on purpose, to protect time and space for more personal experiences. So, retreats typically range from 8-10 participants.

MOEs have one guide, and typically 3-6 participants, unless you reserve a private MOE.

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What if it rains, or the weather is bad?

MOEs and Retreats are typically rain-or-shine events. We will keep close watch on the forecast to be aware of inclement or dangerous weather. If weather prevents a safe experience, we will offer an alternate date(s).

What if I can no longer attend my reserved event?

Unfortunately, there are no refunds. If you have something come up that you cannot get out of, we will work with you in attempt to resolve the time conflict.

It's a retreat, what if I just want to relax?

All activities and exercises are invitations. If you prefer to skip something, you're welcome to take care of yourself by staying behind to relax in your own way.