

On Becoming Outdoors

... and the implications for working
with young people



THINKING OUT ALOUD

Di Collins, Journeying Gently
EOE, Stockholm, June 2013

Meet Dhatchin

Aged 13; fluent in Tamil and English; wants to study engineering

Will he be an
outdoor person?
What relationship
will he have with
the outdoors?
Does it matter?



Becoming Outdoor

Talk to the people
around you

Why did you become a
person who loves the
outdoors, an outdoor
person?



There are probably a variety of reasons

Family traditions and habit

Friendships

A love of nature

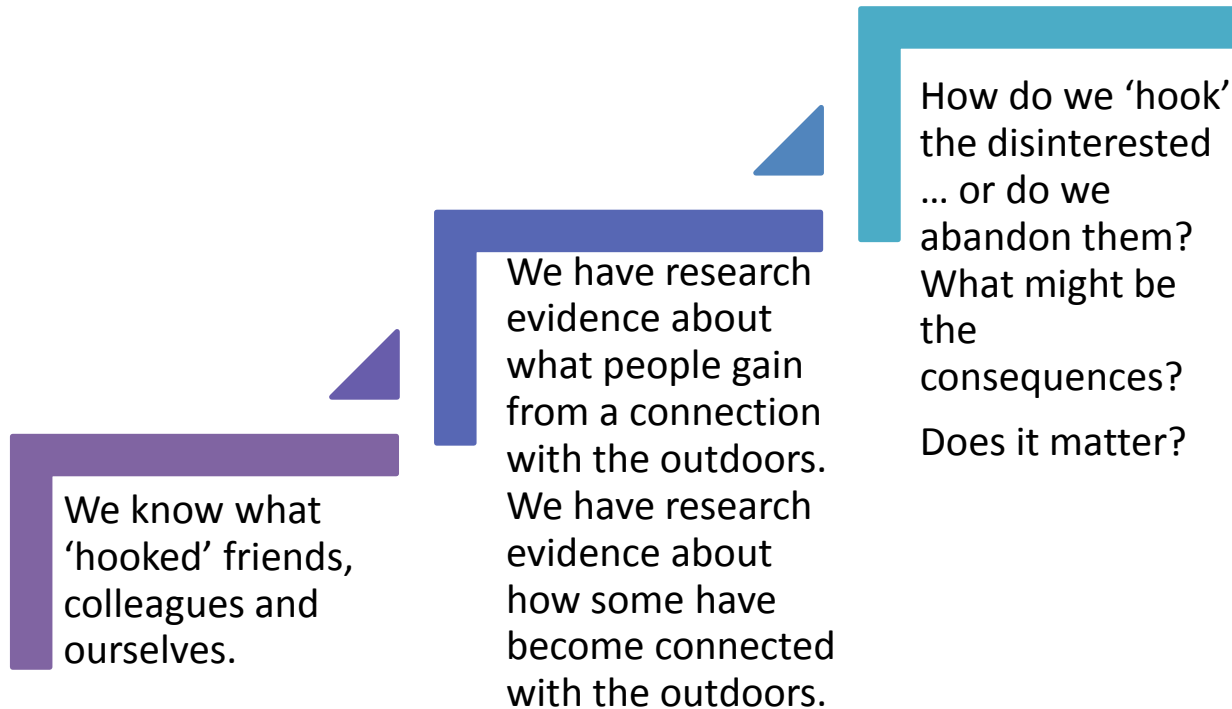
A love of outdoor activities

Inspired by someone or something

Given opportunities

Thinking out aloud

Reflections on my career and my research



My (Our) Problem

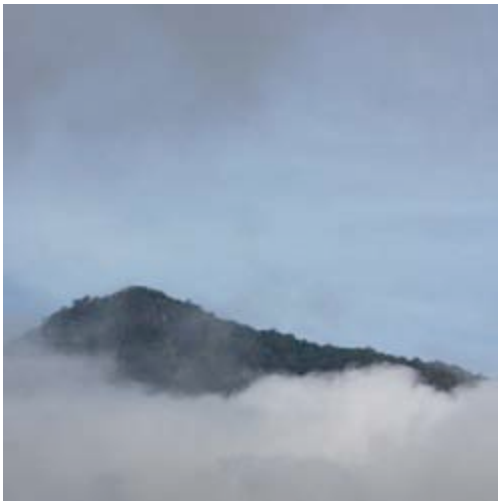
Many of the youth workers that I have worked with lack an outdoor habit. The outdoors and nature are alien environments. How can I encourage these youth workers to:

- a. incorporate the outdoors into their lifestyles; and
- b. encourage them to motivate young people to experience and, hopefully, come to love the outdoors.

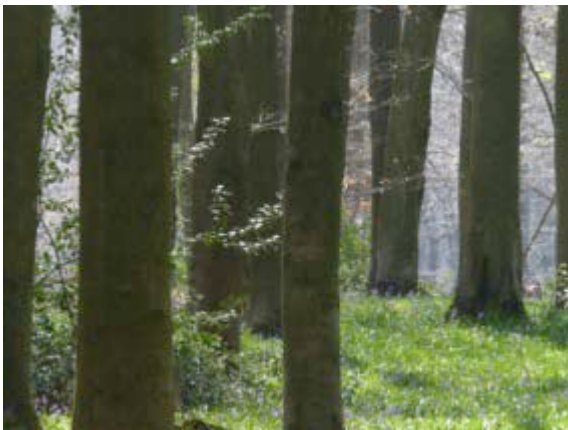
How do people see the outdoors?



How do people see the outdoors?



How do people see the outdoors?



Does it matter?

The State of Nature, 2013

(A Report of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)

- Climate change is having an increasing impact on nature in the UK. Rising average temperatures are known to be driving range expansion in some species, but evidence for harmful impacts are mounting.
- 30% out of the 54 butterfly species assessed have decreased in England.
- 60% of England's flowering plants are decreasing.
- Over the last 200 years, about 80% of the UK's lowland heathland has been lost.

The Western Ghats

- It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight "hottest hotspots" of biological diversity in the world. (Wikipedia)
- Government proposals to set up polluting industries. *(Madhav Gadgil, Chairman, Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel writing in The Hindu 18.05.13)*
- Unregulated logging, open-cast mining, large dams, and the diversion of land to real-estate barons have led to environmental degradation as well as social discontent. *(Ramachandra Guha, Secrets of the Western Ghats writing in The Hindu, 12.05.12)*
- Local knowledge of the beneficial qualities of plants may be lost.

Growing Outdoor People

“Nature needs passionate naturalists, who care for the plant and animal species struggling to maintain their positions in rapidly changing habitats.

Where do these people come from? They grow up in family gardens and spend time in local parks, woodlands and seashores. They care about the environment because they experience it. They have a sense of oneness with nature and as the relationship grows they start to develop a feeling of responsibility for its welfare.”

(David Bond: <http://outdoornation.org.uk/2013/05/24/the-state-of-nature/>)

National Organisations

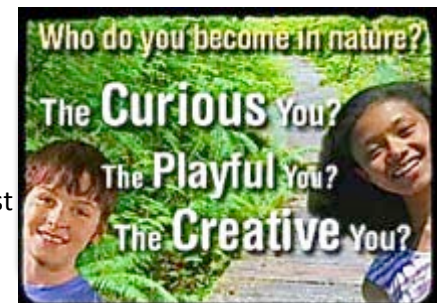
Promoting getting outdoors



Royal Horticultural
Society



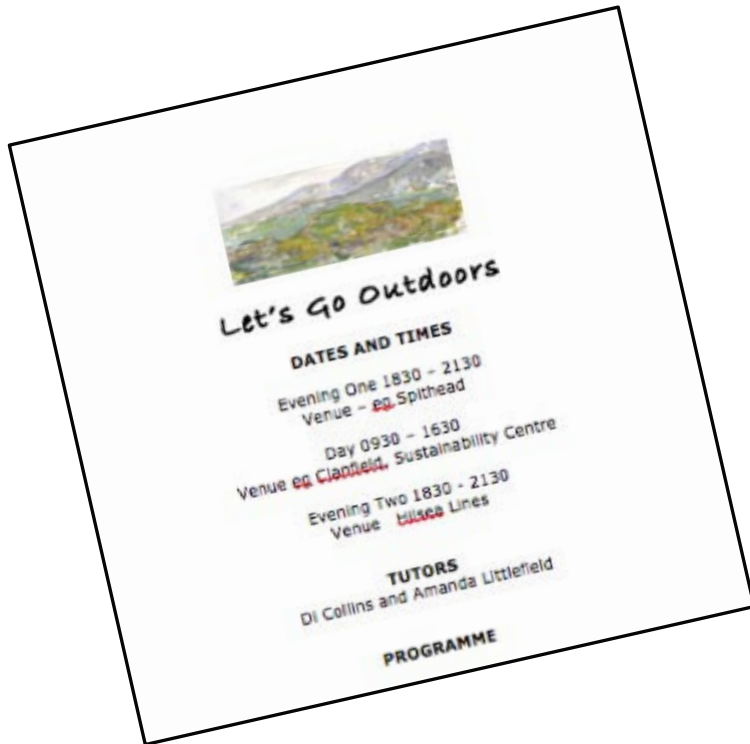
National Trust



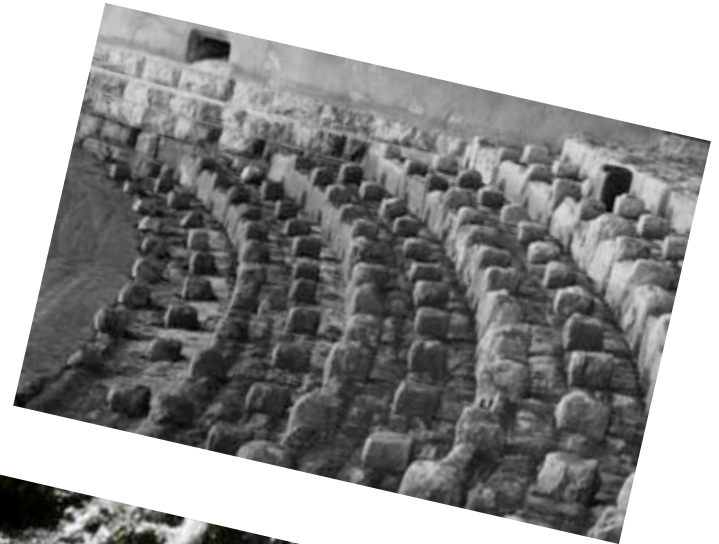
Woodland Trust

A Few Ideas

Let's Go Outdoors



Open Area Design



.... and does it matter?



It matters to me