



TRAINER GUIDE

Health Benefits of
Being Outdoors



Health Benefits of Being Outdoors

Use this trainer guide to facilitate the training, lead great discussions, and help learners apply the concepts.



*This presentation is to be held outdoors, if possible, to enhance the experience. If not possible, a room with lots of windows to an outside view or even windows open would be acceptable.

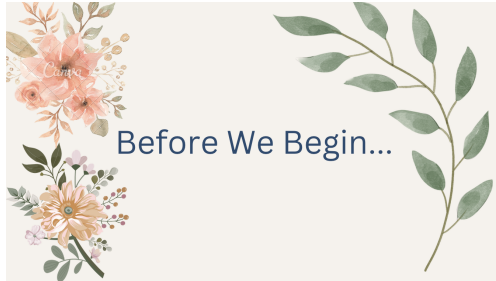
1. Have a clipboard and writing utensil ready for participants.
2. Print out learner guides for participants (hand out upon arrival)

As people arrive, you should greet them and hand them the materials for today. Tell them to find a comfortable spot where they can enjoy the presentation.



Say: Hello, I am [your name here] and I'll be leading you through this presentation today. My hope is that by the end, you will feel energized and ready to make positive changes to your day-to-day life.

Some of my favorite things to enjoy in my own life include being at the beach, taking my dog for a long walk by the river or on a trail, and reading a good book [you can change these if desired].



Say: Before we begin, I'd like you all to take a moment to write down a few things that bring you joy. You can do this in Section 1 of your learner guide.

*give about 2 minutes and then ask volunteers to share what they enjoy.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this presentation, you will understand:

1. The physical benefits of being outdoors
2. The mental benefits of being outdoors
3. How to implement more outdoor time in your work-life balance

Say: Take a minute to read over our objectives for today. As we take in the outdoor setting today, we will be discussing the physical and mental benefits of being outdoors, and we will give you the resources you need to implement more outside time into your own lives.

Why is This Important?

Negative effects of being indoors too much:

- Poor posture
- Weight issues
- Sleep struggles
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Anxiety

Say: So why should we learn about these benefits? Well, to answer that question, we need to understand the negative impacts of NOT being outdoors enough.

And let's be honest, we spend the majority of our lives indoors. We work inside for hours on end, often sitting and sedentary. We sit in our cars to commute to and from that indoor job. We spend our evenings indoors while we eat dinner, wind down from the day, and sleep. We take advantage of grocery and food deliveries so we have even less reason to see the light of day on a regular basis.

Now, in section 2, write a quick outline of your typical day along with the time spent doing each portion of your day. This can include driving, working, picking up kids from school, or anything else that feels significant to your daily routine.

Physical Benefits

- Less stressed (lowers cortisol and adrenaline)
- Better breathing
- Improved sleep habits
- Boosts immune system
- Lower blood pressure



Say: Let's start with the physical benefits. Take a quick glance at this list and circle any that you consider "problem areas in your life".

We can see that being outdoors regularly can lower our stress-related hormones, cortisol and adrenaline. It can help improve our breathing and sleep habits. Being outdoors boosts the immune system and lowers blood pressure.

By being outside more, these physical traits can be improved.

Mental Benefits

- Lower risk of depression
- Lessens anxiety
- More motivation
- Mental energy
- Emotional Wellness



Say: Now let's discuss the mental benefits of being outdoors. Start by circling any items from the list that you feel could use improvement in your life.

Being outdoors can lower the risk of depression, lessen your anxiety, give you more motivation and mental energy, and improve your overall emotional wellness.

Even if you are typically a very happy, energetic person, the benefits of spending more time outdoors could help you even further in those benefits.

Incorporating More Outdoor Time Into Your Life

- Schedule a walk
- Take phone calls outside
- Work/have meetings outside
- Walk your dogs more
- Plan a hiking trip
- Eat outside

Can you think of more ways to be outside?

Say: Now, we know that we can't necessarily spend all of our time outdoors. But, the goal is to get about 20 minutes per day in order to see the improvements we have discussed today.

Look at this short list of ideas to spend more time outside and see if you can come up with a couple more!

Let's Practice and Reflect...

- You've been outdoors for *this* presentation, but think about meetings you have had in office spaces instead... how were these settings different?
- Think about what you do enjoy about the outdoors... what is your favorite type of weather? Your favorite flower? Your favorite outdoor activity?
- Now, set a goal for yourself and determine how you will make time to be outside at least 20 minutes per day (the recommended amount to maximize benefits).

Say: We have officially made it to the final slide of this session, and we are going to take some time to reflect on the lessons we've learned.

Using the last section of your learner guide, write responses to these three points, and we will discuss them in a few minutes.

*give about 5-6 minutes and then ask if anyone is willing to share answers for the first point, second point, and third point.

*once the final slide is wrapped up and responses have been shared:

Say: Thank you so much for your participation in this session today. I hope you feel rejuvenated and ready to take on the challenge of spending more time outdoors.

Before we go, I'd just like to if there is anything that I can clarify or if there are any questions regarding the session?

*once questions are complete, thank everyone again for coming and conclude the slide show/session.