

## STOP 5 - GRATITUDE

As you walk, silently acknowledge three things you are grateful for today.

They may be simple:

Fresh air

A peaceful moment

A supportive person

Nature itself

Reflection:

How does gratitude affect the way you experience the present moment?

## STOP 6 - LETTING GO

Notice any stress, tension, or mental noise you may be carrying.

As you walk:

Take slow breaths

Relax your shoulders

Imagine releasing what you no longer need to hold onto

You do not need to solve everything right now.

Reflection:

What would feel lighter if you allowed yourself to release it?

## ● ● CLOSING REFLECTION

Before leaving the trail:

- Take three slow breaths
- Look around one final time
- Notice how you feel compared to when you began

"I can return to this sense of presence anytime."

Park Visited: \_\_\_\_\_



# ST. MARY'S COUNTY RECREATION & PARKS



## Nature Presence Walk

*National Trails Day*



Take a pause from daily stress and reconnect with nature through this self-guided mindfulness walk. Designed for use on any St. Mary's County Recreation & Parks trail, this experience encourages slowing down, observing the natural world, and becoming more present in the moment.

*This is not a fitness walk or hike. There is no destination, pace requirement, or "right way" to participate. Simply walk, notice, breathe, and reflect.*

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

What to Bring:

Comfortable walking shoes

Water

Optional journal or phone for reflections

Weather-appropriate clothing

Suggested Time: 30-60 minutes

Begin With Intention:

Before starting, pause and ask yourself:

"What do I need from nature today?"

Take three slow breaths before beginning your walk.

## STOP 1 - ARRIVING

For the first few minutes, simply notice:

Your feet contacting the ground

The temperature of the air

The feeling of movement in your body

Sounds near and far

Reflection:

What changes in your body when you intentionally slow down?

## STOP 2 - SEEING

Pause somewhere safe and observe your surroundings.

Notice:

Colors and textures

Patterns in leaves or bark

Sunlight and shadows

Water, clouds, or movement in nature

Try observing without judgment — simply notice what is present.

Reflection:

What is something beautiful you might normally walk past?

## STOP 3 - LISTENING

As you continue walking, focus only on sound.

Listen for:

Birds or Insects

Wind

Water

Footsteps

Distant activity

If your mind wanders, gently return to listening.

Reflection:

Which sounds feel calming or energizing to you?

## STOP 4 - CONNECTION

Pause again and reflect on your connection to this place.

Consider:

How nature supports life

The changing seasons

The role of trails in community wellness

Your own relationship with the outdoors

Reflection:

What helps you feel grounded in everyday life?