



A News Release
from the
**Cataraqui Region
Conservation Authority**

Oct. 4, 2017

CRCA Introduces Innovative Forest Therapy Walks

Kingston – The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) is launching Forest Therapy Walks in Kingston and to the surrounding communities, in hopes of encouraging area residents to reconnect with nature in a deeper, more meaningful way.

The practice of Forest Therapy was recently founded through the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides, based in California. The founders of this mindful, healing and connective practice were inspired by the Japanese practice of “Shinrin-yoku” which translates as “forest bathing.” Research has determined that spending time in nature not only strengthens the human immune response and reduces stress, but also makes us more creative, mindful, and content in our lives.

To introduce the program, the CRCA is offering two public walks. One will take place on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. A second will take place Saturday, Nov. 4 from 1 to 3:30 p.m., with both taking place at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. The cost is \$20 per person.

Our Forest Therapy Walks will be guided by the CRCA’s Senior Conservation Educator, Stana Luxford Oddie who is accredited by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs. Luxford Oddie has more than two decades of experience connecting people of all ages to nature.

“I read about the concept of ‘Forest Bathing’ over two years ago, in a book called Your Brain on Nature and I was really intrigued. It’s about taking time to immerse yourself in nature and giving yourself permission to just be in the moment. What really inspired me to do the training was the concept of being ‘truly’ present, mindful and slowing down,” she said.

She explained that the aim of the Forest Therapy Walks is to get you out of your head and into your sensing body, to a deepened relationship with the more-than-human world. In Forest Therapy, the guide opens the door and the forest is the therapist.



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The feedback from some participants in the Forest Therapy Walks led by Luxford Oddie have praised the benefits and experience of the program.

“Stana has a beautiful leadership quality. I would recommend attending this workshop if you are looking to slow down, connect with other like-minded individuals and nature,” said one recent participant.

“If you need support in connecting to nature and your inner self to your feelings and emotions and your soul nature and your peace on earth – Do this,” added another.

A Forest Therapy Walk is a slow and mindful experience that can combine walking, sitting, standing or laying down. Everything is an invitation, so participants are invited to do what feels most comfortable to them. An entire Forest Therapy Walk experience will be no longer than one kilometre, and can last between two to three hours depending on the requirements and desires of the participants.

Everyone can benefit from Forest Therapy Walks such as, but not limited to, people recovering from illness, youth, active military personnel, veterans, people recovering from loss, students, professionals, parents, people looking to better their mental health, first responders and seniors - anyone who is looking to de-stress, slow down, heal and connect with nature.

Group, retreat, and private, one-on-one Forest Walks are also available. You can find further information on bookings at www.crca.ca/foresttherapy.

For more information about the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, visit www.crca.ca or call (613) 546-4228 x 500 or toll free in the 613 region at 1-877-956-CRCA (2722).

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