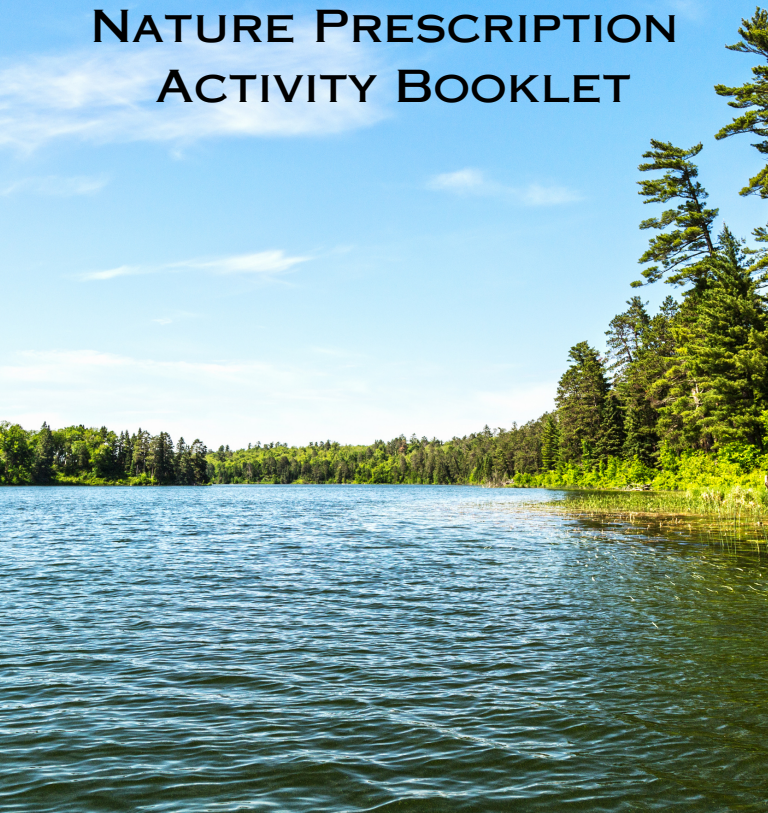


# NATURE PRESCRIPTION ACTIVITY BOOKLET





Southeast Minnesota  
Park Rx

*about*  
**ME**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# SE MN PARK RX PROGRAMMING SITES

## **Fillmore County -**

- Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center - Lanesboro
- Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park - Preston

## **Goodhue County -**

- Frontenac State Park - Frontenac
- Red Wing Environmental Learning Center - Red Wing
- Red Wing Parks and Recreations - Red Wing

## **Houston County -**

- La Crescent Parks and Recreation - La Crescent

## **Mower County -**

- Hormel Nature Center - Austin

## **Olmsted County -**

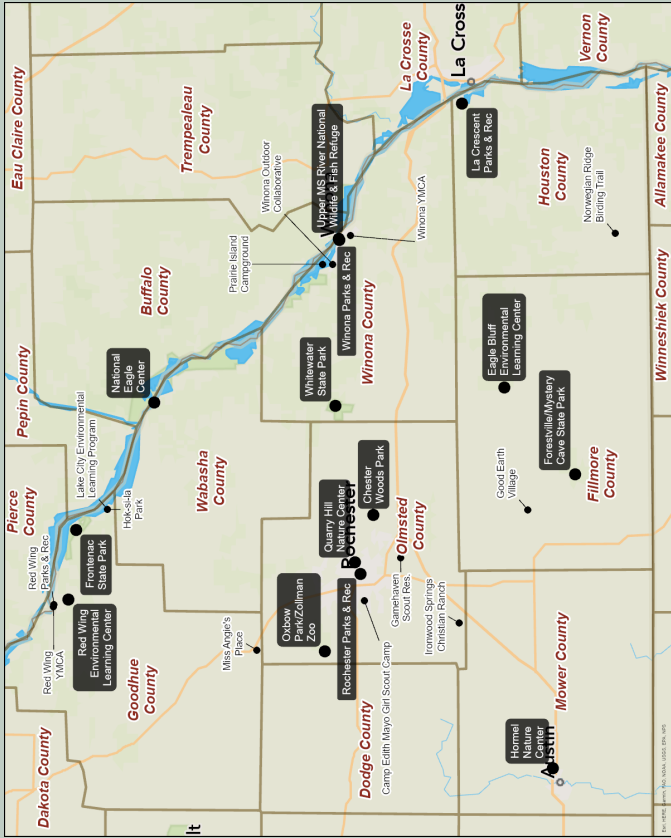
- Oxbow Park/Zollman Zoo - Byron
- Chester Woods Park - Eyota
- Rochester Parks and Recreation - Rochester
- Quarry Hill Nature Center

## **Winona County -**

- Whitewater State Park - Altura
- Winona Parks and Recreation - Winona
- Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge - Winona

## **Wabasha County -**

- National Eagle Center - Wabasha



# BODY SCAN

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot where you can stand, sit, or laydown – bonus if it is outside! Close your eyes if you're comfortable and be as still as you can. Start with your head and work your way down to your feet thinking about each body part. As you move to each body part, think about what you notice.

Are there any sensations you feel? How do your clothes feel? Are your muscles tight or relaxed? What do you feel from the environment around you (sun, wind, temperature)?

Focus on being in the moment and what you notice right then.

**Benefits:** reduce stress and anxiety, increase self-awareness, promote relaxation, and improve focus.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# GROW AND TEND PLANTS

**How To:** Tend to a few plants indoors, potted plants outside, or try your hand at gardening. Planting, watering, pruning, weeding, and enjoying their flowers and foliage will benefit you.

**Benefits:** improve your mood and reduce stress. It gives a sense of purpose which can help decrease anxiety and depression and improve productivity.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# CLOUD GAZING

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot where you can see the sky and watch for clouds. This well-known childhood pastime is great for all ages!

**Benefits:** improves focus, relaxing, stress relief, exercises the brain and fosters creativity.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# NATURE JOURNALING

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot to sit or stand outdoors or go for a walk. Observe your surroundings and either write or draw what you see, hear, feel, smell, and notice around you. You can focus on your senses or pick a theme to journal about.

Look for:

- Colors
- Things that start with the same letter
- Things that are the same shape or texture
- Keep a list of nature items you find.

Try some of the other activities in this booklet and journal about them. The opportunities are endless.

**Benefits:** increased observational skills, stress relief, strengthening of hand-eye coordination, brain stimulation, and increased creativity.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# SIT SPOT

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot outdoors or a spot where you can see the outdoors. Spend 5-15 minutes, with no other expectations, except to notice. Focus on the five senses, one at a time. What do you See? Hear? Smell? Feel? Taste? Close your eyes to help you focus. Return to this same “sit spot” often and see how things change with the time of day and the seasons.

**Benefits:** reduce stress, promote relaxation, and improve confidence and self-esteem.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

**How To:** Create a list of items you can find in nature or find a pre-made list online. Look for those items in your yard or a near by park. Mark the items on your list, but don't collect the items. Leave them for others to see and enjoy.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# BIRD WATCHING

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot outdoors or near a window or go for a walk outdoors. Watch for birds either at a feeder or out in nature. When birding focus on looking and listening – no need to identify each bird, just enjoy their presence!

**Benefits:** meditative, invoke gratitude, reduce stress, blood pressure, and heart rate



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# LISTEN TO BIRD SOUNDS

**How To:** Bird sounds are comforting to us and promote positivity because of their positive associations with spring and summer. Try listening to bird sounds each day either outside, or stream on a podcast or music service.

**Benefits:** Listening to just five minutes of bird sounds can reduce stress, provoke relaxation, increase productivity, and improve observations.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# SOUND MAPPING

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot outdoors or near a window or door that you can open. Spend 5-15 minutes listening to what is around you. Take a sheet of paper and draw a map of where you are hearing sounds. If you can identify the sound, great! If not, describe the sound you're hearing. This exercise is focusing on the sense of hearing during a mindful activity.

**Benefits:** improved focus and mindfulness.



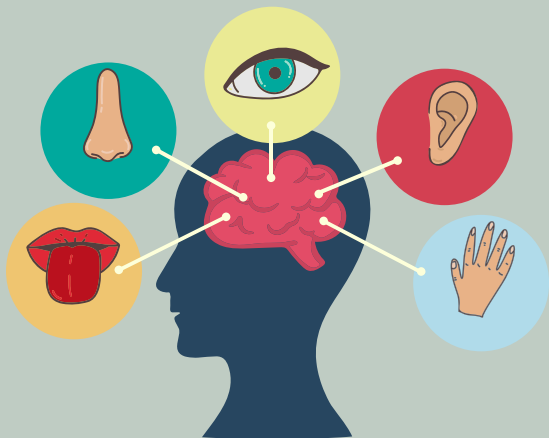
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# 5 SENSES OBSERVATIONS

**How To:** Find a safe and comfortable spot to sit, stand, or lay down. Focus on your five senses. Either mentally list or journal about 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you feel, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste. This activity will help you to practice mindfulness and being in the moment.

**Benefits:** reduce anxiety and depression, lower blood pressure and improve sleep.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# HIKING

- Whole body workout
- Physical Benefits:
  - build strong muscles and bones
  - improve balance
  - improve heart health
- Mental Benefits:
  - boost your mood
  - reduce stress
  - calm anxiety
  - lead to a lower risk of depression



**Tip:** A hike any time of the year promises to be a delightful experience! Enjoy the sights, smells, and feeling of nature as you explore.

**SNAP A SELFIE ON YOUR HIKE FOR YOUR PROVIDER!**



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# BICYCLING

- Low-impact workout, uses all of the major muscle groups
- Physical Benefits:
  - increased cardiovascular fitness
  - joint mobility
  - strengthening of bones
- Mental Benefits:
  - mood boost
  - increased wellbeing
  - improved memory and creative thinking
  - decreased stress levels



**Tip:** Boost the mental health benefits by cycling in a natural area and take in the beautiful scenery!



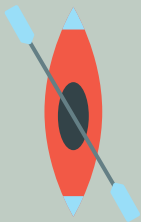
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# KAYAKING

- Physical Benefits:
  - improved cardiovascular fitness
  - increased muscle strength
  - improved stamina and endurance
- Mental Benefits:
  - mood boost
  - improved focus
  - better memory
  - stress relief
- Burn an average of 400 calories an hour



**Tip:** Many parks, nature centers, and recreation businesses have kayaks for use or rent.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# SWIMMING

- Low-impact, all-over body workout - nearly all of your muscle groups are used
- Physical Benefits:
  - builds endurance
  - muscle strength
  - cardiovascular fitness
  - increased lung capacity
  - increased blood flow
- Mental Benefits:
  - release stress and tension
  - reduce anxiety
  - improve memory
  - increase wellbeing



**Tip:** Find a natural swimming area near you to reap the benefits of swimming in nature!



Check Box When Activity Complete

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# SHOWSHOEING

- Physical Benefits:
  - cardio workout while also building strength
  - balance
  - agility
  - endurance
- Mental Benefits:
  - boost your mood and confidence
  - help with Seasonal Affective Disorder
- Burn more calories snowshoeing than you can walking, running, or cross-country skiing at the same pace!

**Tip:** Check your local park or nature center to see if they offer snowshoe rentals.



Check Box When Activity Complete

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