

Connect with nature

In an article published in this edition's Regional, Bruce Masterman—author, town councillor and post-secondary instructor—spoke on the role nature plays in his life and why it's a connection we all share.

First, we at the *Times* commend Masterman on his candid approach to a condition, depression, that we're certain has not been easy for him and for others who manage this day in and day out.

It wouldn't be a great surprise if the people who read this article took his lessons about nature to heart, and learned something about their own selves, and their ability to live alongside their depression.

Thank-you for your strength in telling your story, Bruce.

However, the main topic in Masterman's newest book *One Last Cast: Reflections of an Outdoor Life* is about being outside in nature and the rejuvenating power it can have for all people in Canada.

Nearly everyone can relate that a sedentary lifestyle can creep up on us. Some of us sit at work, we sit at home and we're often longing for the nature that exists around us—even those who don't know it.

This writer's resolution is to get out more. On the warmer winter days, this means walks in town, and on weekends, finding fun and enjoyable ways to be in the company of friends, loved ones and nature.

Stress can eat away at people's lives and nature has an

uncanny ability to, like osmosis, send those difficult, unhealthy vibes away, leaving us feeling energized and able to take on the world.

We should be proud to live by beautiful countryside. This includes the prairies, locations like Frank Lake, Kananaskis Country and unbelievable provincial and national parks just a stone's throw away.

Plus, we must all remember that we too are part of nature. Many of us might live in town, and sometimes we forget that we require the outdoors in our lives, even if it is just for our psyches.

For those who can step out of town, Mother Nature is constantly inviting Albertans into the back country, onto the trails and even out and about in public, and often easily accessible areas.

A simple walk through our beautiful community is perfect for those who don't have the time or the ability to travel further afield. Remember, if you do go out into the parks, please be safe.

Attempt not to travel alone, and all people should tell someone where they are heading in case they run into difficulties along the way. Depending on the season, bring bear-defence supplies.

It's our hope that more people find themselves learning the strength nature can bring to us and the benefits it can have for our souls. We live in a place of great power and beauty.