

Practical Rewilding

Sky

There is no need to wait around to begin breaking your domestication. Do-it-yourself now! There are many things you can be doing in your daily life regardless of your living situation. If you are planning to make the big move into the wilderness and learn the skills to live primitively, start preparing today! Even if you have no plans of leaving the city, you can be rewilding wherever you are.

One way you can reclaim your wildness is through diet. The “civilized” diet is based on starch/carbs, white sugar, processed foods, excess salt, low quality fat, processing, and on and on. Even if you’re on a budget of zero, eating out of the trash, you can make choices to heighten your senses, raise awareness, have more energy, boost your immune system, stabilize your mood and blood sugar, keep Mosquito at bay, and stay warmer during the colder months of the year. By reducing your salt, pepper, vinegar, and spice use, you can reclaim your sense of taste. You begin to taste the vegetables and meats actual flavors. This also increases your sense of smell, which heightens your awareness. Staying away from bread, especially processed starch, coupled with eliminating sugar and sweets in general (except fruit & berries) can be very helpful. This is a big one, I know. If your anything like me, you were raised on low quality bread, margarine, a largely starch based diet, soda pop, ice cream, etc. Try fasting with just water for 24 hours every week or two. Fasting can raise awareness & increase metabolic efficiency. Also, watch how much you eat. Try not to over eat. A well-fed animal is a lazy animal. These things are the biggest struggle for me personally in the rewilding process. But I’ll continue to try because I can feel a difference. The more I pare these things down the more sensitive I become and the more I can feel in general. I could go on and on about diet but it’s already been done. If you want to learn more check out Weston Price’s book *“Nutrition and Physical Degeneration”*. It’s not the most exciting read but it’s well worth reading the studies in the beginning. Reading half of it was enough for me. The beginning of the book documents studies done by a dentist in the 1930’s comparing trends in health and diet in isolated Hunter & Gatherer tribes, isolated Pastoralists, and small-scale Farmers around the world. Another excellent book about “Native diet” and nutrition is Sally Fallon’s *“Nourishing Traditions”*. She’s really into the whole organic pasture-fed dairy thing which isn’t very wild, however, quality wild fat and organs aren’t readily available in the store so I still believe it’s worthwhile information. Check out the section on “Diet” in the Rewilding Resources in the back of this zine.

Prepare your food over an open fire. If this is too much, cook outside and work your way to a fire. If you're in the city I know there can be loopholes to fire regulations. Sometimes open fires are legal for cooking, but not for recreation. If not use a grill or a camp stove. If cooking outside isn't an option, eat outside after you cook. If you already cook on a fire, start practicing some form of friction fire. Stick with it and practice.

After eating comes digestion and what's next, you guessed it, pooping! This happens to be one of my favorite subjects. You can begin the rewilding process right now by altering your approach to your bowel movement. Start "going" outside. This goes for urination as well. I hear that squatting is a much healthier position for this than sitting upright as far as aligning your colon. But also very important to consider is: it gets you outside. Find a wooded lot nearby or some bushes to tuck yourself into if you're in the city. Maybe you'll have to get on your bike. It's worth it. Wipe with snow/moss/leaves/ferns/a smooth stick, etc. just make sure you don't use poison ivy! Ouch! And bury it good (it breaks down faster in the topsoil), so no one has the unpleasant misfortune of stepping in it. And if you're already living near or in the woods this is a perfect way to get you out in the bush every day. Pick one general area and watch it change over the seasons. Learn the plants, animals, insects, rocks, etc. that live there. Try sitting there & being quiet, don't just poop & run. You might be surprised at what you see. If this sounds way too adventurous for you but you still want to improve your pooping, try squatting on the toilet. It's easy, I do it all the time. Lift up the seat, stand on the toilet, squat and the rest comes naturally. Start there and work your way outside.

Listen...this is easier than it sounds. Sit or stand or better yet squat quietly and just listen to what is around you. Pay more attention. Listen during conversation. Try to be more conscious of everything. Try to think before speaking. Listen to the Birds singing around you, the Squirrels chattering, the Frogs singing, the Flies buzzing. Spend time everyday listening. Turn off the radio. Protect your ears when around loud music. So much is happening around you that you'll never notice. This is helpful no matter how you're living. Pay attention to your intuition. Try to feel it. This part of the rewilding process is especially difficult for me. It's not easy to listen. But when I do, I learn more.

Listen to your dreams. You have your own personal guide every night in your sleep. Try to become more aware of the emotional atmosphere in your dreams and connect that with what's happening in your daily life. Learn to express your feelings and emotions in the moment. Civilization teaches us that emotional expression and honesty is weak. Often it seems to be the "wrong time" to express yourself. We're supposed to bottle these feelings up. Emotional frustration often ends up coming out through gossip. Stop gossiping. Strive to be more honest in the moment. Honesty and expression are essential to having healthy relationships and communities.

Park your car. Let's face it- cars suck! They're a great tool to perpetuate your domestication. Ride your bike as much as possible in place of your car. Walk or jog in place of riding your bike. Take your time. Rewilding requires slowing down your pace. So this is a great opportunity to cultivate patience. This will get you outside, strengthen your muscles, give you more energy, and raise awareness as to what's happening around you. It's easier to listen when you're not moving 30 miles per hour with the stereo blasting. I do realize that some people are not going to quit driving. Try turning off the radio/tape/CD. Roll down the windows even if it's cold or hot outside. Let yourself feel the temperature and breathe the fresh air.

Balance is useful for navigating rocks across creeks, staying on snow-packed trails, and bringing yourself into the moment. Practice by standing on one foot, walking on logs, walking on

railroad tracks, curbsides, whatever you can find. Wear shoes with thinner soles so you can feel the earth underneath you. Large tread shoes cause trails to erode more quickly. Set up balancing areas to practice. Check out Tamarack Song's "*Journey To The Ancestral Self*", particularly the section on awareness and attunement exercises for many great suggestions for rewilding.

Spend time with Children. These little folks know how to be in the moment. Spend time with them doing what they want to do. Follow their example. This shouldn't be too difficult. Seems like there's plenty of parents out there looking for a break, or someone to take care of their kids so they can go to work, or go out with their friends.

Do you know what phase the moon is in? Keep track of how the Moon affects your mood with a journal. You can also track how the Moon affects your body by recording your basal temperature (both men & women experience temperature changes that fluctuate with waxing & waning Moon phases). Do you know what direction is east? South? Where does the Sun rise & set? How does this change during the course of the year? Where is the North Star? What trees grow on your street? Can you identify them with no leaves? What animals live near you & what do their tracks & sign look like? What do they eat? What do their homes look like & where are they most likely to be? What birds live near you? What do they sound like when they are agitated? Mating? What are the most common fish near you & what kinds of water bodies do they prefer? What plants grow in your yard? Which are native & which are invasive alien species? Which are edible & which are poisonous? How did indigenous peoples of that area use them? Learn this stuff. Keep track of the direction the wind blows at different times of day (this is most accurately observed by looking straight up at the clouds). Keep a journal of wind direction & learn about prevailing winds at different times of year in your region & what they mean. Pay attention. Read less, listen more. Try to make emotional exchanges in person, rather than by phone or mail, if at all possible. Try to eliminate or minimize alarm clock use and any clock use for that matter. Know what time & day it is only as a necessity. Try keeping time by Moon phases, rather than by a calendar. If you sleep inside, sleep with the window open. Feel the night air. Walk familiar routes blindfolded & utilize different senses. Learn about the aboriginal peoples that lived in your area & how they lived. Study the language of any indigenous peoples because language shapes your perception of the world. Look into your own ancestral roots. There are endless ways to reconnect with the rhythms & cycles of the natural world that are constantly going on all around & within you.

If you're resisting some of these things strongly or if you feel challenged, good. Push yourself. If you start to start to feel really comfortable mix things up a bit and always challenge yourself. Just in case you haven't noticed this re-occurring theme already-be outside as much as possible.

For more information about rewilding, questions, comments, or feedback (even negative feedback is welcome) please contact us at feralhuman@ziplip.com.

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