



Ecotherapy in Action: Perspectives & Practices in Psychology

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Overview



Introduction to Ecotherapy

Theoretical Underpinnings

Practical Applications

Benefits and Challenges

Let's Chat!



Acknowledgement of Country

What is Ecotherapy?

Jordan & Hinds (2016)

Intentionally
incorporating
Nature into clinical
practice

Provides an
alternate context
to provide evidence
based therapies

Relationally and
contextually rich
therapeutic
experience



Theoretical Underpinnings

Ecotherapy

- Biophilia (Wilson)
- Attention Restoration (Kaplan)
- Stress Reduction Theory (Ulrich)
- Adaptive Information Processing (Shapiro)
- Attachment Theory (Bowlby)
- Somatic Psychology (Levine)
- Polyvagal Theory (Porges)
- Existential Phenomenological Psychology (Yalom & van Deuren)





Therapeutic Models

CBT/ACT/DBT

EMDR

Narrative Therapy

Solution-Focused

Play & Art Therapies

Interpersonal Psychotherapy

Parts-Based Approaches

Existential Phenomenology

.... And more!

Common Contexts

Harper & Dobud (2024)



Horticulture Therapy



NB Expressive Arts



Animal Assisted Therapy



Wilderness/ Adventure
Therapy



Eco-Psychology
informed Psychotherapy



Forest Bathing
(Shinrin-yoku)



Mauro



**HAWKESBURY
RIVER
PSYCHOLOGY**

Andi

PhD Thesis: A Mixed-Methods Investigation of Men's Engagement in Walk-and-Talk Therapy Compared to Usual Care



- Outdoor Therapies Delivered by Mental Health Professionals: A Scoping Review
- Walk-and-Talk Therapy vs Conventional Indoor Therapy for Men with Low Mood: A Randomised Controlled Trial
- **Men's Experiences** in W&T vs Conventional Indoor Therapy
- **Therapist Experiences** in W&T vs Conventional Indoor Therapy
- Mechanisms of Change in Walk & Talk Therapy: A Mediation Analysis

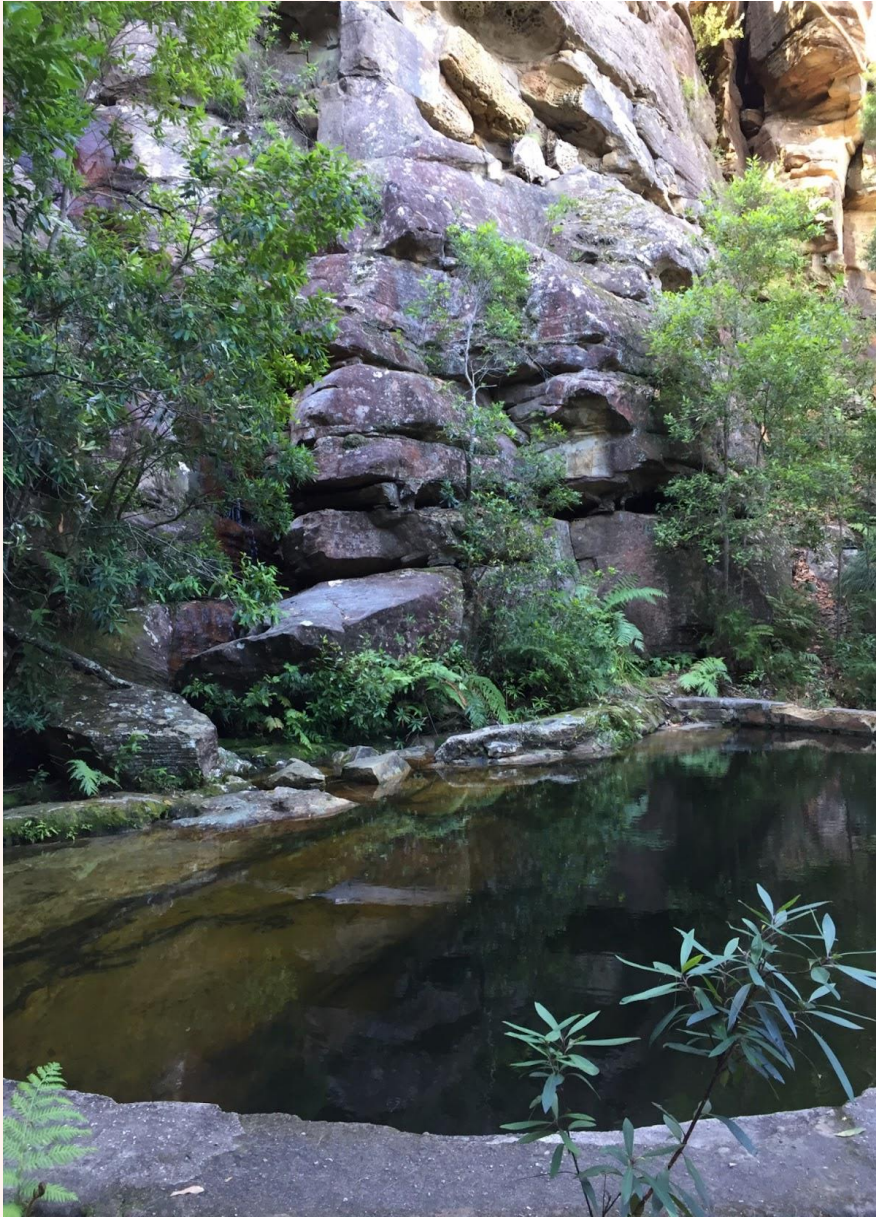




Sue



VALLEY PSYCHOLOGY



Considerations when taking Therapy Outdoors



GUIDANCE

The use of talking therapy outdoors

Unique Resources

Client needs

Competence and training

Risk and safety

Practitioner preference

Ethical considerations

Professional Risk Management



Evidence Based
Practice

Scope of Practice

Ethical Codes and
Guidelines



Best Practice

Insurance



Current lay of the land

Comparison Trials

Pilot RCT- Walk-and-talk vs Indoor for Men with Low Mood (Dickmeyer et al. 2025)

Effect of group CBT in a forest vs Indoors (Kim et al., 2009)

ACT- informed Nature-based therapy for Binge Eating Disorder (Corazon et al., 2018)

RCT-Nature-based therapy for stress-related illness (Corazon et al.. 2018b)

Walking psychotherapy for trauma patients (Koziel et al., 2022)

Adventure therapy for personality disorders (Eikenaes et al., 2006; Gabarda-Blasco et al., 2024)

Single Arm Trials

Qualitative Research

Value of nature during psychotherapy: a qualitative study of client experiences (Meuweuse et al. 2021)

Therapist perceptions of nature-based interventions in community mental health: Aust (Tambyah et al., 2022)

Client experiences of walk-and-talk (Newman & Gabriel, 2022)

Therapist experiences of walk-and-talk (Revell & McLeod, 2016)

Benefits

Increased Accessibility to
MH Services

Helps address the power
imbalance

Reduces stress and anxiety

Behavioural Activation

Enhances Cognitive
functioning

Increased sense of
connection and belonging

Cooley et al. (2020)
Harper et al. (2021)
James et al. (2021)
Owens & Bunce (2022)
Dickmeyer et al. (2025)

MCHUMOR by T. McCracken



"I told you to keep your rice in a plastic bag."

Challenges

Resources/ facilities

Weather

Professional Isolation

Biases and resistance

Scope of practice

Lack of regulation

BPS (2020)

Cooley et al. (2020)

Dave et al. (2024)

Hooley (2016)

Dickmeyer et al. (2025)

Community



Professional Development
Training
Supervision
Hosts to Guest Presenters
Conference
Community

Community & Engagement
Practice & Quality
Research & Evidence
Policy & Advocacy
Bi-annual Forum

Networking
Workshops
Webinars
Involvement is FREE!



Thank you!!

.... any questions?



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Ways to Connect



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