

**NATURE:** Nature connection is a free, available resource

*Continued from page 3*

plots of land,” she said. The students sat for twenty minutes, silently watching and listening to the natural world around them.

“Both the teacher and I were amazed at how well they did,” Prince said.

Then the students made a “story map” with Prince, drawing on a long sheet of paper and sharing what they’d observed.

“These kids, they’re amazing,” she enthused. “I was thrilled! I didn’t think they could go there.”

Go where, exactly?

“I wasn’t sure if they’d have the capacity to sit quietly and focus,” Prince explained. “Because their lives are so busy, I don’t think they sit quietly without a phone or a friend very often.”

She feels passionate about “getting them out there, so they can actually connect without all the devices and expand their awareness.”

The sit spot method has been used for generations, Prince said. Here in Sisters Country, some folks might normally walk through the forest without really experiencing it.

She pictured it this way: “We’re talking, we’re on our phone, we’re thinking about what we’re going to make for lunch. By the time we get to the end of our walk, we don’t even know what happened out there.”

Sit spots allow people to “drop in, listen, hear, and feel, sensing what’s happening around us,” she said. “We notice so much more about what’s there. We figure out what birds are there, we see little bugs, we feel the wind, we start to notice how the whole system fits together. It’s got so much to teach us.”

What does Prince learn from nature?

“It teaches me that I’m not the center of the universe,” she said. “There’s a whole world out here that’s functioning just beautifully without me. It’s very skilled at what it does. It changes as the seasons go.”

For many people, the COVID-19 crisis has intensified the need for mental health and self-care techniques of all kinds.

“I’m finding it uncomfortable to be with some of the feelings that are coming up right now,” Prince acknowledged. “I’m also having these incredible feelings of connection.”

Nature connection is a free, available resource for the fortunate residents of Sisters Country (*see how-to article, page 9*). It can even be done indoors.

“I spent 10 minutes looking at the new orchid blooming on my windowsill,” said Prince. “I got out my magnifying glass. She’s got an incredible face, this flower. And the smell!”

A strong lineage informs Prince’s approach. She learned from Jon Young of Wilderness Awareness School near Seattle, a nonprofit organization founded in 1983, recognized throughout the world as a leader in outdoor education.

“Jon has started over 60

wilderness awareness schools in the U.S.,” said Prince. “His teachings about bird language have been truly inspirational. And for many, like me, these insights have been the impetus for seeking out a much deeper connection with nature.”

Young studied cultural anthropology, learning how cultures develop and break down. Explained Prince, “Jon believes that our modern cultures are in dire need of repair, and to that end he has studied many indigenous societies,” such as the San people of the Kalahari Desert in sub-Saharan Africa, also known as the Bushmen.

Young’s international program, Art of Mentoring, helps create intergenerational communities where all ages have an integral role, especially elders.

Go Beyond Your Edges is the name of Prince’s life coaching business. She believes that transformational inner work happens when people are experiencing major life transitions, “at the edges is where life is most interesting and most challenging and most full of



PHOTO BY TL BROWN

Educator and life coach Susan Prince scouts a riparian area near Sisters for a nature connection workshop.

potential.”

Prince is offering free, one-time “Coping with Covid” coaching sessions. Her contact information is

available at [www.gobeyondyouredges.com](http://www.gobeyondyouredges.com), which also offers resources on nature connection and conscious elderhood.

Don't forget  
*Mother's Day*  
Sunday, May 10



Order Gifts & Dinner  
locally by phone  
and online!

**Fika Sisters**  
COFFEEHOUSE

Coffee, pastries,  
and boxed lunches  
are still available  
for takeout.  
Phone orders  
welcome!

541-588-0311  
201 E. Sun Ranch Dr.,  
Mon-Sat 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**YOUR CARE IS OPEN AND CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY!**

We offer drive-up evaluations and drive-thru testing!

**WALK-IN URGENT CARE OPEN EVERY DAY**

**YourCare**  
*your health*

541-548-2899  
3818 SW 21st Pl., Ste. 100  
Redmond • Open every day  
[yourcaremedical.com](http://yourcaremedical.com)

WALK-IN • URGENT CARE • OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE • X-RAY