



Acts of Kindness

In Nature, We Are Soothed

I borrowed this line from a book manuscript that a dear friend recently invited me to read. It resonated deeply with my experience earlier in the day when I enjoyed a revitalising and soothing walk along the main beach at Anglesea. Of course, having the right clothing helped, which for me, in the middle of winter, included a puffer jacket, beanie, and gloves!

I'm unsure whether it was the chill of the wind, the sound of the waves, the vastness of the sea, the mesmerising footprints in the sand, the relative solitude enjoyed by my wife and me as we walked together in silence, or a combination of all of the above. I also think Winn Raynor has contributed to my recent heightened connection with nature. Having loved reading *The Salt Path*, I am now enjoying Winn Raynor's second book in the series, *The Wild Silence*.

What struck me today, partly due to being on the lookout for a topic for my Acts of Kindness blog, is that I had never really thought of spending time in nature as an act of kindness – but I think it definitely fits the bill.

Firstly, it could simply be an Act of Kindness to yourself. Is there a way that you can spend a brief amount of time today immersed in the soothing beauty of nature? Can you endeavour to be fully present in your experience and see with a sense of wonder and curiosity akin to that of a young child.

Secondly, you could invite a friend, family member, colleague, or neighbour to spend some time in nature with you. Maybe it's a brisk walk at lunchtime, maybe it's sharing a cuppa on a park bench, or maybe it's meeting up to walk your dogs together.

Whether it is new or familiar surroundings, whether it is dawn or dusk or somewhere in between, whether it is bushland, forest, grasslands, wetlands, deserts, mountains, beaches, cliffs, or urban parks and gardens – can you provide an act of kindness by asking a friend to join you in nature today? We think you are likely to find it soothing!

I look forward to sharing a detailed book recommendation of my friend's manuscript, *Healing Our World: How Appreciation of Beauty, Goodness and Excellence Inspires Care*, in a future blog once it is published.