By taking part in the **Fruit-full Communities project** you will be doing great things for the planet and for your local community, but there’s a good chance you will do yourself some good too!

Getting outside and getting active can do wonders for your confidence and your mood, especially if you get close to nature when you do so.

**Examples from around the world**

In Norway there is a long-lived tradition called *friluftsliv*, which literally means ‘free air life’. This is the belief that people can really benefit from being outside and connecting with nature as much as possible. This may be why the Norwegians are some of the happiest people on Earth! Find out more about it in this article by Mother Nature Network.

In Japan, your doctor might give you a prescription not for tablets but for Shinrin Yoku or ‘forest bathing’. You don’t need a swimsuit to do this, you just go into the forest and sit quietly taking in the sights, sounds and smells of the woods. This can help with stress, depression, heart disease, strokes and possibly even cancer!

Here in Britain, our National Health Service has its very own forests because doctors and nurses have found that their patients get better quicker if they have access to green spaces in hospital grounds. You can find out if there is an NHS Forest site near you on this interactive map [nhsforest.org/map](http://nhsforest.org/map).
On the Fruit-full Communities project you have a double health benefit because you get to grow your own organic fruit and nuts as well as getting active outdoors. Check out this project in London called Mindfood where they run their own community business – it might give you some ideas for how to keep your own orchard going in the future. 
www.mindfood.org.uk

Even if you only have a tiny windowsill or balcony, you can always grow some of your own food. Take a look at this website for inspiration! 
bit.ly/1XMT85u

If your orchard is open to the public you will probably find that local people will take an interest and will want to come and spend time there too. This is a great way of getting to meet new people and showing them what a positive contribution you are making to your local community. Somehow, people seem more willing to talk to each other when they are outside!

The mental health charity Mind have lots of information on ‘Ecotherapy’ as people with mental health problems can feel so much better when they get outside.

Find out more here bit.ly/2ICZ08Q there may be a local group you could join.
Get Outdoors!

Woods are Wonderful!

Just going for a walk in the woods can be a great way to get some exercise and clear your mind from all the stresses of life. You can use this map from the Woodland Trust to find a wood near you. Stay safe and make sure you let someone else know where you are going.

[bit.ly/2mcaWee](bit.ly/2mcaWee)

You can find all sorts of food growing freely in the woods, which is great to eat if you know what you are doing. Nothing tastes quite as good as blackberries, hazel nuts or wild garlic that you have picked yourself.

Mind you don’t eat anything unless you are sure you know what it is - some plants are very poisonous.

You can use these guides from the Woodland Trust to work out what is good and safe to eat and how to harvest it without doing any damage.

[bit.ly/2fdepp2](bit.ly/2fdepp2)

If you want a challenge – see if you can make yourself a shelter using only things that you can find in the woods. Have a look at this video to give you some ideas. [bit.ly/2mc6YCz](bit.ly/2mc6YCz)

For more ideas and orchard resources visit: [www.fruitfullcommunities.org](http://www.fruitfullcommunities.org) and remember - stay safe!