

# TCNJ RECWELL

## *Wellness Newsletter*

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## ◆ Wellness through Nature

How does being outdoors affect us? We are on our screens so many hours in the day; whether this be on phones, computers, or smartboards. Therefore, we should be aware of how taking breaks from our screens help us, in body and mind.

Two RECreate Your Night activities focused on nature & human experience within; *Community Garden Night* and *Our Senses & Nature*. These events promoted a focus on cooperation with others, preparing for outdoor gardening, creative expression, and engagement of whole-body awareness through our senses.

Amongst hours indoors studying or engaging in classwork, taking breaks outdoors is beneficial. As reported by an article from the American Psychological Association, contact with nature is associated with increases in:

- Happiness
- Subjective well-being
- Positive affect
- Positive social interactions
- A sense of meaning & purpose
- Decreases in mental distress

Ways to experience the **benefits of green spaces** include:

- Actually being outdoors (benefits are strongest)
- Viewing a video of nature
- Looking out a window
- Virtual reality experiences (may be helpful for those who are unable to access or mobilize outdoors easily)

An interesting thing to note is that generous behaviors seem to improve with exposure to nature as well. *Feelings of awe* (remember [Feel-Good February](#)?) may be associated with generosity, and nature may help elicit feelings of awe.

Exposure to blue and green spaces, remote or isolated areas, and increased biodiversity in environments seem to be good for well-being, which is another element to consider and experience versus just time outdoors.

(Weir, 2020)

**Forest bathing**, also known as forest therapy or nature bathing, has also been linked to:

- Lowered tension & anxiety
- Improved sleep
- Decrease pain
  - [Read more here](#) from the *TCNJ Campus Well* (“Why and How to Spend More Time in Nature for Your Health - College of New Jersey”, 2021)

## **Nature Walk & Our Senses**

Overall, as we are multi-sensory, it is good to use and appreciate what we have in experiencing this earth. Take a moment to engage in this [nature walk](#), focusing on our senses out in nature!

1. Sight
2. Hear
3. Touch
4. Taste
5. Smell

## ◆ Color & Emotion

Have you ever considered how color is used in American culture, and around the globe? Keep reading to learn more on how colors may affect your emotion, enable you to remember things more easily, and how you can use colors to help in studying!

Colors can be described in:

Hardness and softness

- Soft feelings = brightness & low saturation
- Hard feelings = dimness & high saturation

Calmness and assertiveness

- Calmness = Weaker contrast & saturation
- Activeness = strong contrast & saturation

Colors can increase or decrease arousal levels:

- Warm colors are **vivid** in nature and increase arousal more than cool colors
  - Warm colors (red, yellows)
  - Cool colors (blues, greens)

<b>RED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longest wavelength</li> <li>• <i>Powerful, strong</i>, primary color</li> <li>• Appears nearer than it is &amp; grabs your attention first</li> <li>• <b>Lively, friendly</b>, but can be <b>demanding or aggressive</b></li> </ul>
<b>Yellow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joyful, outgoing, open &amp; friendly</li> <li>• “In color-mood association studies, yellow is associated with <b>comedy, playfulness, and a happy mood</b>”</li> <li>• “about <i>emotions, self esteem, and creativity</i>”</li> </ul>
<b>Green</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calming, refreshing, harmony &amp; equilibrium</li> <li>• “<b>symbolizes universal love,</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>environmental awareness, and peace”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be relaxing due to its connection &amp; reminder of nature</li> </ul>
<b>Blue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “encourages intellectual activity, reasoning, and logical thought”</li> <li>• <b>Soothing &amp; calming</b></li> <li>• Strong blues stimulate clear thought</li> </ul>

(Kurt & Osueke, 2014).

Meaning of colors can vary amongst and within cultures. For example, Disney uses colors to represent emotions in “Inside Out”. Green for disgust, blue for sadness, red or anger, etc. Red can also represent romance, such as with roses, or unfairness and roughness in sports, such as “red cards”. Color can impact our attention, taste, and perception of temperature.

(Vetter, 2019)

Let’s take a look at color and memory next, which can be directly related to you as a student!

### **Study Better with Colors**

A webpage article from TCNJ Campus Well reports that studies have also shown that colors can help us *encode* information and *retrieve* it later. For example, as in the table above, warm colors such as red and yellow seem to have a greater impact on our attention than neutral colors; this is likely due to increasing our arousal levels (think of a stop sign).

Here are is an example you can use colors to organize & study materials!

## The stoplight method for studying

Color code your notes using red, yellow, and green markers to indicate your level of comfort with the material.

For example:

**Red**

You're lost. These are areas where you need to ask your professor or teaching assistant for some help.

**Yellow**

You've almost got it. You need to review this info a couple more times to feel confident.

**Green**

You're a pro. You're confident on this topic.

{ Another clever way to use this method is by making three piles of flash cards. Color code the cards based on the stoplight scheme, circulating the red cards the most. }

(“Try This Color Coding Strategy to Study for Your next Exam - College of New Jersey”, 2021)

## ◆ Social & Physical Well-being through Movement

Every individual is unique and requires an individualized plan to be healthy and maintain health throughout their lifetime.

- Don't know where to start, or thinking of making changes?
  - Always talk with your doctor when making important changes to your health

“Regular physical activity can promote good health, improve cognitive function, and prevent disease. Abundant research from the health and exercise science literature also presents empirical evidence of positive ‘non-health effects’ induced by physical activity or sports participation. Among the non-health effects, physical activity **improves life satisfaction, happiness, subjective well-being, mental health, and interpersonal relations,**” (Di Bartolomeo & Papa, 2019).

Physical activity provides opportunities for:

- Socialization
- development of self-concept & self-esteem
- learning & developing social skills favoring social inclusion
- healthy emotional management strategies
- tolerance to frustration
- development of resilience
- and assuming responsibilities

(Di Bartolomeo & Papa, 2019)

TCNJ has *recreation & wellness resources* to fit your needs and desires of participation in movement activities. Seeking to explore the fitness center? Wanting to be involved in a group class to provide yourself with the opportunity for social engagement?

⇒ [Resources on fitness and physical-activity clubs & sports here.](#)

## **Health is More than just Physical Exercise**

Along with diet and exercise across your lifespan, social connections are a just as important for health. Having a social support system can allow you to:

1. Feel less stress
2. Boosts physical health (blood pressure, sleep, impulse control)
3. Protects against depression & anxiety

Read why [social support is the most overlooked in a self-care routine here](#), at the TCNJ Campus Well webpage.

(“Why Social Support Is the Most Overlooked Self-Care Routine”, 2021)



## Resources for YOU

### TCNJ Campus Well

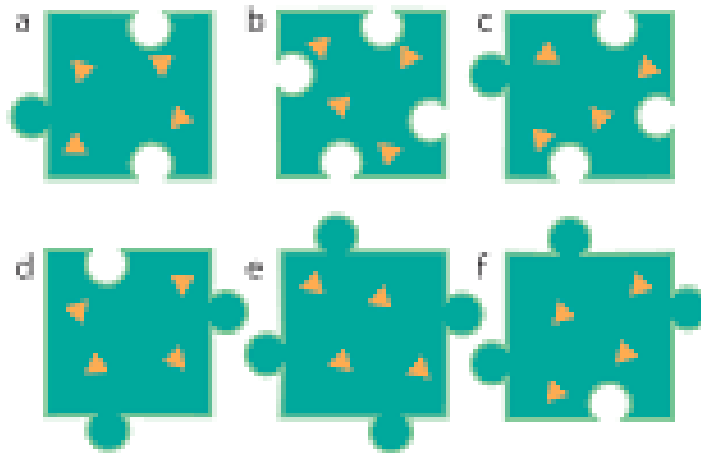
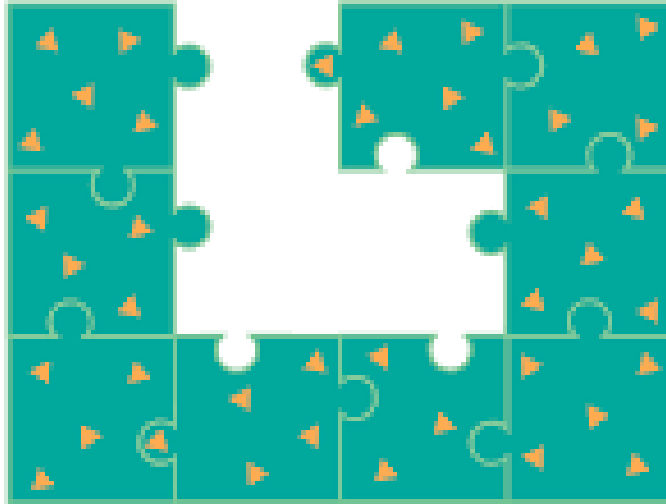
Read more with [TCNJ Campus Well](#) website, bringing you health and wellness information regarding:

- Body
- Food
- Mind
- Academics
- Relationships
- Sexual culture
  - And more!

### Recreation & Wellness

Sport clubs, group classes, fitness center hours, and more! Get creative and engage in social activities with RECreate Your Night, and sign-up for Motivational Mondays, to start your week with positivity, laughs, and poetry! TCNJ RecWell's information on all above activities [here](#).

## Refresh Button

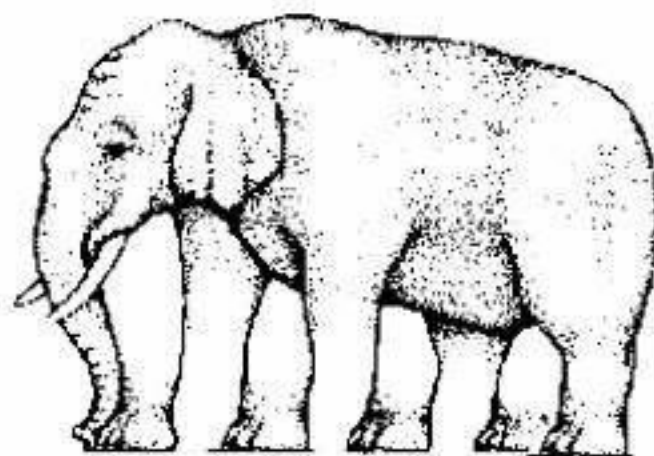


I have a head and a tail  
that will never meet.  
Having too many of me  
is always a treat.

What am I?



RD



How many legs does this elephant have?



## References

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## Recreation & Wellness

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