

Step (outside) into my office...

In my mind, I have for a long time believed that my interests have two polar opposite avenues. On one side: nature, conservation, simplicity. The other: human progression, complex systems, innovation and technology.

For me these two avenues never seemed to be able to exist in the same world in complete harmony. It has only been in the last few years that I have been focusing on how to incorporate these two facets into one space.

How can the chaos of modern humanity exist with nature's own chaotic way?

Is there a way to please our inner cave person? Would it be worth the effort of trying to make it happen? Will they ultimately cancel themselves out, like waves travelling in opposition?

On occasion, if I had the mental energy after work, I would ponder a way, build something or research some 'out there' concepts. Nothing meaningful ever really resulted from the limited time and energy I had to spare.

I was working my arse off in the logistics department of a multi-national company. The concept of actually having time to hold a meeting without disruption (let alone innovating) was, to put it lightly, a far off and fanciful idea.

Fortunately, I had a total mental collapse.

Yes, I said fortunately.

Signed off from work, on medication, doctors and loved ones doing everything they could to help me come back from the abyss, kind of collapse.

It was really the first time since my school days that I actually had time to do nothing.

Weeks passed, then months. Finally, I started coming back. Slowly I started to be productive in my new "no work, just recover" world.

My passion for the natural world and hobbies became a part of my recovery, and this became the starting point for something completely different.

In order to continue to improve and prosper I have to shape MY world.

A part of that included my future employment. I knew what I definitely didn't want, and I had a little idea of what I did want, so with a small budget and the desire to help others, Tiny Jungle began.

Starting a business, as many of you will know, requires a lot of research, and for me some of that research includes bringing some of those colliding interests back out of storage.

Why not? If I'm molding things, why not shape the company the way I want to?

So I started doing a bit of snooping (my partner refers to it as Professional Stalking) to find out about what successful business people do that makes them 'so special'.

There's a good chance that you've noticed how many of them hold 'walking / walk & talk' meetings.

On further investigation you (like I did) probably found hundreds of articles relating to the topic, on its benefits and even some offering cautionary words of wisdom.

So, I decided that I would try it and see how it made me feel. After all, Tiny Jungle is all about helping people to feel happier, more productive, and engaged in their daily pursuits - so it fits the brand.

I organised to meet with a health & wellbeing copywriter - the lovely [Susan Hammond](#) - that I had connected with at a networking event for a 1-2-1 over coffee and a stroll around a woodland trail surrounding a lake system in Northamptonshire.

As you can imagine, November in the UK is not the most conducive time of year to be outdoors but both of us liked the idea of combining a mental health break with our meeting.

The start of the meeting began at an oddly modern but environmentally conscious shoreline pier, peppered with wildflower gardens and reed sculptures.

The views over the lake surrounded by the autumnal colours displayed by the deciduous broadleaf woodland that surrounds it is, in my opinion, one of the jewels of the area.

If the meeting had ended there, I'm sure Cave Sean would've been happy.

The air carried the smell of freshly fallen leaves, and quaint woodland animal sculptures line the path. There must be children's activities associated with the sculptures, but neither of us batted an eyelid when the other excitedly pointed out the artworks.

The high rainfall of late drowned some of the low lying vegetation but fungi, moss and lichen above the water level still provided flashes of greenery to occasionally draw attention away from the meeting briefly.

Within minutes, Nature had taken hold and released our minds from the stresses of the world we had just left behind, and our conversations flowed freely.

We walked for approximately 30 minutes, and without the constant distraction of technology and society we were both able to develop some ideas and solutions.

There was even time for a quick climbing frame break - after all, what's a business meeting without a slide?!

Some may read this and think that it is really just a bunch of adults not focusing on what really needs to be done, but actually it was an incredibly productive meeting.

Perhaps one of the most productive periods of the week.

Why?

Being outside away from everything settles your mind, lowers your stress levels and allows you to rejuvenate. This rejuvenation happens fast, and has long lasting effects.

Sharing the time in nature to have a meeting allows your mind to focus without thousands of distractions.

What's the point?

Well, as modern humans, we easily get stuck in autopilot, and our brains allow us to absorb information from too many places at once. This ends up causing us to miss important parts of the things that we do want to concentrate on. Prehistoric us worked outdoors, in nature, and ideally so should we.

Of course, working outside 100% of the time isn't possible for a lot of businesses, but if you can get out and have a walking meeting once in a while, I would certainly make the effort to.

As far as satisfying the prehistoric us in us all, bringing nature indoors helps too!

(See the article on [LinkedIn](#))