

제 포트폴리오에 오신 것을 환영합니다

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EVERYDAY INSPIRATION

Expressing creativity doesn't have to mean making a work of art. Smaller sparks of imagination can be just as special

When you think of creativity, you might picture an artist at work on a big project. Perhaps you imagine someone spending hours painting a canvas, crafting a beautiful pot out of clay or composing a powerful piece of poetry.

While these can all be worthwhile and enjoyable activities, it's also good to recognise the smaller scale ways in which you are creative, perhaps without realising it, and to celebrate the little ways you can weave more creativity into your day.

A new twist

Creativity is defined by the Encyclopaedia Britannica as the ability to 'bring into existence something new', but that doesn't mean it has to be a completely original idea. Lots of creative activities involve putting your own spin on something. Things like tweaking a baking recipe so that you decorate a cake with a different kind of icing, which changes the flavour, is a way of being creative. It builds on something that's already there - a recipe - but gives your own take on it and uses your ideas. You may not always realise it, but activities like this are just as creative and worthy of acknowledgment as bigger artistic feats.

Pleasure and purpose

Being creative has lots of benefits that make it worthwhile. There's the satisfaction that can come with making something, as well as enjoying the process along the way. Creativity can be a way to express yourself, such as sharing your ideas or exploring a topic you're interested in. Perhaps you've found it meaningful to pen a poem about your feelings, or to sketch a picture of a person who you care about.

You may also find that you enter a 'flow state' and get lost in an activity, your mind running free as you become absorbed in what you're doing. Studies have shown that being in a flow state can reduce anxiety and boost your mood.

Doing an activity that allows you to enter this state can mean your body release feel-good hormones called endorphins, while reducing levels of the stress hormone cortisol. This all makes engaging with something creative beneficial for your mental wellbeing and a great way to unwind.

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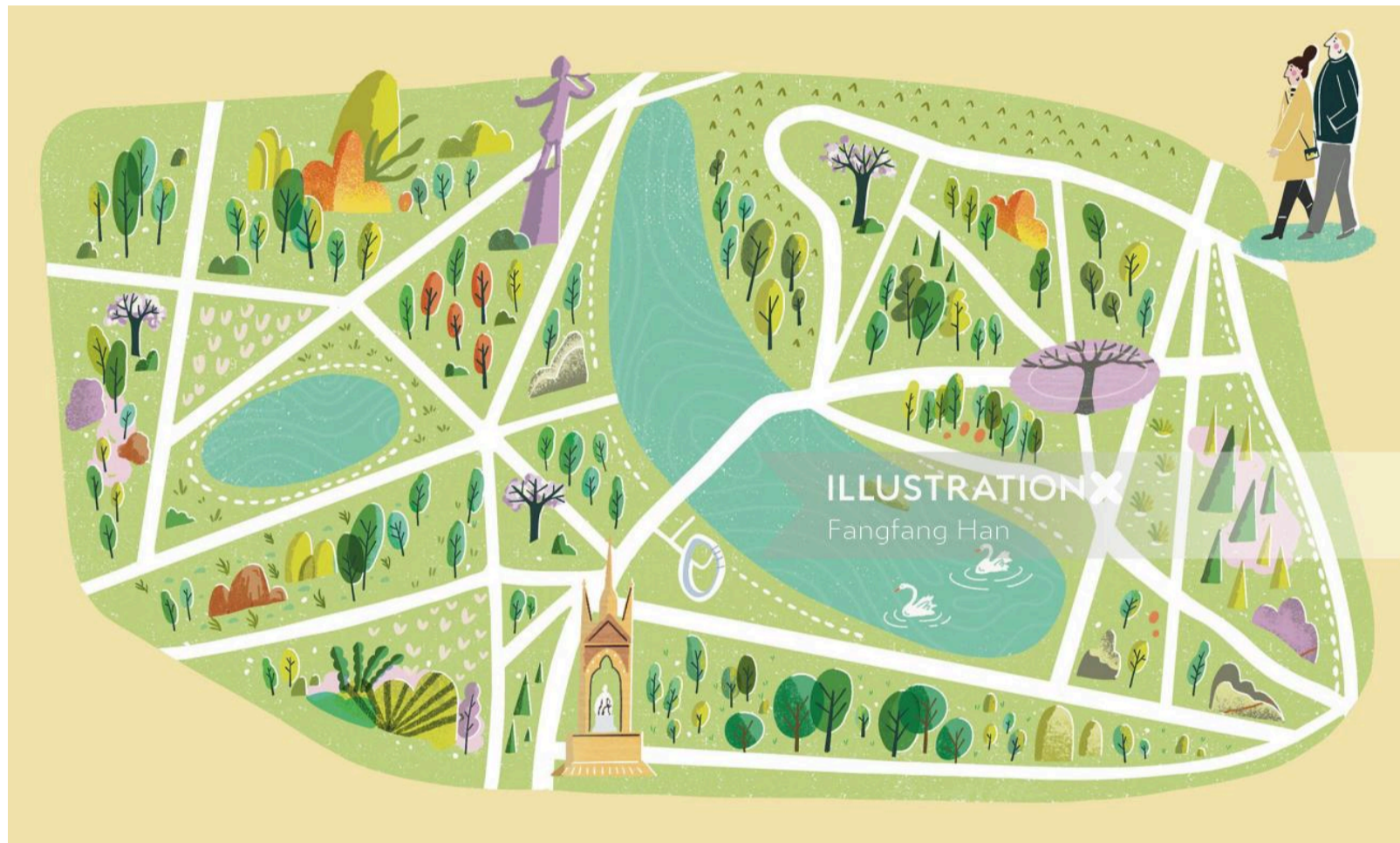
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POLE TO POLE

Ever wondered what people are doing, striding through the park with what look like ski poles swinging from their arms? Nordic walking is a fantastic way to get out in nature and meet new friends too

'Coming for a walk?' may not be the most exciting invitation you've had this week. But there's a fun sport taking off that may encourage you to do just that. Nordic walking is low cost, easy to learn, and has so many benefits for your body as well as your mind.

Using special height-adjustable poles, the technique will help you improve your coordination and strengthen your upper and lower body, as well as offering all the mental health perks of being outside in nature. See it as skiing without the risks! Build up your stamina and endurance at your own pace - perfect.

Where it all started

Nordic walking was originally devised in Finland to keep up the fitness of cross-country skiers during the summer months. It was introduced into Finnish schools, and quickly caught on internationally.

The good news is, you don't need to be super-fit to do it. And the technique isn't difficult to pick up either, so it's easy to get started (see xxxxx).

What's so good about it?

Katie Atkins is the international lead for children and teens for the International Nordic Walking Federation

and founder of Nordic4 in Bristol, where she runs the Nordic4Teens group.

She says: 'Nordic walking enables you to find yourself through developing confidence, both socially and physically.'

'You'll develop a love of learning about -and walking in- nature in a low-key, relaxed way. Some might feel pressured academically, socially or in team sports. Nordic walking, I hope, provides a remedy for this.'

Although it involves stepping with your foot and driving forwards with a pole, it's not wobbly like learning to ski.

For one thing the poles give you more stability on wet or bumpy surfaces, taking the strain off your joints and helping you feel lighter on your feet.

Katie shows the group how to adjust their poles for different terrain. For example, when it's muddy, you plant them more firmly, bringing the poles up into a more upright position. It's important, too, as the group walks in most types of weather, though not if it's stormy or very windy.

What Nordic walkers say

Jenny, 15, [16 in October 2024] goes regularly to the Bristol group, where other members are aged from 12 to 17. Part of the appeal, she says, is discovering new things about the



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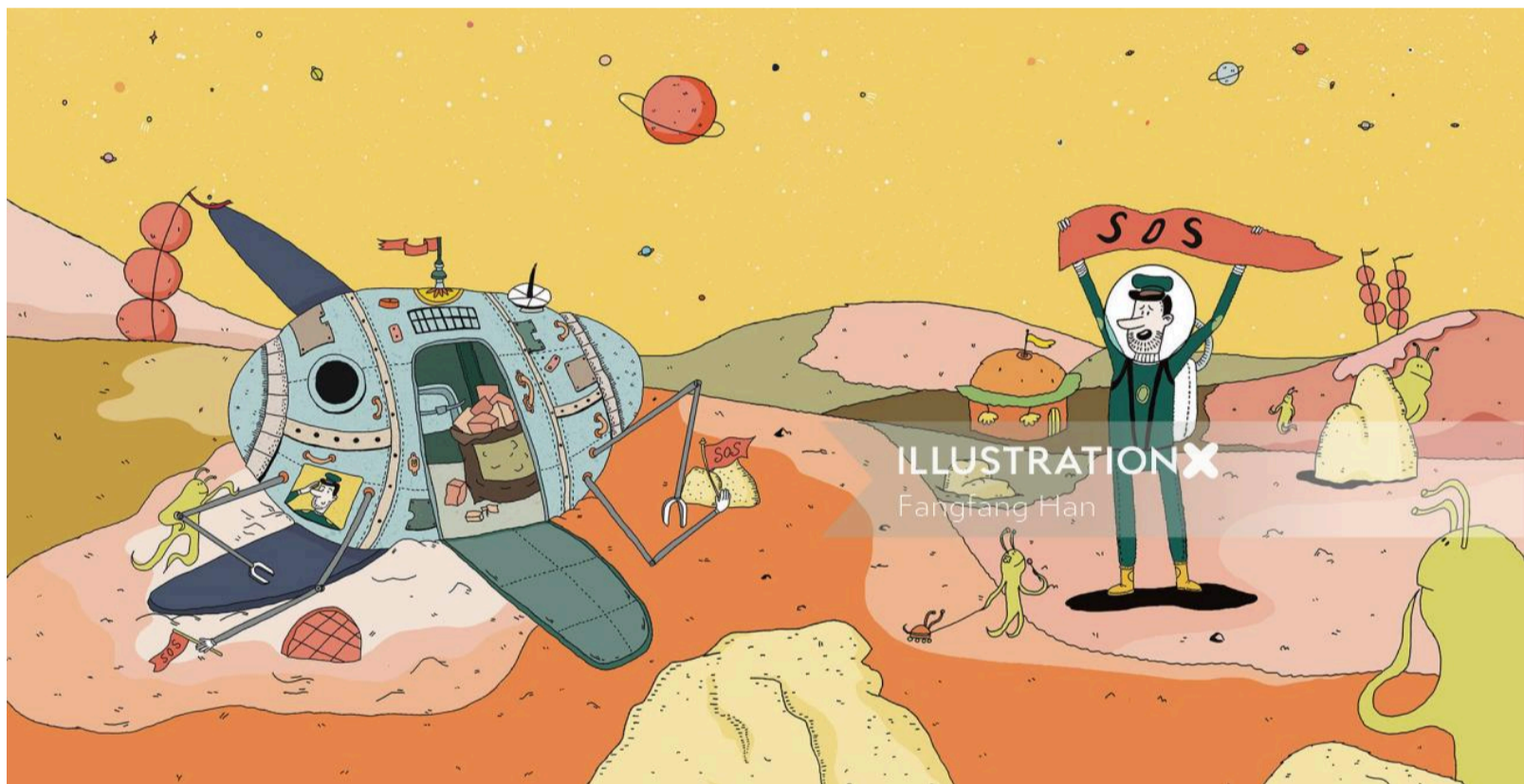
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