

## Some Notes on Contemplative Hiking

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**Go light.** Develop an ultralight approach. Consider reading and applying *Beyond Backpacking: Ray Jardine's Guide to Lightweight Hiking* (1999)

**Minimalism and voluntary simplicity.** Take only what you need

**Backcountry and wilderness ethics.** Land conservation. Develop a sense of place. Bioregional and watershed awareness. Geology and geography. Cause the least possible harm. Consider reading Gary Snyder's *The Practice of the Wild* (1990)

**No-trace camping.** Pack-it-in, pack-it-out. Take only memories; leave only footprints. Leave each place better than you found it

**Take your time.** Travel at your own pace. Be present. Walk leisurely. Listen to your body. Enjoy the landscape

**Practice trail etiquette.** Yield the trail, especially when going downhill. Step aside and give way to people climbing up. In general stay on the trail (to decrease erosion), but rest on the side, ideally off the main trail

**Formal meditation.** Spend some time each day standing and sitting in silence

**Mountain contemplation.** Sit quietly in beautiful places, observing and listening

**Movement awareness.** Move with awareness and presence. Become rooted and sure-footed

**Listen to birdsong and observe animals.** Engage animals as teachers and develop a shared sense of animality. Trans-personal and trans-human relationality and care. Mutual nourishment and mutual flourishing

**Contemplative reading.** Take poetry, nature writing, spiritual classics, and other materials as trail companions and dialogue partners. Nourish spirit and develop insight

**Reflection and journaling.** Set aside some time for writing and reflecting on your experiences. Develop deeper discernment and insight about meaning and purpose. Affinities and aspiration

**Trail names.** Choose a name that expresses your values and interests, that provides a glimpse into your authentic commitments and character. It also might serve as an orientation point

**Water.** Drink fresh mountain stream and lake water. Stay hydrated and always carry enough water. Share water with those who need it

**Wear good footwear.** Make sure your shoes or boots are broken-in, supportive, and comfortable

**Take care of your feet,** in every sense