

# Healing the Healers: Nature-Based Approaches to Healthcare Professional Wellbeing

## Flourishing Spaces

*Nature Connection Retreats for Health Care Professionals*

Dr Lucy Loveday

Peters, D. and Loveday, L. (2025) 'Flourishing on Dartmoor: Nature connection retreats for GPs. Journal of Holistic Healthcare, 22(3), pp. 14–18



# Why This Matters

Burnout is rising in healthcare

Impact on workforce and patient care

Sustainable future for people & planet



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# Thankyou

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## An immersion in nature

📷 Photo by Theo Moya 20/09/21 Dr Lucy Loveday is helping to run a nature retreat for GPs at Brimpts Farm, Dartmeet, Devon.

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Alan Heeks  
Professor David Peters  
Penny Atkinson  
Brimpts Farm Team  
Kernow CiC  
RCGP  
IPM and many more ....



# Our approach

Nature based retreats for Health Care Professionals

## Polyvagal Theory

- Mindfulness & Breathwork
  - Conservation
  - Reflection
  - Landscape

Fantastic Team - Andy the Farmer ....



# What participants needed

- Pause
- Restoration
- Reset
- Calm
- Clarity
- Connection
- Relief from the 'hamster wheel'
- Space to rest, heal, reflect
- Learning
- Wellbeing



# What we found ...

## High pre-retreat stress



Mood disturbance



Tension, fatigue, depression



Vigour, self-esteem



**Shift; Depletion -> Flourishing**

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# Re-centre with nature

- Teacher
- Sanctuary
- Anchor
- Regulator
- Space for personal growth
- Inner balance



# Themes

**Renewed Commitment to self- care**

**Restoration**

**Connection**

**Practical Tools & Techniques**

**Inspiration & Hope**

**Learning from others**



# Intentions

**Letting Go & Mindset shift**

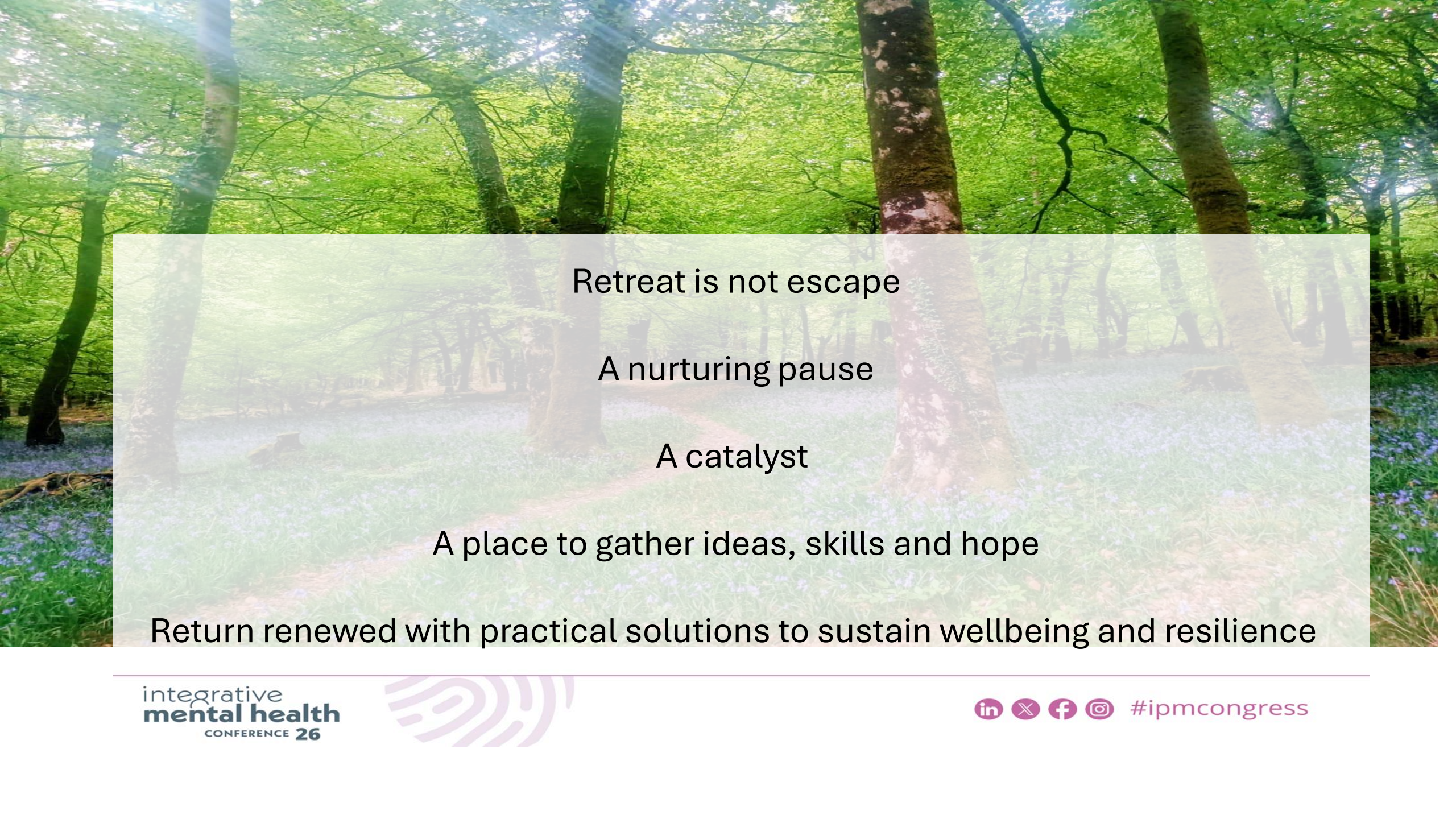
**Integration of Learning**

**Self-Awareness & Self-Regulation & Wellbeing**

**Planning & Time Management**

**Nature Connection & Community**





Retreat is not escape

A nurturing pause

A catalyst

A place to gather ideas, skills and hope

Return renewed with practical solutions to sustain wellbeing and resilience





# Take Away

From burn out to flourishing

Creating conditions for people to flourish

This is not just about individual wellbeing.

It is also about embedding a nature-connected culture into the health care system and integrating supportive environments to support healthcare professional wellbeing.

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# Thankyou



**and Prof David Peters**

