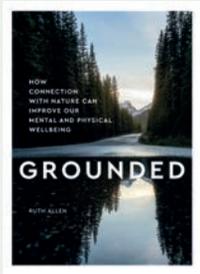


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## Grounded



**Ruth Allen**

Mortimer Books  
ISBN: 978-1-78739-586-2

Ruth Allen is a counsellor and eco-psychotherapist with a PhD in geology. She has brought her passion,

joy and expertise together in a beautiful book with special relevance to our current situation.

*Grounded* is a practical book that encourages us to connect with nature as an essential way to support our wellbeing. It's more than a toolkit and it encourages us to slow down and still ourselves. This is coupled with images that may lead to contemplation.

As many practitioners are exploring their own way back to face-to-face therapy, this book offers good ideas on practical ways of doing this. I envisage therapists could use it for their own self-care, as well as selecting exercises to explore with a client in an outdoors session. I'd recommend it to clients because it's thoughtful and not full of jargon.

It is classed as a 'self-help' book and meets the reader wherever they are on their journey with the natural world. It could be especially useful for people who find it hard to articulate feelings and emotions. It offers the view that nature can heal and help us, alongside, or as an alternative to, conventional therapy.

As someone in the clinically extremely vulnerable shielding group, the outdoors has been one of the few places that have felt safe over the last year, and this book has been helpful as it has gently reminded me of the benefits of becoming mindful in nature and thereby more grounded. I echo Ruth's view that a holistic approach to client work can often be more helpful than a strictly medical model.

The book is accessible and easy to dip into, with short chapters that encourage reflection. The exercises

encourage making a plan for solitude, taking a wild walk or getting our hands dirty. The author discusses elements of grounding taking the form of ritual and mystery, and encourages us to become more attuned to the spiritual aspect.

I did sometimes find the layout made the flow of the book a bit disjointed, as some of the exercises cut across the text (although I did wonder if the interweaving was deliberate). The book discusses some theoretical approaches and has details of research in the bibliography, but there is little referencing in the actual text. I think that helped the book flow well, but others may want more detail.

**Joanna Burridge** MBACP,  
counsellor, spiritual accompanier