New Processes for Digital Devices in Wild, Green Spaces by Jo Scott

10 Training Prompts

Take your phone into a wild, green space of your choosing. I think it is important that you are alone with your phone and in your chosen place – head there now if you haven't already done so. Remember that the only condition is that nature is in charge here – it's doing what it wants, it's dominant. It could be urban woodland, a riverside, a wasteland abandoned for lack of capital and full of growth instead – it could be edgelands, moorlands, open countryside, an overgrown city park, the wild end of a garden. For the moment, don't connect with others through the phone's data tendrils into the wider world. Use the device as part of a present encounter with what is here and now – resist its desires for you to be elsewhere.

1. Take a moment now to move around and explore and look at the space you are in, including the digital space of your device. What is visible as actions and movements, what is hidden, what can you hear and what is inaudible? What patterns can you see and feel in the wider natural landscape and in the contained, but endless landscape of the device?

2. Mark a movement or journey through the space in an unusual way. Strap the phone to your arm, point it behind you, resist the urge to look through it for the moment – let it do what it wants and try not to be bothered with what this produces.

3. Find one thing here that you want to encounter more closely and use the phone to help you form this encounter. Try it the other way around – can you see your phone through the moss, through the branches of a tree, through the ivy?

4. Put the phone into the environment – somewhere where it doesn't fit and make it do something – record or play sound, image, video. Place its automated happenings in relation to all the other processes happening here. Don't look through the device – look at it in this space. What does it look like? Why is it here? What is it hiding? Record your responses to these questions, if you want.

5. Leave the phone somewhere in the space to film/record sound/take pictures, then run towards it fast, pick it up and turn it out into the space. The image will move with your breath, which is good – that will change how the environment is. Feel the breath of the body in the image, the impossibility of stillness, the moment formed between body, device and place.

6. Walk with the device facing backwards to a part of this space you can't see, that you've just seen, that you've just passed. Let it be the eyes in the back of your head, your back, your feet, without ever seeing, without ever looking. Does the place look back? A circumspect tilted appraisal of the body and device.

7. Think about all the things happening in this space at this time. Try to position yourself and the device in relation to just one of these tiny, ongoing, infinitesimal processes, so you really see it, so you stay with it for longer than you should – a drip of water from a leaf, wind pushing a single branch somewhere, the movement of the shadow of something. Try to hear and engage with the processes of the device too – its tiny, repetitive and continuous actions, working in and shaping the world.

8. Play with the shadows of things in the space – yours, the shadow of a tree, a branch, a loose leaf shivering, grasses brushing against each other, the presence of the phone, as sensed and thrown into the world. No selfies, no posing or framing or forming of something for later, but a chasing through the space and through the device.

9. Take three pictures of the same part of this wild, green space – try to stay still, try not to move. Put the phone, showing the pictures in the space and scroll through. What do you see? Is there a shift? How do these streams of numbers visualised on your screen look when they are nestled in the space? What do you see? What don't you see? There is so much more happening here - so much to contemplate, to celebrate, to fear.

10. Sing a song to your device, sing it so that only it can hear what you say – no hugging of trees but a lullaby for the 0s and 1s, for the silicon and code.