

## Activity 9 – My words exactly

**Hello.** My name is Anne Margaret and **today I'd like to talk to you about** my favorite activity which is walking in the hills. **In this talk, I'm going to cover three main topics** which are: some of the things that you need to take with you, how to find the way, and the benefits of walking in the hills.

So, **the first topic I want to cover** is the equipment - the things that you need to take with you. Now, walking doesn't have to be a very expensive hobby, but it does help to have one or two items of equipment that will make your life so much easier, and make the walk so much more enjoyable.

So the first thing is good boots. Your boots should be waterproof, and they should be comfortable, and you'll find that you enjoy walking a lot more if you've got comfortable boots.

The next thing, is a really good waterproof jacket, like this one. Now you may not want to wear it all day, but you should always have a waterproof jacket with you, because it could start raining at any time. So a waterproof jacket is essential.

And similarly, the temperature can drop. So I always take warm clothes with me. Take a hat and some gloves - even in the summer - because when you stop to rest, you start to cool down quite quickly, and in order to stay warm, you need warm clothes.

As well as clothing, it's also important to have food and drink with you - particularly water. It's thirsty work, walking, so you need to have plenty of water with you, and the food that you would normally eat - your lunch, a snack.

Remember that when you're walking, you use up a lot of energy. So it's actually quite important to take extra food with you, as well, more than you would normally expect to eat. I don't always eat all the food I take with me, but I do like to have an emergency chocolate bar in my bag, just in case.

There's a couple of safety items that you should have with you, too. For example, a first aid kit. Really, really important. It doesn't have to be very big, but you should have some plasters with you. You should have some blister plasters, a compression bandage, in case you turn your ankle, and some cream in case you get bitten. Just a few things that mean that, if something should happen, you can respond immediately. And finally - you should have a map of the route with you.

**All in all,** you don't want to be carrying too much, because that would be really heavy. But it is important to make sure you've got a few essentials that could be really useful on your walk.

So **now, I'd like to say some more about** the route map, and how to find the way. Now many of us have SatNav or GPS on our phones, but unfortunately, once you get up into the hills, you may not have a signal. So it's really important that you plan the route before you leave, that you know where you're starting, and you know where you're going to, and also what you might see along the way, so you can be sure that you're on the right route. It's important as well to take a map or a guidebook. You can get guidebooks which have a map and a description of the route, so that can be really helpful. I always take a compass as well, because even though the route might be very clearly marked, when you get to the hills, it may be that

the path is not clear. And so although you can see this path here, it may not be obvious on the ground, and you may need to use your compass to make sure you're walking in the right direction.

And of course, it's important to keep looking out for landmarks to make sure you're on the right track. Now, up in the hills there aren't many buildings, and very few trees, so the kind of landmarks that we're looking for are things like a pile of stones - a cairn - which might be marked on your map. Best of all is a trig point, which will definitely be marked on your map, so you know for sure where you are. But the best thing about a trig point, is that it's always at the top of the hill, so you know when you've got there, that you don't have to go up anymore! And you get an enormous sense of achievement from knowing that you have reached the top.

**So overall**, I would say that navigation is one of the challenges of walking, but it's definitely worth using a map and a compass to help you to make sure you don't get lost.

**I'd like to move on now to talk about** the third topic today.

**I'd like to say something about** the benefits of walking in the hills. There are many benefits, actually, for walking - particularly out in the open countryside. When we get out into the daylight, of course, we start to make vitamin D in our skin, and that's really good for the immune system. Just being out in the fresh air makes us feel more lively, clears the head a bit, and of course the exercise is really good for your heart, for your lungs, for your muscles.

But there are many psychological benefits, as well as the physical benefits. I mentioned the sense of achievement when you get to the top of that hill, and you look back and you can see how far you've come. That makes you feel really good. You also get a sense of well-being from being out in the green environment, more than you do just walking around in town. When you're walking, there's nothing else you can be doing, so you stop worrying about all the things back home that you should be doing, because you're really just concentrating on getting up that hill.

I like to walk with friends, and it's lovely to have a chat to catch up, and it also helps with the navigation, if I'm honest, to have somebody to check with - are we on the right path? But I also very much enjoy walking on my own, because it gives me time to think through any problems that I have. It means that I can walk at my own pace, and it means I can stop whenever I want to. So there are benefits for walking on your own, as well as walking with friends.

**So to conclude**, walking - and particularly walking in the hills - is a great way to relax and to get some exercise. It is important to make sure you've got the right equipment, and that you know how to find the way, but **I'd like to finish today by** recommending that you give it a go, and I hope you'll enjoy walking as much as I do.

**Thank you for listening today, and I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have.**