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When I was small, my grandpa would always take us on his walks. Usually in the afternoon. He was a little aged, having some wrinkles along his face. Most were from smiling. We would walk along the ditch, the water rippling as water spiders dart across the surface of the cloudy brown water. The ditch water lazily moved along as our feet kicked up dust from the dirt road we walked, leaving behind the crumbling buildings that are the bane of my very existence. We were always taught to be silent on these walks and enjoy our surroundings. Enjoy the time we were spending together, while we still had the time. We would walk for 30 minutes every day in one direction, following the same road every time. Even though we always saw the same things, the scenery was just as beautiful each time. The rolling hills on the left of us, the trees along the Rio Grande to our right. I am who I am because of my grandpa, and partly because of those walks. He taught me how to read, which has made me as literate as I am, and those walks he took me on made me very observant. I can notice some things that other people probably can't because of how he made me observe. We were connected with our surroundings. Now I feel that we're disconnected.

I feel that Aldo Leopold would find that he agrees with the thought that the one tool that disconnects us the most from the nature around us is our phones. We never had our phones while on these walks. Phones make communication easier, it can find information easily on the web, and it can take pictures. We're constantly looking through the eye of our phones, taking pictures of nice views, of wildlife, of interesting plants. We think that we could look at the pictures later, and study them after we've experienced them rather than while we were experiencing them. People should enjoy what's in front of them now, in the present rather than later in a picture, because there's so many more senses you can touch when you enjoy your surroundings now. There are sounds you can't hear through a photo, touch you can't feel, smells you can't smell. Tastes you can't taste. I think that in the future, phones will distract us from what's really important, which is the present.

I believe that we should be mindful of the tools we use, but at the same time I believe that we should welcome these tools. Every tool that we use will harm Mother Earth in one way or another, whether it be some extremely small damage like digging a hole with a shovel, or extremely big problems like tearing a hole in the sky with cars. It all depends on what's better for us and Mother Earth in the long term. We should tread lightly in the future, as if stepping through a forest trying not to make noise to scare the animals. As if to observe the flora and fauna, rather than dominate our environment. What I want to do to contribute to the health of Mother Earth is to study cleaner but efficient energy, something that could make an abundance of energy while never putting out harmful materials as a side effect. It's what my grandpa would want.