



Mindful Senses Awareness Activities

Background information

These activities were originally created to be used as part of a wider project and shared through a teaching session. Whilst they offer mindful activities, they are not intended to be a teaching in mindful meditation. These ideas offer a way to bring a mindful approach into our lives, helping to engage all our senses and bring a present moment awareness into everyday experiences.



Cautions

Always consider any allergies that you may have and ONLY use what you know to be safe for you and your family.

Consider age appropriateness for each activity and only use what objects and equipment are suitable for the age range of your family.

Wash your hands thoroughly after this activity

Resources

- Plate, bowl or pot
- Clean or fresh earth
- Natural pieces eg – stones/pebble/leaves/petals/flowers/weeds/ grasses/ twigs/feather, maybe collected from the garden or during a walk outdoors.
- Any other additional resources

Extension options

- Use the preparation time as moments of mindful awareness
- Change fill levels
- Focus on different senses/ remove different senses
- Change the selection of pieces to place in the earth garden
- Add/use plants with aroma such as sage, lavender or camomile
- Add other textures such as sand, cornflower, water
- Focus attention at a specific point in exercise e.g. - Just before placing the piece in the garden – where are your thoughts?..... What can you see, hear or notice in the body?

Preparation

Gather everything you may need for the activity.

Find a space where you can take some time to become still, quiet and settled, somewhere where you may not be disturbed.

If possible dim lighting, ensure you have warmth, are comfortably seated, set phones to silent.

You are invited to start each activity by softly closing your eyes for a few moments or resting a softened gaze at a point just ahead of your body. Bring your attention to the body, noticing any areas of tension that may be held, perhaps in the shoulders, back or legs, and choosing to soften these areas. Bringing your attention to the breath and follow the rhythm of the breath, wherever it is most noticeable for you, following a few breaths with attention. If, for whatever reason, this is not comfortable for you, you may choose to bring your attention to the air around your nose or focus attention to sensations at the soles of the feet, hands or where the body makes contact with the seat or floor below. Spending a few moments allowing the body and mind to settle.



Earth Gardens

Breathe slowly and deeply becoming aware of the breath and how the body moves with each breathe.

Bringing awareness to the choices available and pick a pebble, stick, stone, feather or leaf.

Be guided by the natural draw, internal feeling and just select.

Observe the hand as it reaches out to take a piece.
Were you aware of any thoughts or judgements as you made the choice?

Explore the chosen piece through the senses – what does it look like? Notice the weight of it in the hand, its colours and patterns. Feel how it sits against the hand, its size shape and texture. Is it warm or cold, rough, smooth, tickly or prickly? Does it have a smell or a sound?

Place the piece into the earth; see the movement of the earth around the piece as it settles in. Mindfully choose another piece, similar or different.

Observe the new choice as before. And again, settle this piece into the forming garden.

Notice how it looks in this new area, being aware of any judgements of it being right or wrong, just allowing these thoughts to pass, without having to react.

Continue to choose pieces until the earth garden is complete.