



Sense Meditation

Jack offers a rich and full sense meditation here that's applicable for adolescents to adults. He explores why this practice is a valuable experience to include in nature experiences. Sensory integration is incredible for our emotional regulation along with many other benefits. We link this video to other led sensory experiences accessible for younger children too.

Ages

All, however, the specific sense meditation offered here is applicable for adolescents through to adults. There are other adaptations for younger children.

Duration:

4-15 mins

Benefits

Kathleen Lockyer, occupational therapist, who has worked alongside the 8-shields says: sensory integration is the foundation of emotional regulation. Integrating the senses and having awareness of them with synesthesia is incredibly good for our emotional regulation.

Gratitude

We first encountered sense meditation as a practice through Jon Young, founder of 8-shields movement and author. We extend our gratitude to him for bringing this practice to us.

Environment

If you're doing a sense meditation from inside, we recommend opening a window to enable more natural stimuli to enter your senses. We find sense meditations most rich in a natural outdoor environment. We invite you to pay attention with a diffuse, open, porous attention to the senses.

How to

When being led in a sense meditation, just be as present as you can be, acknowledging thoughts that may pass through and bringing yourself back to the sensory awareness of the moment.

Leading sense meditations for yourself or others:

There is no right or wrong way to engage with the senses in a meditative way. A few things we like to include are:

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- Starting with closed eyes and a deep breath
- Noticing how your body is supported - feet on the earth / sitting etc. and bringing further awareness to the sense of touch
- Bringing awareness to each of the other classic senses (smell, taste, hearing, visual) in turn and re-visiting them all together in a more integrated way.
- It can be helpful to bring people fully back into awareness of their physical body after stretching their senses into the landscape by wiggling fingers and toes to end with.

We often notice groups feeling calmer after a sense meditation, even if you go through the whole thing in just a couple of moments in a light way. A longer sense meditation can really relax the nervous system and bring a simple, yet profound sense of presence.

Variations

You can easily vary the tone and duration of bringing awareness to the senses to fit the group and context you have. With adults it can be really helpful to lead a sense meditation and then send the group out for a sit spot, journeying there in fox walking with owl eyes to prime their sit spot experience.

For younger ones:

- you can simply invite them to close their eyes and count on their fingers each new sound they hear.
- You can play a shape shifting game where they become a badger with a long, sensitive nose to get them sniffing around bringing awareness to their sense of smell. And then shape shift to an animal with incredible hearing such as the deer. And so on.

Links

- Sit spot
- Fox walking
- Owl Eyes
- Thanksgiving poem
- Beginnings, Endings and Gratitude

Tags

- Sense meditation, senses, awareness, emotional regulation, integration, relaxation

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