

# Nature therapy mindful walk



Making some time to walk or be in nature (with or without photography) can be relaxing and helps us to be more aware and present in the moment.

This exercise brings awareness to your breath, surroundings and emotions.

By making time to slow down and consciously work to be aware of your immediate surroundings, this helps you to relieve stress and worry and identify your emotions.

## Exercise

### STEPS

1

**Prepare for your journey** so that you can enjoy your time out in nature, this is a useful way of focussing on preparing for your walk and to start directing your mind with useful purpose.

- Consider your footwear
- Consider your clothing
- Bring water and snacks
- Focus- adopting a specific intention to connect with nature and yourself in a healing way.
- Resist the urge to rush, this is not about physical exertion or exercising.
- Walks should be no more than a mile and between 20 minutes and an hour.
- Generously give your attention as you walk.
- Know that practice develops a meaningful relationship with yourself and nature over time and through the seasons.

2

**Choose a walking route** in nature or find a space where you can see or be in nature for a little while.

3

**Consciously be aware** of all the things that you are seeing around you, really noticing them one by one, much more than you ever have previously.

4

While you walk, start by paying attention to your breathing, bringing awareness to our breathing enables us to access the present moment. Breathwork is the link between our body and mind, and we can alter our state by maintaining our focus and changing how we are breathing as and when we need to adapt to different situations.



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## Exercise continued

This will be a work in progress, and you will find you will improve over time. As you breathe in, count one, and as you breathe out count two. Then as you breathe in again, count three and as you breathe out again count four. Do this until you reach ten and then go back to one again.

Sometimes, it is easier to do this whilst just standing or sitting down at first. It is perfectly normal for you to lose count as the mind wanders off, becoming distracted by all the sounds and sights around you. When you become aware of this happening, simply bring your attention back to your breath and start again.

When you become more accomplished, you may like to try walking really slowly, in time with your breath count and notice what you notice.

**5** **As you continue your walk**, bring your focus and attention on your surroundings, gently allowing your mind to quieten, aware of your breath. As thoughts about what you need to do or worries that you may have come into your mind, let them come in and then gently let them flow back out. I like to imagine them as clouds, always moving and changing.

**6** **Look around you in your environment** for things that visually interest you.

**7** **If you see something that you are drawn to**, perhaps it strikes an emotion in you, or you find it beautiful or intriguing, take a photo of it or simply look at it. Notice it up close, and from different angles. How does it look at close range, what does it feel like, does it have a scent, is it soft or hard, is it rough or smooth, what colour is it, how does it make you feel?

**8** **As you progress on your walk**, take some photos of anything that evokes a response/emotion in you.

**9** **Give each of your photos** a name when you take them.

**10** **Review your images on your return home**, how do you feel now when you look at them? Have your feelings changed since you originally took them?

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