

Hand Warming Visualization

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

Heart

Mind

Body

Breath

Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



Biofeedback is the process by which we can gain greater awareness of – and control over – various physiological functions that are typically involuntary.

It can help to reduce the body's stress response and create greater feelings of ease and relaxation.

This hand warming visualization explores the potential we hold to influence involuntary systems through relaxation and visualization practices.

One of the scientific understandings that it works with is the known fact that when we are stressed, blood rushes away from our hands and feet and into vital organs like the brain, heart, and muscles. This creates a drop in temperature.

When we are relaxed, on the other hand, blood is redirected back into the extremities, which increases temperature. Through this visualization and relaxation practice, we will explore this mechanism.

You will need a thermometer for this to accurately measure the temperature of your hands.

Tape this thermometer to the tip of your middle finger, resting it against the fleshy underside of this finger. The tape shouldn't be too tight so as to cause sweating.

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PRACTICE:

1. Once you are ready to begin, note the temperature of the thermometer now taped to your finger. Write it down for reference later.
2. Find a comfortable place to rest on your back, close your eyes, and take five deep breaths. Count down from five alongside each of these breaths.
3. Now begin the visualization:

Take a moment to draw your attention to the imaginative capacity of your mind and begin to visualize that you are standing on the footpath in the center of a lush, green forest in the middle of summer. You take a full, deep breath in of the aromatic breeze that surrounds you... and then you let it out slowly, arriving affirmatively in this beautiful landscape.

Spend a few moments tuning into your senses here as you imagine what this enchanted forest looks like. Consider the sounds, the colors, the textures, the smells, and the diversity that presents itself here.

After about a minute of grounding yourself in this environment, you begin to envision yourself walking down the mystical path in the center of this forest. With each step you take, your body relaxes a little bit more. Your shoulders drop, your belly softens, and your jaw unclenches itself. You feel completely at peace in this environment.

Soon the trees part, opening up to a radiant field of green grass and colorful flowers. Just ahead of you, there is a picnic blanket waiting for you to come rest yourself on it. Imagine yourself slowly making your way towards it and then lying flat on your back amidst the warm breeze and beneath the summer sun.

Spend five to ten more minutes envisioning yourself resting in this peaceful, natural environment. Notice the sounds of the birds, the beauty of the summer blossoms, and the tranquility that is embedded in this landscape.

Notice also the heat of the sun as it meets your body. From the tips of your toes to the top of your head, it warms you throughout.

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Continue to breathe deeply here, letting the belly relax as you absorb the fresh breeze and warmth of the sun. Imagine the feeling of the sun caressing your body for at least one full minute.

When you feel completely at ease and ready to finish the practice, take three more deep breaths. Slowly open your eyes to the world around you, bringing with you this deep sense of peace and tranquility.

4. Once you open your eyes, have a look at the thermometer. Note what the reading is and write it down. How does it compare to the temperature of your finger when you began this exercise?

5. What does this exercise tell you about the mind-body connection?