

Energizers

Sensory Walk: Sound And Smell Mindfulness Exercise

Brief Description/Purpose

The sensory walk is often used in group mindfulness training. This variation has participants pay attention to two senses we tend not to use: sound and smell. It's great to use as an energizer for any kind of seminar. Instead of taking a coffee break, go for a walk.

Type

Physical movement, icebreaker, energizer

Age Appropriate

Any

Ideal Group Size

Any size

Time For Exercise

20 minutes

Topic/Subject

Mindfulness, but also useful as an energizer for other kinds of courses, since it provides a refreshing break. Just modify the instructions to shorten it to fit your energizer time available.

Detailed Instructions If Needed

Take the group outdoors to a garden or area with trees and grass. Allow the group to sit down in a circle and ask what animals or plants they would expect to see in this area.

As humans, how do we receive most of our information about our surroundings? (Sight) What are our other senses? Now we will try to view the world without our sight. Ask the group to close their eyes (or use scarves) and listen.

Read out the following: "We are going to rely on our hearing and so need absolute silence for this. I will ask different questions for you to think about, but don't answer until the end. Many creatures depend on sound for information about the world around them, such as bats and dolphins. Try to observe 3 sounds you can hear. If you didn't know where you were, would you be able to guess from the sounds around you?"

Other animals depend on smell to know more about their surroundings, such as dogs and pigs. Try to make out two smells in the air. Smell is very closely linked to memory. Do the smells trigger any memories for us?

Finally, use your sense of touch. Cats have a very sensitive touch and use their whiskers when

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hunting. Can you find two different textures, e.g. something wet or dry, something soft, or hard? Now open your eyes”.

DEBRIEF:

- What sounds, smells, and textures did they experience?
- Which were natural and which were humanmade?
- Which sense did they find it easiest to use? Which was most difficult?

Hints

To use this as an energizer, you can skip a lot of these steps. Simply send folks out to walk, indoors or out, and find three scents, three sounds that they hadn't paid attention to, and were unaware of previously.

You can debrief in more depth, or less after the "break".

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