

THE ACTIVITY ADVISOR

A weekly newsletter brought to you by Towson University
Occupational Therapy students



TU TOWSON UNIVERSITY Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science

ISSUE 3



Who are we?

Hello! *The Activity Advisor* is a weekly newsletter brought to you by Towson University Occupational Therapy students. Our names are Sarah T., Allison A., and Brandyn G.. For those of you who may not know, occupational therapy is a field that helps individuals across the lifespan successfully carry out activities that are meaningful to them and achieve their greatest potential through the therapeutic use of daily activities, otherwise known as "occupations" (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2020). We hope to inspire and motivate individuals to take part in mindfulness and craft based activities at home, inspired by nature and our senses. These activities will be catered towards children and adolescents, with suggested parental oversight. However, we encourage everyone to participate in them. We hope you all enjoy these activities and find them to be meaningful and enjoyable!

Mindfulness Moments: Garden Yoga

Mindfulness Moments features mindfulness based activities that encourage you to be present in the moment. For this week's activity, garden yoga, we are focusing on the well-being of our bodies - both emotionally and physically. Mindful yoga is a widely practiced mindfulness activity which has numerous benefits. These benefits include but are not limited to decreased stress, anxiety, depression, blood pressure, and chronic pain, as well as improved concentration and memory (Moss, 2018). Use this time to help ground yourself and free your mind of any stress or worries. This activity was adapted from Burnett (2020).

This activity should take approximately 10-20 minutes.

You will need:

- A yoga mat or towel
- An outdoor space around your home

Steps:

- 1) First, grab a yoga mat or towel from your home to use for this activity. You will not need socks or shoes for this activity but you may keep them on if you prefer.
- 2) Next, place the mat or towel down in an outdoor space such as your porch, deck, or in the grass.
- 3) For these poses, you may reference the image on the right to help you visualize the poses. Hold these poses for at least one minute. Feel free to hold them for a longer or shorter time and carry this out at your own pace. Clear your mind and think about your senses.
- 4) The first pose is Tree Pose. Try to balance on one leg while placing the bottom of your other foot above your knee, on your inner thigh. If you prefer, you can sway like a tree in the breeze!
- 5) The second pose is Frog Pose. Squat down with your knees apart from one another. If you'd like, touch the ground and pretend to jump like a frog! You can also make a frog noise, RIBBIT RIBBIT!
- 6) The third pose is Child's Pose. In this pose, you will pretend to be a seed planted in a garden. Kneel down on your mat, bringing your heels underneath you while resting your forehead on the floor.
- 7) The fourth pose is Cobbler's Pose. Sit on the mat and bring your heels and the soles of your feet together, while spreading your knees outward. Try to mimic a butterfly and flap your legs like its flying wings!
- 8) The last pose is the Flower Pose. This is similar to the Cobbler's Pose, however you will raise your thighs higher while balancing on your sitting bones. You can weave your arms underneath your legs and pretend to be a flower about to BLOOM!



Pretend to be a tree

Tree Pose: Stand on one leg. Bend the other knee and place the sole of your foot on your inner thigh. Sway like a tree in the breeze. Now the other side.



Pretend to be a frog

Squat Pose: Come down to a squat with your knees apart and arms resting between your knees. Touch your hands to the ground. Jump like a frog.



Pretend to be a seed

Child's Pose: Sit back on your heels and bring your forehead down to rest on the floor. Pretend to be a seed in the garden.



Pretend to be a butterfly

Cobbler's Pose: Sit on your buttocks with a tall spine. Bend your legs with the soles of your feet together. Flap your legs like the wings of a butterfly.



Pretend to be a flower

Flower Pose: Lift your bent legs, balancing on your sitting bones. Weave your arms under your legs, palms up. Pretend to be a flower in bloom.



printable yoga poster

(Burnett, 2020)



Mindfulness Quote of the Week

"Quiet the mind, and the soul will speak." - Ma Jaya Sati
(Daily Mediate, 2014)

Craft Corner

Craft Corner features engaging activities that encourage you to take part in hands-on activities with relevance to your senses and the world around you. This week's activity features a Soothing Sensory Shaker made with materials found in nature! Sensory bottles and shakers provide participants with a means of calming down and relaxing. They can provide means of sensory exploration through interaction with the components inside the jar and with the jar itself (Regan, 2018). This activity was adapted from Regan (2018).

This activity will take approximately 15-30 minutes.

You will need:

- 1 recycled clear jar or bottle with an air-tight lid
- Materials in nature (leaves, flowers, rocks, etc.)
- Water
- Duct tape or glue
- Art materials (glitter, beads, plastic trinkets, etc.) (optional)
- Cooking oil (canola, vegetable, olive, etc.) (optional)
- Food coloring (optional)



Soothing Sensory Shaker

1. RECYCLE a clear glass or plastic container in your home (ex. jarred food containers such as sauce or peanut butter, plastic water bottles, etc.) with an air-tight lid.
2. Carefully rinse the jar and allow it to dry in a warm and sunny area.
3. Step outside into your yard, woods, or garden and search for objects to add to your jar. Examples might include rocks, flowers, leaves, or sticks.... Be creative! You can also choose to add beads, glitter, or plastic or rubber trinkets!
4. Fill your container with water. This will give the materials in your jar a neat texture and will slow the process of object movement within the jar when shaken. Add a splash of cooking oil (canola or vegetable) to slow the object movement even more!
5. If desired, add drops of food coloring to your jar. Increasing the number of food coloring drops added will intensify the color of the water in the bottle.
6. Seal the top of your jar or bottle by gluing the lid down, or by securely duct-taping it.
7. When feeling stressed or overwhelmed, use this jar to relax and calm you or help you achieve a peace of mind. Consider the movements of the items within the jar or bottle. How can you match your breathing pattern with the slow movements of the objects as you carefully shake and rotate the bottle or jar? Do the weight of the objects, such as rocks, help you to feel good? How do the sounds of the rocks and objects in the bottle make you feel? Do the bubbles from the oil and water soothe you? Use these senses to find your "happy place." You may also choose to place your shaker in a well-lit space in your home for you to look at when feeling overwhelmed!



(Regan, 2018)



Soothing Sensory Shakers made by team member Sarah and her younger brother.

Craft Quote of the Week

"A work of art is a world in itself reflecting senses and emotions of the artist's world." - Hans Hoffman (Hans Hoffman Quotes, 2020)

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