

THE ACTIVITY ADVISOR

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



TU TOWSON UNIVERSITY Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science

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Community Ecology Institute

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! This issue is the last issue in *The Activity Advisor* newsletter series.

Mindfulness Moments: Forest Bathing

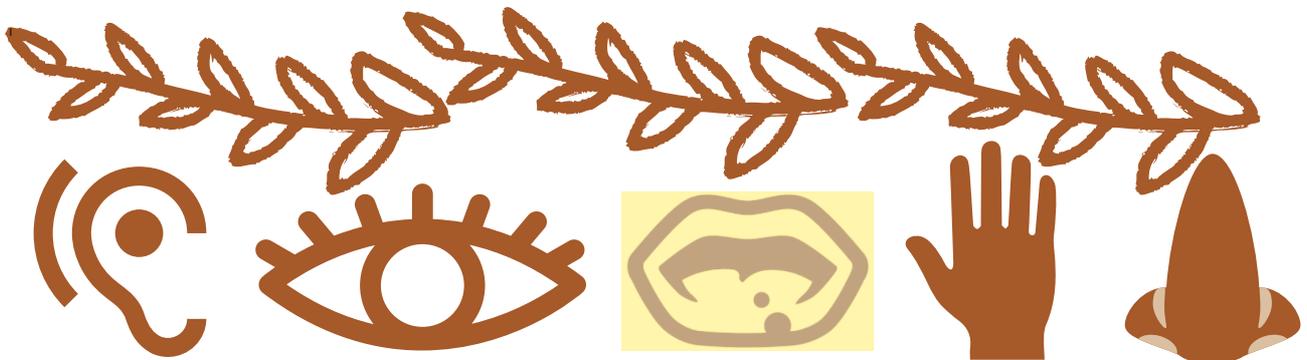
Mindfulness Moments features mindfulness based activities that encourage you to be present in the moment. For this week's activity, forest bathing, we are focusing on our emotions and thoughts in the context of nature. The term "forest bathing" emerged in Japan in the 1980s. It served as a physiological and psychological exercise called shinrin-yoku, which meant "taking in the forest atmosphere" (Fitzgerald, 2019). Research shows that forest bathing has numerous health benefits such as, but not limited to, decreased stress, improved mood, a variety of mental health benefits, improved vigor, reduced fatigue and feelings of awe (Hansen, Jones, & Tocchini, 2018). Use this time to help ground yourself and free your mind of any stress or worries.

This activity should take a minimum of 15 minutes but may last as long as desired and safe (a few hours).



Steps:

- 1) Clear your mind and make the intention to connect with nature in a healing way. This walk should not be for physical activity purposes.
- 2) Take your time as you walk down the woods or forest path. Breathe in and out slowly with each step that you take, taking in the air around you. Gaze up at the treetops, the clouds, and then look down at the leaves, twigs, and rocks beneath your feet. Touch the trees and leaves around you. Continue this adventure by involving all of your senses, and fully immerse yourself in the forest environment. Stop every once in a while to take in everything around you.
- 3) When you're done, reflect on your experience. How do you feel? What thoughts went through your head? Do you feel more connected to nature? How do you feel physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually? You may also choose to share your thoughts with a family member or friend.



Mindfulness Quote of the Week

"Looking at beauty in the world, is the first step of purifying the mind." - Amit Ray (Goodreads, 2020)