

CREATIVE LEARNING

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This is a practice for connecting to the present moment, to your body, yourself and to place

Thaendra Frangos

Facilitator Name: Thaendra Frangos

Curriculum Link: Cross-curriculum priority
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Lesson Title: Connecting to self and nature with a focus on meditation

Target Audience: Year 7 - 12

Key Focus: A sensory meditation exploring the relationship with the self and nature.

A Simple Meditation Practice:

This is a practice for connecting to the present moment, to your body, yourself and to place. Below are a few suggestions.

You may wish to begin your practice by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the country you are standing on and naming your parents, grandparents and great grandparents – asking for any wisdom to be imparted from your ancestors.

Try Wayapa Wuurk®. Wayapa Wuurk means ‘connect country’ and is an earth mindfulness, narrative meditation and movement practice based in Aboriginal wisdom in caring for and connecting to country. Wayapa was created by Jamie Marloo Thomas (Gunditjmara and Gunnai) and Sara Jones. Wayapa is the only known Indigenous healing modality that is registered with the International Institute of Complementary Therapies. Wayapa is a unique combination of storytelling, slow, fluid, meditative movement, stillness and connection with nature in a repeatable format invoking connection with 14 elements in nature with movements that can be practiced to the individual’s level and ability or as a visualisation. Thaendra is an accredited Wayapa facilitator of workshops and classes for groups, schools, businesses and individuals by request.

Try stepping outside in bare feet, with your feet resting on the ground. Notice how you feel. Are there any thoughts that you are aware of? What emotions are you experiencing? What sensations do you notice within and around your body? How are your energy levels (tired, excited, jittery, sleepy, flat etc)? Draw your attention to the feeling of your feet on the earth, press the soles of the feet into the earth and move your toes slowly. Notice the temperature, texture, shape, size and weight of your feet, imagine you are describing these sensations to someone or writing about them.

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Bring your attention to the sensory feeling of your body, the feeling of weight, shape, temperature and skin. From this place, begin to notice the environment around you using all your senses. What is the air like – is it humid or fresh? Is there any wind? How does it feel on your skin and through your body? What sounds are you aware of? How does the sky look? What do you see? What do you notice in the environment – plants, trees, grasses, shapes, birds, animals, insects, leaves, textures, shapes?

Move your gaze slowly around the body, gently move your fingers and toes, place your hands towards any part of your body that feels a bit absent or disconnected. Engage in this mindfulness process for 5 minutes or so. Check in again with your emotions, sensations, thoughts and feelings. What has shifted? What has come into your awareness and what has changed?

Lie or sit comfortably. Give your whole body a little shake including your hands and feet. Think of a place in nature that you feel connected to, where you feel at home, relaxed and safe. This could be any place you have visited, seen or imagined. Imagine you are sitting or lying in that place – how do you feel in your body? What do you notice?

Stand or sit comfortably in a place that you can watch the sunrise or sunset. Feel your whole body and give your fingers and toes some movement. Allow the weight of your body to drop down towards the earth and tension to begin to dissolve, imagining that flowing back into the earth. Allow your attention to go from your feet and around your whole body, including your back and sides and the area around your body. Watch the sunrise or sunset with a soft gaze, allowing your breath to remain natural. Notice how you feel after doing this.

Notice what arises for you after these practices – any dreams, ideas, visions, creative urges, feelings, sensations. You may wish to write, speak or create art about these experiences. The benefits and effects of mindfulness and contemplative practices are cumulative and sometimes subtle. For example, you may notice over time that you experience more clarity, that you feel more grounded, that your body is more relaxed, that you feel more connected and aware of your body and your environment, you may experience a sense of resilience and strength and that you have more understanding of yourself and others.