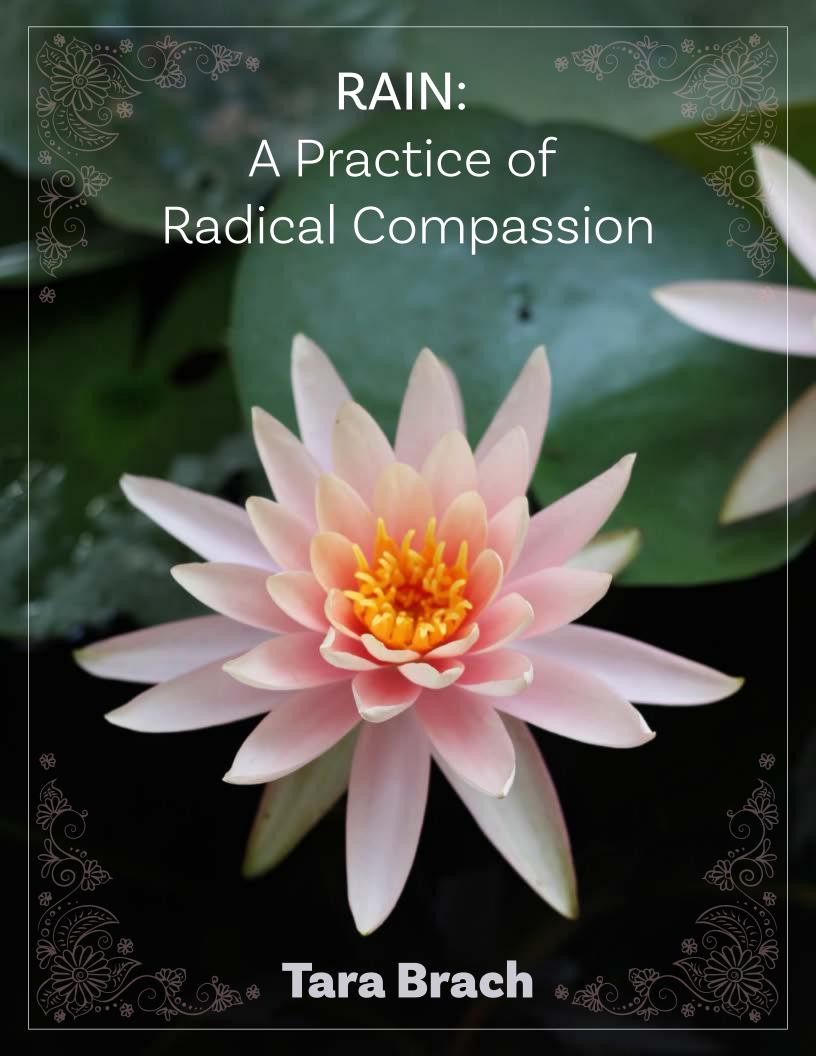
# Resources for Mindfulness

for professionals, families and children

We hope you enjoy this collection of selected resources to enhance your mindfulness practice, and wish you restoration, relaxation and renewal in the new year!

Mindfulness means
paying attention
in a particular way;
On purpose,in
the present moment,
and non-judgmentally."

Jon Kabat-Zinn



## RAIN: A Practice of Radical Compassion

The acronym RAIN is an easy-to-remember tool for bringing mindfulness and compassion to emotional difficulty.

Recognize what is going on;
Allow the experience to be there, just as it is;
Investigate with interest and care;
Nurture with self-compassion.

You can take your time and explore RAIN as a stand-alone meditation or move through the steps whenever challenging feelings arise.

#### R-Recognize What's Going On

Recognizing means consciously acknowledging, in any given moment, the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are affecting you. This can be a done with a simple mental whisper, noting what you are most aware of.

#### A-Allow the Experience to be There, Just as It Is

Allowing means letting the thoughts, emotions, feelings, or sensations you have recognized simply be there, without trying to fix or avoid anything.

You might recognize fear, and allow by mentally whispering "it's ok" or "this belongs" or "yes."

Allowing creates a pause that makes it possible to deepen attention.

#### I-Investigate with Interest and Care

To investigate, call on your natural curiosity—the desire to know truth—and direct a more focused attention to your present experience.

You might ask yourself: What most wants attention? How am I experiencing this in my body? What am I believing? What does this vulnerable place want from me? What does it most need?

Whatever the inquiry, your investigation will be most transformational if you step away from conceptualizing and bring your primary attention to the felt-sense in the body.

#### N-Nurture with Self-Compassion

Self-compassion begins to naturally arise in the moments that you recognize you are suffering. It comes into fullness as you intentionally nurture your inner life with self-care.

To do this, try to sense what the wounded, frightened or hurting place inside you most needs, and then offer some gesture of active care that might address this need. Does it need a message of reassurance? Of forgiveness? Of companionship? Of love?

Experiment and see which intentional gesture of kindness most helps to comfort, soften or open your heart. It might be the mental whisper, I'm here with you. I'm sorry, and I love you. I love you, and I'm listening. It's not your fault. Trust in your goodness.

In addition to a whispered message of care, many people find healing by gently placing a hand on the heart or cheek; or by envisioning being bathed in or embraced by warm, radiant light. If it feels difficult to offer yourself love, bring to mind a loving being—spiritual figure, family member, friend or pet—and imagine that being's love and wisdom flowing into you.

#### After the RAIN

When you've completed the active steps of RAIN, it's important to notice the quality of your own presence and rest in that wakeful, tender space of awareness.

The fruit of RAIN is realizing that you are no longer imprisoned in or identified with any limiting sense of self. Give yourself the gift of becoming familiar with the truth and natural freedom of your being; it is mysterious and precious!

Resource: Guided Meditation - The Practice of RAIN

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www.tarabrach.com

#### Resources from The Krame Center for Mindful Living

https://thekramecenter.org/

#### **Articles on How to Meditate:**

- "How to Meditate" by David Gelles of the New York Times Well Section (How to begin a meditation practice why, where and how to meditate)
- How to Meditate by Tara Brach

#### Recommended Reading:

- Be Here Now by Ram Dass
- Flow:The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
- Flourish by Martin Seligman
- Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- How to Live a Good Life: Soulful Stories, Surprising Science, and Practical Wisdom by Jonathan Fields
- Learned Hopefulness: Harnessing the Power of Positivity to Overcome Depression, Increase Motivation, and Build Unshakable Resilience by Dan Tomasulo
- Letting Go: The Pathway of Surrender by David Hawkins
- Life as Sport: What Top Athletes Can Teach You About How to Win in Life by Jonathan Fader
- Living Beautifully with Uncertainty and Change by Pema Chodron
- Living in Flow: The Key to Unlocking Your Greatest Potential by Catherine Krame
- Mindfulness in Plain English by Bhante Henepola Guanaratana
- Mother Nature Is Trying to Kill You: A Lively Tour Through the Dark Side of the Natural World by Dan Riskin
- No Mud, No Lotus by Thich Nhat Hanh
- Positivity by Barbara Fredrickson
- Practicing the Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle
- Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself by Kristen Neff
- Stop Missing Your Life: How to Be Deeply Present in an Un-Present World by Cory Muscara
- The Art of Happiness by Dalai Lama
- The Art of Living by Epictetus
- The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz
- The Great Work of Your Life by Stephen Cope
- The Mindful Path to Self Compassion by Chris Germer
- The Miracle of Mindfulness by Thich Nhat Hanh
- The Path of Heart by Jack Kornfield
- The Power of Meaning: Finding Fulfillment in a World Obsessed with Happiness by Emily Esfahani Smith

- The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself by Michael Singer
- Training in Compassion by Norman Fischer
- Transcend: The New Science of Self-Actualization by Scott Barry Kaufman
- Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt into Fuel for Brilliance by Jonathan Fields
- Ungifted: Intelligence Redefined by Scott Barry Kaufman
- When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times by Pema Chodron
- Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind by Scott Barry Kaufman

#### Children's Books:

- A World of Pausabilities: An Exercise in Mindfulness by Frank J. Sileo, PhD
- Alphabreaths: The ABCs of Mindful Breathing by Christopher Willard and Daniel Rechtschaffen
- Bee Still: An Invitation to Meditation by Frank J. Sileo, PhD
- Bee Calm: The Buzz on Yoga by Frank J. Sileo, PhD
- Bee Heartful: Spread Loving-Kindness by Frank J. Sileo, PhD

#### The Center for Mindful Self-compassion – guided meditations and exercises:

Self-Compassion Guided Meditations and Exercises

#### **Awareness of Breath Meditations:**

- 10-Minute Sitting Meditation by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- 20-Minute Awareness of Breath Sitting Meditation by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- 30-Minute Awareness of Breath Meditation by Jon Kabat Zinn

#### **Body Scans:**

- 10-Minute Body Scan by Florence Meleo-Meyer
- 20-Minute Body Scan by Steve Hickman
- 30-Minute Body Scan by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- <u>60-Minute Body Scan by Florence Meleo-Meyer</u>

#### Walking Meditations:

- 5-Minute Walking Meditation by Jack Kornfield
- 10-Minute Guided Walking Meditation by Jon Kabat-Zinn

#### Jon Kabat-Zinn Meditations:

- 10-Minute Lying Down Meditation
- 20-Minute Lying Down Meditation
- 20-Minute Mountain Meditation
- 20-Minute Lake Meditation
- <u>30-Minute Lying Down Meditation</u>

#### Loving-Kindness Meditations:

- 12-Minute Loving-Kindness Meditation by Jack Kornfield
- 15-Minute Loving-Kindness Meditation by Sharon Salzberg
- <u>25-Minute Loving-Kindness Meditation by Sarah Raymond</u>
- 50-Minute Loving-Kindness Meditation by Jon Kabat-Zinn

#### Short Mindfulness Meditation Practices from UCLA:

Free Guided Meditations (courtesy of UCLA)

## 50 Activities and Techniques for Teaching Mindfulness to Children www.waterford.org

- Heartbeat Exercise: As your students monitor their heartbeat and breathing after exercise, they'll learn to become mindful of how their body feels.
- 2. <u>Pinwheel Breathing</u>: This exercise helps students practice deep breaths by using a pinwheel to show them how.
- 3. <u>Muscle Relaxation</u>: How often are we truly mindful of the muscles in our body? With this activity, children can start practicing mindfulness around how they tense or relax their muscles.
- 4. **Mindful Coloring**: Click on the link to find printable sheets that you can use for a mindful coloring activity.
- 5. Five Senses Exercise: Did you know that you can use all five of your senses while being mindful? This activity can show you how!
- 6. **The Present Moment Worksheet**: This free mindfulness worksheet teaches young students all about what it means to be present.
- 7. <u>Yoga for Kids</u>: Check out this video of a group mindfulness exercise that will help elementary students practice yoga through age-appropriate and imaginative games.
- 8. Contentment Thermometer: Being aware of our emotions is a key component of mindfulness. This "contentment thermometer" can help students define and track their feelings.
- 9. <u>Making Mindful Observations</u>: Add a little social-emotional learning to your <u>science lessons</u> by teaching students to make mindful observations.
- 10.Teaching STOP Mindfulness: Teach kids the core components of mindfulness through the acronym STOP: Stop, Take a breath, Observe, and Proceed.
- 11. **Breathing Boards:** Have your students follow the line with their finger as they take calm, measured breaths.
- 12. **Gift of You**: This festive activity is a great way to teach mindfulness around the holidays.
- 13. Mindful Glitter Jar: This adorable craft can give students a physical example of how their thoughts settle down after practicing mindfulness.
- 14. Mindful Eating: What student doesn't love a lesson that involves snacks? With this creative mindfulness exercise, students can learn to be more aware of what they're eating.
- 15. Smiling Minds App: Try out this free mindfulness app for kids with your students to practice short meditations and other exercises.
- 16. Mindful Gratitude Exercise: When students learn to be mindful of what they're thankful for, they can find greater contentment in their lives.
- 17. Quiet Time: Adding a little quiet time to your classroom schedule can give students time to de-stress and focus on the present.

- 18. Nature Walk: Embark on an outdoor walk that will encourage your students to engage all of their five senses in observation.
- 19. What Mood Are You Generating in Others?: Discuss with your students how everyday actions affect their classmates and what they can do to put themselves in another person's shoes.
- 20. Rainbow Bubble Breathing Story: For younger students, this "story" about a rainbow bubble can be a great visual for practicing controlled breathing.
- 21. Mindfulness Scavenger Hunt: As students check off each box in this modified scavenger hunt, they will get closer and closer to practicing mindfulness.
- 22. **Guided Meditation**: Demonstrating how to meditate to your little learners can be tough. With this guided meditation designed for children, you can help them learn how.
- 23. Mindfulness Safari: With this mindfulness safari, you can learn to pay attention to the world around you from the comfort of your schoolyard.
- 24. Positive Affirmations: Check out this list of 125 positive mantras your students can use while meditating or reflecting on their strengths.
- 25. <u>Mindful Listening</u>: Listening is an essential part of mindfulness. Use this resource to show your students how to become mindful listeners in school and elsewhere.
- 26. **Build a Face Story Stones**: This activity can help students learn to observe and recognize different emotions.
- 27. **Blindfolded Taste Test**: Taste is a powerful sensation, and this activity can be especially helpful for teaching students to analyze different sensations.
- 28. Mindful or Unmindful? Worksheet: To make sure your students grasp what mindfulness is and is not, fill out this worksheet as a class.
- 29. Being Mindful of Anger: Anger can be difficult for kids to process and even tougher for them to react to in a healthy way. Use this quick meditation script to help students calm down when they feel overwhelmed.
- 30. <u>Mindful Journaling Prompts</u>: Try some of these journaling prompts on confidence and self-esteem with older students to help them reflect on internal and external experiences.
- 31. Read a Book About Mindfulness: Put together a story-time read aloud with this list of 11 best mindfulness books for young learners from Read Brightly.
- 32. Who Am 1? Game: This classic game encourages students to pay attention and make observations, which can be helpful for developing mindfulness.
- 33. Emotion Octopus Craft: Learning about our emotions has never looked so adorable! Let each child put together an emotion octopus, then have a class discussion on feelings.
- 34. Today I Feel...: Hang up this Muppet-themed chart in your class and teach students how to recognize the emotions they feel each day.
- 35. <u>Square Breaths</u>: Square breathing is a simple yet effective way to help students calm down when they're feeling overwhelmed.

- 36. <u>Finding Silver Linings</u>: Mindfulness involves as much analysis as it does observation. This activity teaches students to reframe negative experiences and figure out what they can learn from them.
- 37. Body Scan: Try this quick body scan meditation as a class to focus on emotions and physical sensations
- 38. Assessing vs. Judging Others: Do you know the difference between observing and judging another person? Teach your students how to assess others mindfully with this social-emotional learning activity.
- 39. Pause and Think Online: Mindfulness can be an important part of teaching good digital citizenship! This activity from Common Sense Media shows students how to pause before they react to something online.
- 40. Freeze Dance Mindfulness: Have a freeze dance party with your class as a fun way to engage and teach your students about mindfulness.
- 41. What Are You Doing? Activity: This activity teaches students both how to listen mindfully and pay better attention to their actions.
- 42. <u>Stop and Think Worksheet</u>: Every action we do can cause a positive or negative reaction in others. Pass this worksheet out to your students, then discuss why it matters to consider others' reactions.
- 43. <u>Raisin Exercise</u>: Hand out a raisin to each of your students, then practice observing it using each of the five senses. Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center recommends doing this exercise multiple times to get the full effect, but even once can be a helpful experience for your students.
- 44. Red Light, Green Light: This game is a classic P.E. staple, but did you know that you can use it to teach observation—a core part of mindfulness?
- 45. <u>Loving Kindness Meditation</u>: Loving kindness meditations encourage us to have compassion for others—a perfect blend of mindfulness and social-emotional learning for students.
- 46. Root to Rise Activity: This activity combines yoga and meditation to help students mindfully practice self-confidence and peace.
- 47. <u>Draw Your Breath</u>: This art exercise can help students gain self-awareness of their breath and use that knowledge to move towards relaxation.
- 48. <u>Melt or Freeze?</u>: Mindfulness is a great way to help students manage their impulses. This activity helps students sort possible actions into impulsive ("melt") and responsible ("freeze").
- 49. Rainbow Walk: Go on a walk with your students and encourage them to find something red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet as a quick way to practice mindfulness.
- 50. <u>Tuning into Different Moods</u>: If we're overwhelmed or distracted, it can be hard to remember to stay mindful of our emotions. This exercise requires just a few minutes as you teach students to observe what they're feeling in the moment.



#### **Rainbow Relaxation Script**

#### **CALM BREATHING**

Calm breathing is used as mother prepares for her labor by conditioning her mind and her body to slip into relaxation between surges in labor and maintain a state of relaxation to keep her body limp and loose as labor advances. This script is given to students in class so that the mother and her birth companion can practice together to help mother become conditioned to "going within" and to a deeper trance state at hearing the companion's voice during her labor. Technique:

Slowly inhale to the count of 4 – pause

Slowly exhale to the count of 8, allowing the breath to drift down into the chest, stomach, and through the body. Repeat several times as the body gradually shifts into relaxation.

If time is a factor, recite only the introduction and two or three colors each time you practice. This will be equivalent to approximately a 10-minute practice session.

#### For regular practice by birth companion and mom

And now it's time to relax. Just make yourself comfortable and allow your eyelids to gently meet. With your mouth softly closed, take in a deep breath and SLOWLY . . . allow that breath to drift d-o-w-n--through your entire body . . . bringing you comfort and peace. Before we start, perhaps you'd like to take a moment to adjust your position and make yourself totally comfortable. You can do that now. (Pause) very good. . . Let's continue . . . Just let your breath flow down through your chest . . . your stomach . . . your abdomen . . . your legs . . . and your ankles . . . and all the way down to the soles of your feet. As you begin to feel the soft tingling sensation of relaxation on the soles of your feet, you release in both mind and body, and you give yourself permission to go deeper and deeper.

Each time that you practice this Rainbow conditioning, you'll find that you immediately go more rapidly and more soundly into that wonderful place where you will be aware only of how deeply relaxed and comfortable you are. Each time, you will be able to achieve this wonderful, euphoric state in a shorter amount of time. Each time you will be able to go deeper and deeper into ultimate relaxation — preparing your body to respond with the same deep level of relaxation that you will call upon as your labor advances on your baby's birthing day. Soon you'll come to thoroughly enjoy being in this state and you'll find that you can bring yourself into it at a moment's notice.

If, while you are listening to this Rainbow session, you discover a word, or a phrase, or an image here or there that you would like to change, simply feel free to do that. Substitute whatever word, phrase or thought will make you feel more comfortable . . . and then continue to move on through your relaxation. As you continue to drift deeper, return your awareness to your

eyes and feel how comfortable it is to just rest and allow your eyelids to remain gently closed. With your awareness on your eyes, you discover that all the little muscles in and around your eyes are becoming more and more relaxed. And your eyelids seem to close more thoroughly. As your eyelids close even more, any little worry lines around your eyes begin to fade and disappear . . . And this same quality of relaxation drifts down and around your cheeks . . . and your mouth . . . while all the rest of your facial muscles release and become loose and limp . . . And you go deeper . . . As you feel yourself drifting into total comfort, allow all tension in your jaw to just melt down and away. Softly rest the tip of your tongue behind your front upper teeth . . . and your lower jaw recedes and becomes comfortably relaxed.

A wonderful sense of well-being settles into every muscle, every nerve, and every cell within your face . . . Your mind releases and your body releases, and you go twice as deeply into relaxation. The relaxation now drifts in and around your shoulders, as you give yourself permission to allow your shoulders to droop into the frame of your body. As your shoulders go limp and loose, the relaxation flows down through you upper arms . . . your elbows . . . your lower arms . . . your wrist . . . and your hands all become loose and limp. Your entire upper body becomes perfectly relaxed. And you continue to go deeper.

Now take in a deep breath and release all tension from your chest . . . and from your heart . . . and from your stomach. And your breathing becomes soft and rhythmic . . . you are beginning to reach a perfect resting level. Feel your body respond to this slow, comfortable breathing, as your body learns to release tension from each set of muscles from the very top of your head and throughout the entire upper portion of your body. And your breathing and your heartbeat slows to a perfect resting rate. Your circulation flows smoothly and freely throughout your body, miraculously bringing just the right amount of oxygen to your baby, as well as to every muscle, every nerve, every cell, and every vital organ within your body.

Thoughts of how your relaxation is benefiting both you and your baby are reassuring, as you give yourself permission to double your relaxation once more and go even deeper. **Your lower body now begins** to become totally loose and limp . . . as though you were a marionette with all the strings released. Totally loose . . . totally limp. And you go deeper still. Now, your abdomen and your lower pelvic area are totally relaxed. It's so essential that this part of your body remain loose and limp allowing your birthing muscles to learn to be free of tension . . . letting any tension melt **all the way down** through your legs and your feet . . . melting down into the ground . . . Just the way the soft spring rain melts into the earth.

**To assist you as you** move even deeper into this perfectly relaxed state, **picture, in your mind's eye**, or your imagination, a magnificent rainbow arched across the sky above you, each color vibrating in harmony with the energy of the earth and the energy within your body. Allow your body, as though it were a magnet, to absorb all of the wonderful soothing and relaxing energy of the rainbow. Let the soft energizing colors, one by one, flow through and around your entire body . . . bringing you a sense of well-being and calm, drawing away all doubts, all fears, and all tension . . . leaving you calm and at peace. And you go deeper . . . and deeper, envisioning each color of the rainbow relaxation.

Now you are ready to explore the healing, soothing colors of the rainbow. Place your full awareness on your mind . . . and imagine yourself on a beautiful mist of deep blue indigo and

purple, a deep combination that puts your mind at ease . . . Because the mind vibrates to the color of purple . . . a sense of confidence accompanies the thoughts that begin to fill your mind, and the mist of deep indigo teaches you to trust your baby and your body to know exactly how to birth . . . and you release all doubts concerning your birthing. As you breathe in the soft purple relaxation, your mind is filled with assurance, confidence, and calm. All of nature is in tune with indigo, and you are in tune with nature, now more than ever. As you fill your mind with a sense of joy and anticipation, you approach your birthing as an informed and protective parent . . . making decisions that you know are exactly right for your baby and yourself. Go deeper now into ultimate relaxation, as you turn your mind and body over to thoughts of gentle birthing . . . trusting that your mind and body will each play out the perfect design of nature when it's time to birth your baby.

Picture yourself now within a mist of soothing blue and feel your throat and neck relax. The throat and neck vibrate to the color of blue, so breathe in the blue mist of relaxation and feel all the tension in the area of the neck and throat melt away. The energy of blue helps you to find your voice and to learn to speak up and ask questions if ever it is important for you to do so. The energy from the blue mist teaches you to speak clearly and with confidence about your birthing wishes and your dream of how you will bring your baby into the world. You talk with your baby, and you resolve to be the spokesperson for yourself and this tiny dependent baby you are carrying. Your voice and your throat muscles align in perfect harmony with blue and with nature, and a wonderful calm and confidence accompanies your thoughts.

Now in your mind's eye, envision yourself surrounded by a mist of green—the soft green color of spring. As you breathe in the soft green mist, the entire area of your chest, and particularly, your heart, relaxes more deeply than you've ever relaxed before. Feeling energized by the green mist, you open your heart and your life to feelings of love for the tiny baby inside you—the little one that you are carrying with such joy. Because your heart and your chest vibrate to the energy of the color green, you feel an even greater sense of well-being, as your life combines in love with the life of your baby. Green is the color of birth . . . and as the earth gives forth life . . . so too . . . your body will easily and naturally give forth a new beginning of life. Filled with the energy of a calm and loving heart, you free your body to blend in perfect harmony with the energy of green and find yourself in harmony with your natural birthing instincts—so calm, so loving, so peaceful. And you resolve to go even deeper when your labor advances on your birthing day.

Your thoughts turn now to the color yellow. Yellow is the color that vibrates in harmony with the region of your solar plexus and your stomach, As you become aware of yellow, you also become aware of the need to put only nutritional foods and substances into your stomach, knowing that your baby receives, absorbs, and grows in a healthy manner because of the effects of healthy foods that you put into your stomach. The energy surrounding your stomach and solar plexus teaches you that when you become aware of the importance of choosing only safe, nutritious foods, you help your body and baby avoid many late term circumstances that could stand in the way of your gentle, natural birthing. These thoughts are calming as you relax even deeper into the mist of yellow relaxation.

Now turn your thoughts to the mist of orange energy that surrounds your abdomen. The color orange vibrates in harmony with your abdomen, the area that houses your womb and

your reproductive organs. The energy of orange drifts in and around your womb and, like a sponge, it absorbs calm and peace, gently soothing your baby, and creating a veil of tranquility that softly protects and nurtures the miracle of life that is developing within you. Every muscle, every nerve and every cell relaxes as the orange mist flows and drifts through your entire abdomen and pelvis. Draw the orange mist into your body and know that this energy is helping to prepare for a healthy birthing.

Imagine yourself now on a soft, strawberry-colored mist . . . that gently envelops your entire lower torso . . . taking away all tension, bathing you in gentle relaxation. Let the soft strawberry mist of perfect relaxation drift throughout all your lower back and spine . . . Red is the color of love and of life. Its energy is that of truth and faith. As the soft strawberry mist drifts in and around your body it helps you to gain a stronger sense of the important truths that you are learning about the naturalness of your pregnancy and the birthing experience. You are learning that birth is natural, normal and healthy. Pregnancy is not an illness, and birthing for all but a very few women does not need to be a medical event. You are a natural vehicle of nature as you carry your baby and give birth. You have faith that this is the most natural function of your body. Breathe in the soft strawberry red mist and go deeper and deeper, secure in the knowledge that your lower body is designed to give birth and your baby's body is designed to be birthed. You are in tune with nature. All of nature is in tune with the soft red of love and life. Breathe in the red mist that gently wraps your body in a soft blanket of natural relaxation, and enjoy the deeper relaxation and comfort that you drift into as your labor advances.

And now, working from a perfect level of relaxation, see yourself surrounded by a marvelous mist of all of the colors of the rainbow . . . combining all the colors of the energies of life . . . surrounding you with peace. Become aware of the feeling of confidence that you are developing day by day as you embrace the knowledge that birthing is a natural process of your mind and body, working together with your spirit. Become filled with the light of the rainbow, as your mind, your body and your spirit all work in complete natural harmony. Let the reflected glow of the colors of the rainbow permeate every part of your essence, while you continue to grow in confidence and the belief that this will, indeed, be a comfortable, easy birth. Your natural birthing instinct tells you that you will bring your baby into the world in a peaceful, relaxed manner that mirrors nature.

Choose a favorite soothing birth color from among all the colors of the rainbow. Know that when you have chosen your birth color, you will be able to call upon this soothing color each and every time you wish to return to this state of euphoria and deep relaxation.

It's time now to end this session. If you would like to slip into a natural sleep, just ignore what I will say next and continue to rest for a full, uninterrupted nap or a full night's sleep.

To become fully alert and continue the activities of the day or evening, simply begin to become aware of your surroundings and feel the energy slowly coming back to your body—hands and fingers beginning to move, legs and feet becoming energized. When you are ready, opening your eyes—feeling healthier than ever before, and filled with joy as you prepare for the birth of your baby—mentally alert, physically energized and spiritually refreshed.

#### **Ankhara Rose**

Breathwork Facilitator Sound Healer Teacher www.ankhararose.com

The simplest way to bring more mindfulness and presence into your life is to start with your breath. Just 3 breaths can shift you from stressed out, ungrounded, and frantic to calm, heart-centered and present. **Try out this quick and easy 3-breath mindfulness technique:** 

- Place a hand on your heart, and close your eyes or soften your gaze.
- (Breath 1) Take in a slow breath through your nose, filling the lungs. Exhale slowly through your mouth, and as you do so, feel your seat or the ground underneath you, supporting you.
- (Breath 2) Take in a 2nd slow breath through your nose, and this time as you exhale through your mouth, feel yourself "land" in your body. This means we allow our distracted, busy, stressed aspects of ourselves to pause and return home to the body.
- (Breath 3) Inhale slowly through the nose, and exhale with an audible sigh, allowing any and all stress to unwind from your body.

#### Here are a few more tips:

- Try breathing out through pursed lips to slow the exhale down.
- Any time your exhale is longer than your inhale, you are calming the body play around with your exhale being 2 to 3 times longer than your inhale.
- When building a sustainable mindfulness practice, less is more! Start with something short and easy, *and after it becomes a habit*, begin to increase the time and space you give your practice.

**Ankhara Rose** is a certified breathwork facilitator, sound healer, mindfulness/presence teacher and body-relationship coach. She works with clients all over the world helping them to release trauma, increase peace, presence & pleasure in their lives, and heal their relationships with their bodies. You can find more about her & her offerings at www.ankhararose.com



#### Mindfulness Exercise: The Butterfly Story

One bright morning a man found a silky cocoon of a butterfly in a garden. He was very eager to see what will happen to that cocoon. The next day the man found a small opening was appearing from the cocoon. He sat there in a sheer curiosity and started watching what happens next to butterfly for several hours.

The butterfly was struggling to wrench its whole body through the little hole. Then suddenly man found that the butterfly stopped its movement and couldn't go further. Therefore, the kind man pitied the innocent butterfly and started to help it. He tried to free the butterfly from a tiny hole by cutting the cocoon with the help of scissors.

The butterfly emerged easily because the man helped it, but the butterfly had withered wings with the swollen body. The man was very happy as he helped the butterfly to come out from the tiny cocoon hole. The man continued to watch it.

The man was expecting that any minute the wings of the butterfly would begin to enlarge and it will start to fly but for the man's surprise, nothing happened!

In fact, the beautiful and innocent butterfly was never able to fly with its beautiful wings.

The man was very kind but what he did not understand is, by restricting cocoon actually he is disrupting the whole life cycle of the butterfly because the struggle for coming out from the cocoon was necessary for butterfly's life.

It was a natural process of progress but the man interrupted the entire process thus the beautiful butterfly died because of kind man's foolishness.



## Mindfulness Exercise: A Very Special Bank Account

Imagine you had a bank account that deposited \$86,400 each morning. The account carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every dollar each day!

We all have such a bank. Its name is Time. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever time you have failed to use wisely. It carries over no balance from day to day. It allows no overdraft so you can't borrow against yourself or use more time than you have. Each day, the account starts fresh. Each night, it destroys an unused time. If you fail to use the day's deposits, it's your loss and you can't appeal to get it back.

There is never any borrowing time. You can't take a loan out on your time or against someone else's. The time you have is the time you have and that is that. Time management is yours to decide how you spend the time, just as with money you decide how you spend the money. It is never the case of us not having enough time to do things, but the case of whether we want to do them and where they fall in our priorities.



#### Mindfulness Exercise: Making a Connection

A simple touch-technique that parents can use for calm, connection and safety

The video in the link below is a part of the YouTube channel created by the **Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health** as a community resource during the pandemic. Toward the end of the video, at minute marker 18:26 is a video instruction for a simple touch technique that parents can use in a mindful way to help establish a sense of calm, connection and safety. The beauty of touch is that it is a two way connection, so as you calm your child, you receive the same soothing effect. Enjoy!

### Importance of Parent Touch in a 'No Touch' World: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_t5x2z\_iWAE

Even before the pandemic it was easy for parents to under-estimate just how important their healthy, nurturing touch is to their children's development. But now that coronavirus has transformed touch into a danger and children are missing out on so many of the natural ways that touch comes into their daily lives - like hugs, cuddles and kisses from grandparents, aunts, uncles and caregivers - the fun and tumble play with friends – we especially include this video to look more deeply at how a parent's attuned touch is now - more important than ever. We conclude with a video instruction of a simple QST touch-technique that parents can use for calm, connection and safety.

A parent says it best: "A friend shared your wonderful video presentation! I was struck by the whole idea of our distorted view of touch, the new science and the old traditions. After watching this morning, when my daughter was having a tantrum/ meltdown after the school day I remembered to give her a hug...hold her in my lap..rub her back...and do a little of the shoulder/arm/hand sequence you showed in the video. It was miraculous! For both of us, actually. It helped calm and reset me, too. Thank you again. This is such good and important work!!"



#### **Asha Chhabildas Bayer**

Yoga Nidra and Yoga Teacher Mindfulness Educator Founder & Director Big Sky Full of Stars Live classes & online programs for children, teens, and parents



www.bigskyfullofstars.com

#### A HOLIDAY GIFT OF DEEP PEACE & CALM

Experience the full Yoga Nidra recording, *Harmony & Balance*, for free until 01/15/21 Click <u>here</u> to sign up.

**Big Sky Full of Stars** helps sensitive kids and soulful parents experience more calm, connection, and creativity by building off of a restorative process that feels like sleep called Yoga Nidra. Current offerings include **Naptime Yoga** for kids, **Yoga Nidra** for adults, and a special **Mindfulness-based Sleep Program** that provides parents natural and nourishing tools to help their kids fall asleep more quickly, along with the most deliciously relaxing techniques to enjoy during the day.

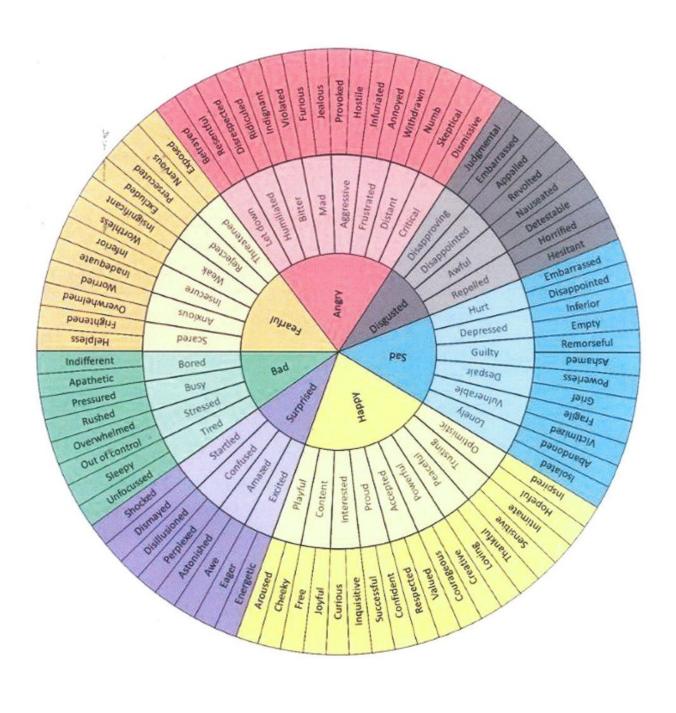
**Naptime Yoga**—These weekly classes help kids get their energy and emotions out in a healthy way. Using movement, mindfulness, and breath techniques that cultivate imagination \*and\* inner calm.

**Yoga Nidra**—One of the hidden gems of mindfulness practices, this is yoga you do lying down!! You'll be guided through an intentional sequence of awareness, imagery, and breath techniques that help you calm the mind, soothe the nervous system, and develop an inner sanctuary of peace. Believe it or not, one session is as restorative as 3 hours of sleep! Learn more <a href="here">here</a>.

**Mindfulness-Based Sleep Program**—In this <u>audio course</u> parents discover simple yet powerful techniques that help children fall asleep more quickly and gently. At the heart of the program is a unique art form called sleep storytelling, which is designed to help listeners of any age relax and fall into a deep sleep, naturally. Telling a sleep story provides a warm and nurturing element that strengthens relationships while promoting a sense of well-being for parents and children. Listen to a snippet of a sleep story <u>here</u>.

**About Asha**—Asha had been devoted to studying and serving children for more than fifteen years, but nothing prepared her for the levels of exhaustion and frustration she herself experienced as a new parent. This is when she discovered Yoga Nidra, and it changed everything. She is passionate about sharing the science behind these ancient yoga practices and creating fully accessible programs, because she knows firsthand how health, peace of mind and family relationships can beautifully transform as a direct result.

#### Mindfulness Exercise: Emotional Wheel



#### **Additional Resources**

#### General resources from Mindful.org

https://www.mindful.org/

#### Resources from Zero to Three

https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/mindfulness-in-early-childhood

#### CalmBirth website:

http://www.calmbirth.org/

#### Podcasts from Birthing from Within, scroll to bottom of page under podcasts:

https://birthingfromwithin.com/media/

#### Mindfulness in Infant/Toddler programs from NAEYC:

https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2018/rocking-and-rolling

#### **Susan Kaiser Greenland:**

https://www.susankaisergreenland.com/

#### The Power of Presence

by Dr. Elizabeth Joy Erwin, Professor at Montclair State University
This new book focuses on mindfulness and early childhood and is great for
professionals (and families!) of young children. Scroll down on the linked page
for a one-hour presentation about mindfulness. There is a free shipping
promotion now though 1/4/21 when you use promo code: HOLIDAY20 at check
out!

https://www.gryphonhouse.com/books/details/the-power-of-presence

#### **Preschool Mindfulness Summit**

Join this incredible online summit to deepen an understanding and practice about mindfulness. Experts from around the globe will share their ideas, research and strategies for engaging in mindfulness with young children - and also offer tips and tools for the adults who take care of them! No cost to attend but registration required:

https://www.preschoolmindfulnesssummit.com/first-page36399212

