

Mindfulness at The Tree Cathedral

Mindfulness walks are great for our mental health and The Tree Cathedral is a peaceful place to unwind and reconnect with nature.

It can be challenging to slow down from our busy lives so don't worry if an activity doesn't work for you, just do what is comfortable.

The main aim is to relax and take a moment to connect with nature. You might like to bring a piece of scrap paper and a pencil or crayon, but these aren't essential.



Mindfulness at the Tree Cathedral

1 It is useful to have a method to let go of stressful thoughts as they come to mind. To help you stay present, find an interesting rock or colourful leaf as you approach the tree cathedral. When stressful thoughts pop into your mind, gently tap your object, passing your burdens onto it.

2 The entrance to the cathedral is at the end of an avenue of trees. "Meet" a tree. Feel the bark, smell the tree, admire the leaves and twisting of the branches. Tap the trunk with a stick, what does it sound like?

3 Enter the tree cathedral. Have a look at the map on your right to familiarise yourself with the shape. Look at the majestic rows of trees and how they tower above you. With your finger in the air, trace the outline of the trunk and branches of the tallest tree you can see.



4 Imagine becoming a tree, your feet growing roots deep into the ground, wriggling your toes as you anchor into the earth. Stand tall while growing your branches by reaching your arms out as leaves sprout from your fingertips.



5 Find a patch of light shining through the trees. Imagine a stained glass window casting its artwork on the ground. What would this look like? Arrange a frame on the ground from sticks and let your imagination decide the rest using colourful leaves, twigs, wood chippings, grass, etc. Leave the artwork behind for other park goers to enjoy or add to.



6

Find the Cloister lawn to the right. Stand between the four shrubs and face the direction you came from. Hold your hands out in front of you, focusing your eyes on only what you can see between them. Slowly widen your arms, taking in everything in your periphery until they stretch out of view.

7

Head out of the Cloister and turn right. Stop between the four trees that make up the "tower." Imagine your eyes are the arms of a clock. Look up into the sky for 12 o'clock, right for 3 o'clock, and down for 6, etc. Admire the giant redwoods surrounding you. Feel their soft bark.



8

Head to the left side of the cathedral, opposite the Cloister, where you will find the Cathedral Meadow. Find a cozy bench to sit on. Close your eyes and concentrate what you can hear. Notice the differences in sounds nearby versus those far away.

9

Return to the cathedral and turn left to head to the sanctuary at the far end. Take several deep and mindful breaths, imagining you are breathing in all the leaves from the trees as you inhale, and blowing them all back into place as you exhale.

10

Spend some time walking up and down the rows of trees. If you have a paper and pencil to hand, take bark rubbings when you feel inspired by a particular tree. Notice all of the different colours in the various trees.

11

As you exit, thank the trees in the cathedral for their important role in our natural world. Leave the object you collected at the start of the walk to symbolise leaving your stresses behind and feel the weight lifted from your shoulders as you do.

Appreciate yourself for taking the time to connect with nature and enjoy the healing benefits!