**Mindful Activities in the South Downs National Park**

We know that having access to open space and the natural environment improves mental and physical health. Taking time to pause, soak up the amazing sites, sounds and smells around us, ensures we take time and space for ourselves in our busy lives. Whether you take 5 or 50 minutes, we hope you enjoy these mindful activities which can be completed as a group or an individual when out enjoying the South Downs National Park.

**Sticky Feet**

* Stand facing nature. In a group, do this as a circle with your feet touching each other
* Take a minute to observe everything you are seeing in front of you.
* Start naming all the different things you can see. Try to be as specific as possible. Can you put an adjective before the words to describe how the things you are seeing look?
* If you are in a group, how many times can you say something without repeating what someone has already said?

**I wonder why**

* As you look or wonder around nature, think of questions that start with, ‘I wonder why…’ and then ask questions.
* For example, you might ask: ‘I wonder why the trees are in straight lines? I wonder why the hills are all different shapes?’
* If you are in a group, you could share your questions with the rest of the group. If anyone knows the answer to a question, they could share it with the person who asked.
* If you are on your own, you could search up the answer on your return or allow yourself to marvel at the mystery of the natural world

**Guided meditation**

* Sit in a space you feel comfortable, gently close your eyes and have someone ask these questions slowly. We are not looking for answers outloud:
  + What parts of your body are in contact with the ground?
  + What does your skin feel like?
  + Which way is the breeze coming from?
  + Can you sense any moisture in the air?
  + What is the furthest sound you can hear?
  + What is the loudest and quietest sound you can hear?
  + Is there a direction from which you can’t hear a sound?
  + Can you smell anything?
  + Open your lips and sip the air, can you taste anything?
  + Think about all 5 senses, open your eyes as if this is the first time you have seen this place
* If you are on your own, you might prefer to use some guided meditation apps or videos available on YouTube
* At the end, you might reflect together on what you thought about or you might leave it as private thoughts.

**Sit-spot**

* Similar to above but rather than thinking about certain questions, take 5 minutes to sit or lay listening and watching what is around you.
* You might choose to concentrate on your senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, hear) or just simple be.
* At the end, you might reflect together on what you saw or heard or you might leave it as private thoughts.

**Camera spot**

* This can only be completed with two or more people.
* Work in pairs standing one behind the other.
  + The person in front (the camera) closes their eyes and is guided by the person behind (the camera operator)
  + The camera operator gently positions the camera to an interesting view and gently presses the cameras opening shutter (their partners ear)!
  + The camera opens their eyes and sees the view for 5 seconds.
  + The camera operator returns them to their starting spot.
  + Can the camera open their eyes and work out where the camera operator had positioned them?
* Repeat but change roles
* At the end take time to think about why that spot was chosen? What was it like seeing a view for the first time? What did you feel like to have a spot chosen specially for you?