



Art & Selfie Awareness

-A Blue Apple Outreach program-

An artistic and introspective experience designed for teens and young adults to process creatively during tense times. Video offering a calming guided meditation, a selfie acting project about emotional literacy and a visual art project.

Watch the video with instructions & samples:

- <https://www.commonwealththeatre.org/cp-summer20-art-selfie/>

Introduction

- ★ You do not have to be an artist or an actor to do the activities in this video. This is for anyone.
 - Maybe you've been feeling confused or upset and you want to channel that somewhere. This is for you.
 - Maybe you're bored and looking for something new to do. This is for you.
 - Maybe you want to reflect on yourself. This is for you.
- ★ Simply - it's some 'you' time. You can do these activities in any order. You can pick & choose. The important thing is to show up for yourself.
- ★ I recommend the following order:

List of Activities:

- A sitting guided meditation
- Journal entry prompts
- A Theatre-based selfie activity exploring your personal emotional literacy
- A visual art activity

You Will Need:

- Some time
- Some private space. (Or if you have a close family member or a friend you zoom with, you could do this together)
- A smart phone or a camera
- You may choose to source some props/costumes from your home. You don't need to buy anything, but to look at your surroundings with an open mind.
- Paper
- Art supplies - your choice - it could be watercolor paints & brushes, markers, magazines & glue to collage. Or all of them. Your choice.
- Some patience and honesty with yourself

We'll Provide:

Ideas, Prompts, Information about Emotional Literacy & a list of emotions

Let's Get Started

A Word or Two about Meditation:

- Some people feel uncomfortable, skeptical, or intimidated by the idea.
 - What do you have to lose? About 8 minutes of your time.
 - The real question is: What do you have to gain? Maybe a lot. You might gain . . .
 - Calm or a feeling of renewal
 - Insights about yourself and how your brain works
 - Maybe you'll like yourself more or have more patience for others
 - Maybe even positive health outcomes, like lowered blood pressure
 - *According to neuroscience research, mindfulness practices dampen activity in our amygdala and increase the connections between the amygdala and prefrontal cortex. Both of these parts of the brain help us to be less reactive to stressors and to recover better from stress when we experience it"---actual quote from UC Berkeley Greater Good Science Center Article .*
 - Why not give it a try? What if it works . . .

How To Start a Simple Meditation:

- Find a comfortable place to sit - a chair, cushion, or the floor.
- Choose a place to sit that is pleasing to you. It helps your calm and your creativity when you like where you are and what you are looking at.

- Let's get started
 - Take 3 deep breaths. Inhale deeply and then shrug your shoulders down to exhale.
 - 1
 - Think “in with the good air, out with the bad air”
 - 2
 - Lengthen the breath
 - 3
 - Now let your breathing return to normal and place a hand on your heart and on your stomach. Close your eyes and see if you can hear or feel your heartbeat.
 - Relax your hands on your lap.
 - With your eyes closed, we're going to do a body scan. Starting with the crown of your head and working your way down. Taking in your body, bit by bit, searching for places of tightness or tension. When you find something tense, take a breath and see if you can loosen that area by saying or thinking the word “relax”
 - When you finish your scan, let go of thinking about your body.
 - Invite a larger awareness.
 - See if you can empty your mind and just notice what is happening in this moment.
 - Right now.
 - Let go of yesterday.
 - Let go of tomorrow.
 - Let go of what happened earlier or what you need to do later.
 - Bring your mind to right now. And when it wanders away - no judgement - gently guide your mind back to right now.
 - What do you hear?
 - What do you smell?
 - What do you feel?
 - If your mind wanders away, no judgement, gently guide it back to the present.
 - Alright - wiggle your toes in your shoes, wiggle your fingers, and gently open your eyes
- Congratulations. That was meditation practice. It's always called practice because there is no perfect, there is only process. Try it once a week or every day. And see how you feel.
- You showed up for yourself. Good job. On to the next activity.

About Emotional Literacy

Emotional Literacy is the ability to identify emotions in yourself and others. It's also the ability to verbalize and talk about the variety of emotions you experience. There is a whole vocabulary of emotions out there.

- Are emotions good or bad? Trick question!

- Emotions are emotions. They are not good or bad.
- They are comfortable or uncomfortable.
- Emotions are like data points - Giving you information about your brain's reaction to your surroundings. Emotions can also act like signposts or signals - letting you know that something isn't right and you need to change course. Or that something is really right, and you should coach yourself to keep going.

There are 6 Core Umbrella Emotions:

Peace * Power * Joy * Anger * Fear * Sadness

And there are lots more emotions that are related to those . . .

Peace

Thankful * Confident * Faithful * Valuable * Important * Appreciated * Respectful *
Worthwhile * Successful * Surprised * Proud * Peaceful

Power

Hope * Acceptance * Strength * Belonging * Content * Thoughtful * Loving * Trusting *
Nurturing * Relaxed * Responsive * Serence * Secure

Joy

Aware * Optimistic * Playful * Joyful * Amused * Stimulated * Daring * Fascinated * Excited *
Energetic * Cheerful * Creative

Anger

Critical * Frustrated * Sarcastic * Irritated * Jealous * Skeptical *
Hostile * Selfish * Hateful * Anger

Fear

Disgust * Discouraged * Insignificant * Inadequate * Embarrassed * Overwhelmed * Stupid *
Humiliated * Anxious * Inferior * Abandoned * Confused * Helpless * Insecure

Sadness

Hurt * Sadness * Shame * Distant * Guilt * Hopelessness * Isolated * Apathetic * Lonely *
Depressed * Remorseful * Rejected * Numb

Creativity prompts

- Look over the list of emotions.
- Select 3 emotions that you are resonating with you right now.
- Grab some paper and some markers (or pens or crayons or pencils or paint)
- Write one emotion on one piece of paper. Explore your personal font style & shape as you write it. You might want to write an emotion in really large letters if it's intimidating you, or you might want to use some smooth cursive if it feels good.
- Now that you have written the emotion on the page, explore the page with your art supplies to express that emotion. You can doodle, you can color, you can bullet list words related to the emotion or describe a time you felt the emotion. There is no wrong way to do this page. Just fill up the page with what comes into your head as you dig into that emotion and express it.
- If that's too much freedom, think of it this way -
 - What does the emotion sound like?
 - What does the emotion look like?
 - What does it smell like?
 - Where do you feel the emotion in your body?
- Do this process for each of the three emotions you selected.
- Now, you have some creativity maps of emotions!

Selfie-Project

- In theatre, there is a very old tradition called Tableaux Vivants - which means, "living pictures". Actors used to stand together on stage in a frozen scene to illustrate a story or a feeling or just be really impressive. Families sometimes did this at home at different times throughout history (sort of like charades, but no moving). Today, magazine ads, movie posters, and even album covers are a kind of tableaux. And selfies can be too, when you set them up.
- Now, pick one of those emotions and start brainstorming some ways that you could take a selfie that illustrates that emotion. (You have your creativity map from the previous lesson to help guide you). Think about your facial expression and body position to illustrate the emotion. Consider some props, costume, setting (or the absolute absence of them!) to build drama in your photo.
- Take a selfie! Label it with the emotion.
- Move on to another emotion and start again to build an album.
- This can be a private theatre project, or shared with an audience.

Visual Art Project - Tracing your Path

Where you've been, Where you are, and Where you're going

- Grab a large piece of paper or several pieces of paper and something to draw with.
- Put the paper on the floor and step one foot onto it.
- Trace your left foot. Trace your right foot. Trace your left foot. Almost like footprints in the sand.
- Each traced foot has a designation - label them
 - “Where I’ve Been”
 - “Where I Am”
 - “Where I’m Going”
- Grab some art supplies. Any will work - here are some ideas:
 - Paint and brushes
 - Markers, colored pencils, or pens
 - Magazines, fancy paper & glue
- Use your art supplies to creatively express the theme for each foot tracing.
- You may want to refer back to the list of emotions or your creativity maps to guide you. You can artistically interpret these in colors, shapes, images, pictures, etc.
- You be you.

Done!

Look at everything you created! You showed up for yourself.

We hope these activities have given you some artistic outlet, and have also guided you to be kind to yourself.

If you enjoyed this experience, let us know!

Contact us at Outreach@commonwealththeatre.org

Or you can mail us at:

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