

Simple home candle mindfulness time

During this unusual time it can be useful to build times of reflection, or step away times, into the day or week. These build breaks to allow for well being and good spiritual and mental health.

Here is a simple idea that could be built into a weekly or daily rhythm.

1. Choose a time in the day (or week) with minimal interruptions, such as after a morning break or lunchtime.
2. Create a space - clear the table; maybe put out cushions and a special piece of material, a candle or nature based focus objects.
3. Ensure your child(ren) / young people know why they are entering into a time of stillness and silence is a good idea - practise closing your eyes gently, adults too, and breathing in and out slowly.
4. Play some soft soothing music and fade it down gently. You could then use a bell or a chime to signify the beginning of the mindfulness (awareness of thoughts and feelings) time.

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app> is a good app for finding chimes and it offers a timer too (other apps are available).

5. As a rule of thumb, time spent in mindfulness can be related to the youngest child's chronological age, e.g. 5 mins for a 5 year old, 10 mins for a 10 year old.
6. Many traditions suggest using a word or phrase to concentrate on as you breathe in and out and to return to that word when your mind wanders. An example might be saying 'Love' on the in breath and 'Peace' on the out breath

However, feel free to create your own that is right for you/ your family. You may find it helpful to think on something beautiful or an item on your table.

Or you can just keep counting the breaths in and out until you get to 10 and then start again. If your mind wanders so you cannot remember the number, and it may well, just start again at 1.

7. When the time is over, ring the bell/ sound the chime, fade in the quiet music and take time to 'return' to the room.
8. You may wish to allow some time to discuss anything that was felt or thought during that time of mindfulness.
9. Don't give up! Children and adults may be restless and find this difficult. Build the routine and rhythm and you will adapt and benefit. Create a new norm - you might need to change the time or the day until it is right.