**Mindfulness Trail**

for adults and kids!

Welcome to your day out! Possibly it’s your first excursion for a while.

There’s been a lot to deal with during the last few months, so we thought we’d invite you explore Amberley’s history, biodiversity and art in a calmer, more creative and caring way.

Try these **10** **short mindfulness exercises** as you make your way around the site via our Sculpture Trail. There is also a **creative colouring area** in Humphrey’s Barn (with Covid-19 precautions).

Sculpture 1: **Digital detox**

Switch off your devices during your visit. This will allow your mind to slow down and open up to new thoughts and experiences.

Sculpture 4: **How are you today?**

Take a moment to notice how you are feeling – your general mood and emotions and any pains or tensions in your body. Once you’ve identified what’s going on, allow yourself to accept where you are today and bring your attention instead to the physical sensations of the present moment.

*(Don’t worry if you’re finding it difficult: the rest of the trail will help you to do this!)*

Sculpture 7: **Tune into your surroundings**

Make sure you are off the roadway. Now close your eyes. Zero in on the noises around you: what does the Museum sound like – nearby, a little further away, in the distance? Notice the different layers without labelling or trying to understand them fully.

Between Sculptures 12 & 13: **Walking meditation**

As you walk beside the old railway, feel the weight of your feet as you place them on the ground. Tune into your heartbeat. Notice the nature around you. Watch closely any flying insects: how do they behave, do they have a favourite flower?

*Turn over to continue the trail…*

Sculpture 13: **Be your breathing**

For a few moments, turn your attention to your breath. Is it shallow, deep, quick, slow, regular, irregular? Now gently lengthen your breathing by counting to a given number on both in and out breaths. You can play with the duration but remember, it’s not a competition! Now gradually return to your breath’s natural rhythm.

Sculpture 14: **Focus like a bird of prey**

Concentrate on a mental image of your choice: a crackling fire, waves on a beach, your safe space. Watch it intently for some time as if nothing else matters. When your mind begins to wander, simply bring it back.

Sculpture 19: **Exercise your mind’s eye**

Try observing the sculptures in this area without attaching any value judgments. What colours, shapes, textures are present? How do they interact? What feelings, thoughts or memories arise? It might help to look through a simple frame: try making a shape with your hands.

Sculpture 24: **Scentscape**

Engage your olfactory system, or sense of smell. What can you sense? Are they familiar or unfamiliar? Pleasant or unpleasant? Smells often attach themselves to vivid memories: does this happen for you?

Sculpture 33: **Active listening**

As you walk down the site, try talking mindfully with someone in your group. Maybe you’d like to reflect on your visit. Listen to your partner for a full two minutes without interrupting, reacting or changing the subject. Then try to explain back to them what you heard to check you understood them correctly. Now reverse. How did this experience differ from just having a chat?

Sculpture 35: **Cultivate positivity**

Take a moment to think: what are you grateful for today? If you feel able, share your gratitude with your group. For many of us, our minds tend to concentrate on negative thoughts, which can quickly spiral and intensify. By consciously acknowledging the positive aspects of our lives, whatever their size, we can begin to turn these thought patterns around.

**We hope you enjoyed your time at the Museum today.**

Please do take this sheet home and practise if you’d like: these simple mindfulness techniques can be used in many circumstances to promote a more peaceful mind and become easier over time.

If you would like to find out more about **mindfulness**, please visit:

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mindfulness/

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/mindfulness/about-mindfulness/