



Thinking Outside of the Exhibit: Museum Meditation

Objective: Participants will learn how to use the Museum setting for a happier and healthier life.

Time: Fifteen (15) minutes to one (1) hour

Materials for activities:

- Handout on meditation
- A yoga mat, pillow, or other cushion for sitting.

Anticipatory Set: How can Museums be a part of a happier, healthier life? One way to do this is to provide a space for meditation. Museums are naturally quiet settings where visitors can enjoy objects from the past or study a piece of art. Thus, they are ideal locations for taking a break. Meditation has been found to help individuals with stress, relieve anxiety, and improve attention.

Activity:

Independent Individuals

- 1.) For individual meditation without a meditation leader, greet participants by providing a Museum Meditation Handout. The handout will act as the guest's guide. Indicate that they may sit where they wish within the Museum, whether it be on the floor or on a Museum bench.
- 2.) At twenty minutes after the hour and twenty minutes before the hour, ring the bell once to indicate the passage of time.
- 3.) At the top of the hour, ring the bell four (4) times to indicate the end of the session.

Guided Groups

- 1.) For group meditations, a Meditation Leader will be provided. The group will stay within ear-shot of the Meditation Leader, who will select the gallery for meditation use.
- 2.) Instruct participants to choose an artifact or piece of art that they find interesting or beautiful.
- 3.) Note that participants should sit upright throughout the exercise.
- 4.) Guide participants to focus on their breathing for (1) minute, paying attention to the intake and outtake of breath.
- 5.) Encourage the participant to then reflect on what is interesting or beautiful in their chosen object for 1 (one) minute.
- 6.) Ask participants to reflect on how the object makes them feel for 1 (one) minute.
- 7.) Have participants then focus on their heartbeat for 1 (one) minute.
- 8.) Repeat for as long as desired.