

Remind yourself of your walk.  
Write down the highlights here.

*Remember*



*Happiness is achieved when  
you stop waiting for it  
and make the most of  
the moment you are in now.*



Created by CC, July 2019

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Wildlife Trust



## Mindfulness walk

**Bystock Pools Nature Reserve**



Park in the road at the south entrance (by the reservoir). Grid Reference: **SY034 843**

The walk takes approximately 1½ hours

Walk at a natural and comfortable pace. mindfulness is about focusing on the present. Let go of any distractions and bring your attention back to your surroundings. Remember be kind to yourself on the days where you find it more difficult to be mindful. Your thinking mind might distract you, this is completely normal. As you make your way round the Reserve pause, stop, look. Enjoy your walk.



Protecting **wildlife** for the Future

- 1 Start at the south (reservoir) entrance.
- 2 Walk to the first bench. Take in the surroundings. Note what you can see, hear and feel. There is no rush so take your time.
- 3 Then, starting at your feet, gradually flex and relax each muscle in your body. Focus on your breathing, take a deep breath in as you tense your muscles and breathe out when you relax them. Finish with your face; close your eyes and scrunch up your face then release.
- 4 When ready, continue your walk. Follow the path through the kissing gate and up the steps. Take the path as it goes round to the left. At the top, take in the views of the heathland. Take four deep breathes, inhaling and exhaling steadily. On the exhale tune in to what you can hear around you. Note any sounds you can hear, do you know what they are?
- 5 Continue walking alongside the Pine wood. Bring your attention into your body. Notice your posture and walk in a natural way. Really notice how your feet make contact with the ground and tune into your 'in and out' breath.
- 6 Follow the path, until you reach a grassy area. Take time to stretch in whichever way works for you. You may want to raise your arms and stretch them above your head, or you may want to touch your toes. You might want to do both, it's up to you!
- 7 Continue up the path until you reach the woodland. Enjoy walking through the leaves. As you walk, imagine you are smiling (or you can actually smile!). Allow the smile to expand inside your body and then feel it overflow into your surroundings.
- 8 After a small row of beech trees, turn left onto the boardwalk. Boardwalks can be slippery so be aware!
- 9 Remember to tune in to any sounds that you hear - birdsong, the rustle of leaves on the trees. Some sounds may not be pleasing but don't get annoyed by them, accept them and let them go.
- 10 At the corner of the boardwalk gently shrug your shoulders forward five times and backwards 5 times. Feel the tension ease in your shoulders and neck. Bring your hand into fists by your sides. Scrunch them up as hard as you can and then slowly release the grip. Extend your fingers into a stretch. Tilt your head slowly to one side then to the other, do this twice.
- 11 At the end of the boardwalk cross the ditch and bear left up the slope.
- 12 Continue to walk at a comfortable pace, check your breath. If it helps say to yourself "I am breathing in, I am breathing out".
- 13 Enjoy the surroundings - what can you see across the valley? Any ponies? Is the Heather in bloom? Any birds soaring high in the sky?
- 14 Go through the woods and then follow the path left downhill, then down the steps to the boardwalk. Remember to take your time, there is no rush.
- 15 At the small ponds take a moment to stop and look around. What can you see? Depending on the season you could see frogspawn, dragonflies or lizards. Enjoy the views, take a moment to inhale and exhale deeply. Have a good stretch.
- 16 Continue along the path across the valley until you reach the footbridge. Go over the bridge and walk up the steps. Has your mind wandered? If so bring it back into the present moment.
- 17 At the top turn right and follow the path along the side of the wood. Just before the large trees fork to the right and head back down to the main pond.
- 18 Continue to the weir. Listen to the sound of the water flowing over the weir or watch the ripples on the pond and any wildlife that you see.
- 19 As you return to the start, reflect on your walk. What have you seen? Do you feel calmer? Take four deep breathes then tense and release your shoulders. Finish the walk with a smile :)
- 20 Carry on with the rest of your day but try and keep a sense of calm. Visualise yourself at Bystock if you feel the calmness fading.

**Remember; happiness is achieved when you stop waiting for it and make the most of the moment you are in now.**

**Why did I ask you to smile?** The Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS) regulates and helps us create a relaxed state.

Smiling, deep breathing, imagining being somewhere peaceful, practising gratitude, being mindful helps the PNS kick in. So keep up the practice!

