

# Step Into Joy!

## Walking Prompt Week 1

Do you remember the sound of the first step you took this morning?  
What were your eyes focused on for the last left turn you took?  
How many times did you step on a line, shape, or shadow?

What are some things you think about as you walk?  
Do you notice the people you pass? What you have to get done after work?  
A conversation you'd just had?

Every week, we'll be exploring some aspect of walking that can add a new dimension to our lives.

Before you get going, let's do some mind-exploring. Where does walking fit into your life?

## A Pre-Walk assignment:

Write down a list of your usual walks.  
Are they to get to a certain destination? Work? Home? Rehearsal?  
Are they to complete a task? Grocery Store shopping?  
Do you pace as a habit? Does it help you think better?  
Is it part of your fitness routine? A way to connect with friends?  
Do you walk down a hallway at school? Around a corner to your kitchen stove?  
Work, play, leisure, meditation...

Write a list of 10 walks you can think of: They can be as simple as the walk you take from your bed to the sink, so you can brush your teeth in the morning.

*[insert your list here]*

Now, pick one of those walks.

*[insert walk here]*

Think of ONE time you took this walk. Close your eyes and remember it as well as you can.

Draw, write about, rap about, or record yourself remembering this simple routine everyday walk. Be as descriptive as you can, whether it be through photos, a map, metaphor, a dance, or some free-associating good ol' journaling.

*[insert your walk description/expression here]*

Since you do this walk regularly, when is the next time you think you'll be taking this path?

*[insert your best guess-timate here]*

. The next time you take this indoor "routine" path for "here" to "there", notice if you are aware of anything different on this walk. Is the light in the room making you see the same object differently? A new sound? Do you feel your feet differently?

Find a different way to record it.

If you've drawn a map the first time, journal about it the next time.

You'll have time to record your observations in time for our first zoom workshop next Sunday!

## Your Outdoor Walking Practice

This outdoor walking practice asks you to notice things around you differently.

To make our mark by fully taking in with an open heart what we experience around us.

“I am not here to change the world. I am changing the world because I am here.” ~Lisa Wilson

*(Remember this quote. We'll come back to it later)*

The next six weeks will have prompts that encourage you to walk in someone else's shoes, cross paths with ideas we might not have been originally drawn to, explore things that we may be curious about but don't always have the chance to understand.

Maybe you'll discover meaning in details you never noticed, in in-between spaces or new ways of getting from point A to point B.

### **Now, let's set a walking intention.**

This week, your intention is to let your inner child make any path you take come alive. Let's learn to “play” along the most ordinary pathways.

1. Begin by taking a deep breath
2. Feel the ground beneath your feet
3. Feel the energy flowing through your body from the ground up
4. Feel the energy flowing through your body from the sky down
5. Imagine that line of energy growing up and down your body. What color is it? Is it hot, cold, sticky, bouncy, tingly, dull, piercing?
6. Feel that energy in your body and imagine that energy line turning into a different shape. (Think *Harold and the Purple Crayon* – what can that line turn into? A house? A tree? A dragon? A path through?)

(For those of you who don't know Harold and his purple crayon, he uses the pier of walking to s the power to create a world of his own simply by drawing it. **Harold** wants to go for a walk in the moonlight,

but there is no moon, so he draws one. He has nowhere to walk, so he draws a path.)

Remember your line can take any form, shape or tempo you choose. Energy is adaptable and can fit through, around, or over any “unnatural” environment or stumbling block. It can even push you towards a path you wouldn’t naturally wander.

## Walking Outside Prompt 1:

### **An exploration of "blending in"**

**We hear so much that we shouldn't blend in. We should stand out and express our individuality.**

While that may be true, sometimes it helps to step back a bit, listen, watch and learn about the world around us like someone or something else. So this week let's claim our own walking practice by blending into the world around us. Maybe we'll discover something about our own uniqueness in doing so. Now, start walking.

As you walk, keep that energy in mind. What color was it?

Keep walking and notice the colors around you. Which color do you notice first?

What color do you notice most?

Where's the tiniest trace of a color you only spot once?

Now get ready and...

### **Camouflage.**

Hide in plain sight. What can you blend into? As you walk, try to make yourself part of the scenery.

Think expansively here: what does it mean to **camouflage** into the path you are walking?

Can you shape the palm of your hand like the leaf of the branch? Can your feet walk as firmly as the concretely you're stepping on?

Can you widen your left eye to match the shape of that cloud?

**Camouflage your steps:** Try to adapt to the rhythm of the place you are in, and go with the pace of what is around you. A car sputtering? A child bike-riding? A leaf rattling down the pavement? Mimic them as you walk - *don't worry, they'll never know!*

On your camouflage walk, ask yourself:

- How am I like the objects I see before me?
- How am I different?
- What are ways I can move my body to blend in?

**Now, follow the path that you most blend into.**

Maybe you feel like you smell like the rose you pass. Or your skin is thick as the brick you see. *Find those similarities and follow them.*

Do a **body scan** as you walk to find more possibilities of blending in. Start with the top of your head right down to the bottoms of your feet.

**A good place to stop on your body scan:**

Breathe in and feel your **lips**. Is there a shape to your left smiling in the same way? Feel each crack in your lips, and find those cracks somewhere around you - follow those cracks!

**Where else did you stop on your body scan? Right hip? Eyebrow? Back of your left knee?**

**The best part about camouflage?**

**Think of it as wearing Harry Potter's invisibility quote. If no one can see you, you can try anything once even if it feels silly.**

**So make BOLD camo-choices about how you walk, where you walk, and most important, what you notice.**

It's an exploration.

You have to enter into the world you want to create, stumble around and find out what works. Now that you're in camouflage - stumble fearlessly!

By focusing on each small moment, being here and still, I can feel the earth in motion. There is so much noise and birds chirping all around us. It's a beautiful sound.

**Have you heard "there are no silly questions?"** Well, now that you're blended in, walk and ask the silliest questions you can.

You can ponder:

- See the human face in everything - does that tree trunk remind you of a friend's face?
- Be curious: ask childlike questions about the world around you: "What makes the sky blue or the clouds look so puffy?"

## Week 1 Reflection:

Remember this quote?

**"I am not here to change the world. I am changing the world because I am here." ~Lisa Wilson**

*We don't always associate changing the world with "blending in."*

But, after spending time learning to blend into the world around you, did you discover anything about the world, yourself, and who you are in this world, on the path you are walking?

Maybe, maybe not. You have some time to think, walk and explore this before our zoom call on Sunday August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4pm EST.

Record your "blending-in observations." Take pictures of what you blended with. Draw it. Journal or write a poem about what you discovered. Record a video or audio clip. Tell a story.

That's it. ***I now set you free to blend!***

Go forth, listen, look, honor the life all around you by **stepping back** and letting it *lead you forward*.

Step into joy! (*And wear some fun camouflage garb - whatever that means to you!*)

Each week, I'll also share some of what I discover on my own walk, doing **the same prompt:**

## Amy's Walk (My Week 1 reflections)

I tried to blend my snake-like steps into this curvy line on the pavement:



Then, I noticed these dark green leaves wrapped around this tree. I thought about how straight the tree was as it reached upwards, and as I walked, I imagined a long vine of leaves wrapping around me in the same way, straightening my posture just like that bark had straightened.



I notice as I walk, that sometimes, nature tries to blend in too. I see how this twig has aligned itself parallel to the curb, and even the little red buds seem to mimic the moss patterns - or at least how I see it!



During my walk, I stopped under branches that looked like bundles of hands, and noticed my own hands.





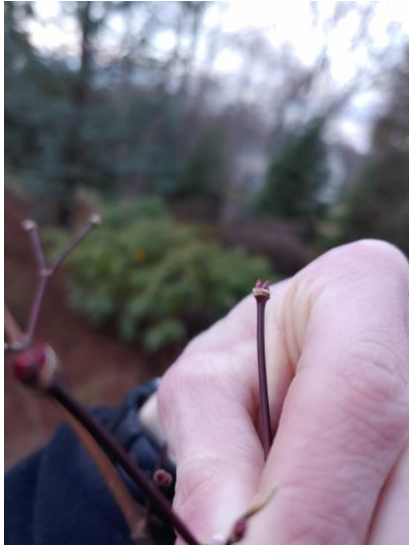
I take a moment to blend in with what I see.



My body, fingertips, and earth, stem connect to this tree.

I try to find a dance, to examine my body in relation to the environment . How can I find a friend in nature, no matter how alone I feel?

How I can feel alive in nature, no matter how numb I feel?



Like a sleeping giant, I wrap my fingers around a newborn bud.



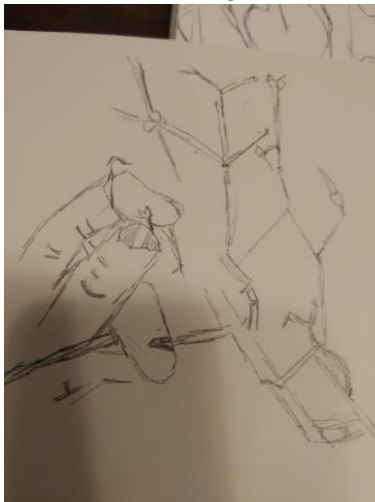
Their mouths open like baby birds.



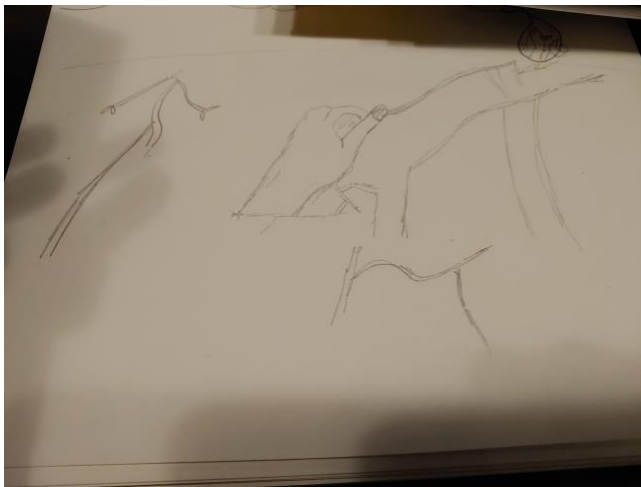
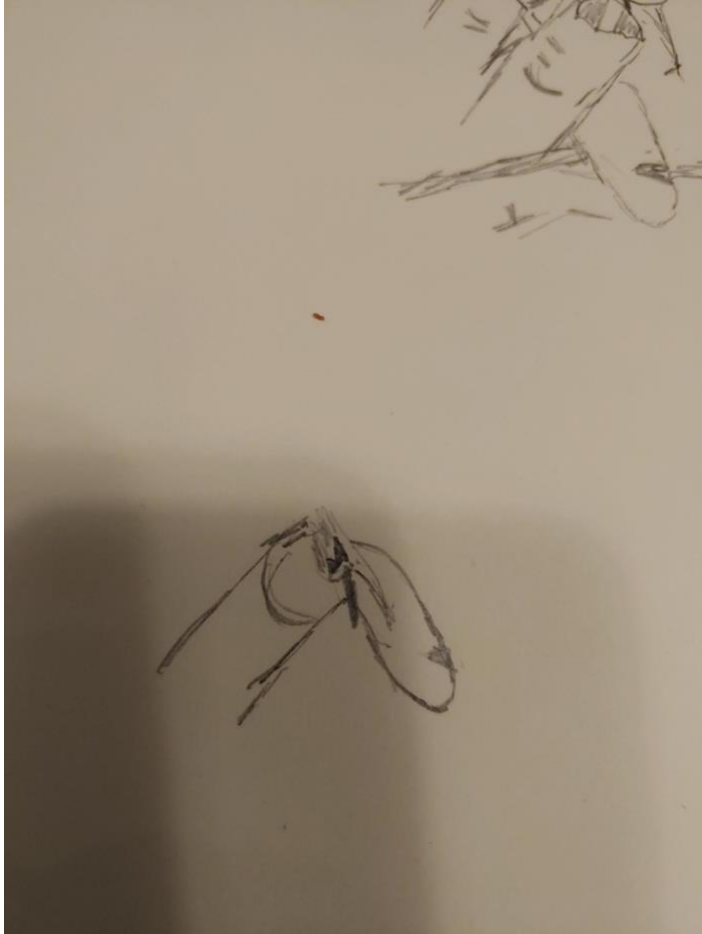
I cradle it, and it points upwards.

Growth is everywhere.

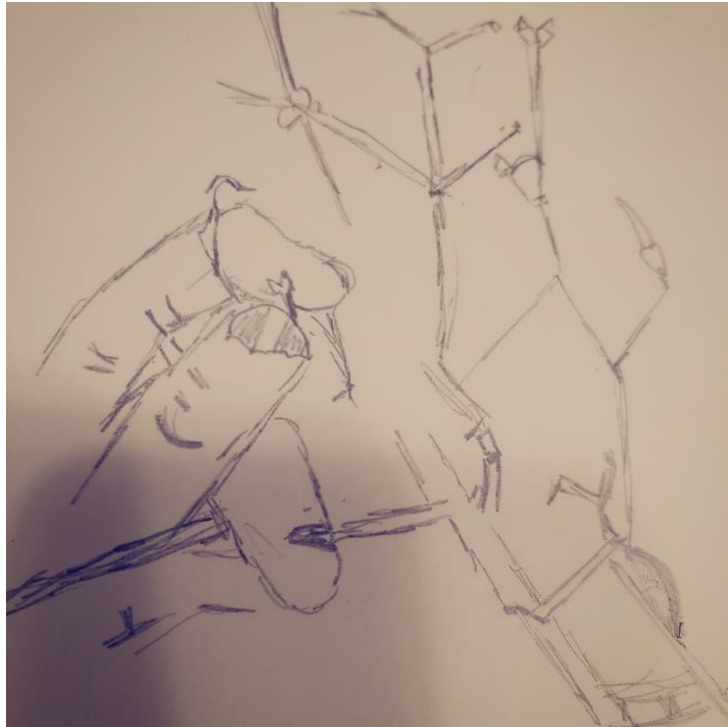
This was how I documented the experience I had on my walking practice, blending in with nature and finding the human form in everything.



There are dances just bouncing off the page.



See how I'm holding the branch as if it's another hand?



***Last - Each week I'll be sharing resources to inspire you.***

## Walking Resources Week 1:

All about the practice of Walking and Art: <https://walkart.wordpress.com/>  
A TEDx Talk on the Transformative power of walking: <https://youtu.be/2-8ams9yG98>

**Find more resources at <https://www.amyoes.com/walk> and posted in our [Step Into Joy Facebook Group!](#)**

**Join our zoom call August 23rd 4-5pm EST for more interactive activities, stories, discussion and sharing. I'll be sending you the link next week!**