

The mind can go in a thousand directions, but on this beautiful path, I walk in peace. With each step, the wind blows. With each step, a flower blooms. - Thich Nhat Hanh

Welcome to Week 5 of Claiming Your Walking Practice!

We've been walking a lot (hopefully) so now is a great time to take a breath and listen to what's going on inside...and outside.

Meditation. There are many ways to "meditate" and it doesn't have to be sitting.

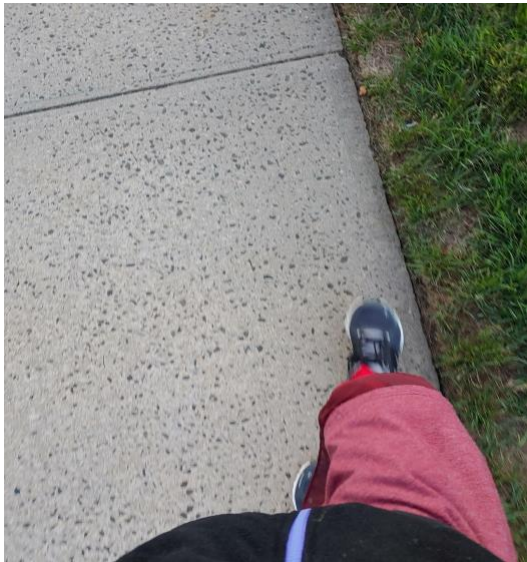
Walking Meditation...many people do it. But how can you create a walking meditation that works for you on your walking path?

First...

Name five reasons why you don't have the right environment for a peaceful "walking meditation."

1. !!!!
2. ?????
3. ^&*^%)&*%^&(%
4.?
5. (_____insert excuse here_____)

Maybe this will help: YOU need meditation for YOU - and walking wherever you are is a great place to start...anywhere.



Take five steps wherever you are. For each step, imagine yourself bringing more awareness into your body.

Give each step a level of awareness.

Name your levels of awareness - allowing each step to put your more into your body. Write what comes up - remember to go slow so you can take in each step fully!

Step One: _____

Step Two: _____

Step Three: _____

Step Four: _____

Step Five: _____

By the time you reach your final 5th step, draw a picture of how your body feels:

It doesn't matter where you walk...



"People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black, curious eyes of a child -- our own two eyes. All is a miracle." ~ Nhat Hanh

What miracle can you engage with today?

Try these out:

Indoors:

Use the inner space to your advantage. You can walk the length of a hall or room in a straight line for 10 steps. Notice how your body feels as you take slow deliberate steps. When your mind wanders, notice the movement of your hands, fingers, and the rhythm of your feet. as long as you have enough space to walk freely in a straight line for 10 to 20 steps.

City:

It might feel tough to sense "calmness" as you're walking in a crowded noisy city. But think (or walk!) again! city. This can be a great place to be challenged to be present and pay attention to

everything happening around us. How are your thoughts being affected by the atmosphere around you? How does the rhythm of your walk change with the pace of the city?

"Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet." ~ Nhat Hanh

What is the rhythm of your footsteps?

Even if you don't read music...try playing around with the steps of your feet using this as a sound map. How would your feet map this out?

PRELUDE
Op. 28, No. 7

Frederic Chopin

The image shows the musical score for Chopin's Prelude Op. 28, No. 7. It is written for piano and consists of two systems of music. The first system is marked 'Andantino' and 'dolce', with dynamics 'p' and 'con Pedale'. The second system is marked 'mp', 'rit. e dim.', and 'pp'. The score is presented in a digital format with a back arrow icon in the top right corner.

Or, listen to the noise around you. Is it affecting the rhythm of your feet?
Is silence affecting the rhythm of your feet?

I made this [art](#) based on the music I heard in the wind as I walked. What would you title this canvas?



30 seconds: Focusing on Sound:

Use the rhythm of the walk and your two feet taking turns on the ground to give you a focus.

“The rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. The creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it. A new thought often seems like a feature of the landscape that was there all along, as though thinking were traveling rather than making.” - Rebecca Solnit



1 Art I made from my walking meditation

30 Seconds: How does your body feel?

Notice how your body feels. Stiff? Elastic? Light? Notice your posture. Where are your hands moving?

How do your two feet interact with the ground? How do your feet interact with each other?

If your feet were two people, ***what conversation would they be having?***



Tune into what's going on around you — passing cars, other people, window displays, trees, the movement and still of things, or any other sights that come into your awareness field. You're not thinking about any of these things, though; you're simply Acknowledge what you see - cars, trees, sky, someone's eyes. **Just notice what you notice. Then let it go. Your feet keep walking.**

What temperature is around you? How does the temperature of your body feel inside? How does the temperature feel as you touch your feet the the ground. Just notice, acknowledge, and let go. (Breathing helps!)

Remember to use the rhythm of your feet touching the ground as the place you can mentally come back to when the mind wanders off.



How would you walk this carpet?

Thich Nhat Hanh has wonderful thoughts on walking meditations.

Watch this video:

On Walking Meditation (Thich Nhat Hanh) <https://youtu.be/90Pzn6NK4VQ>

What's your favorite thought in this video?

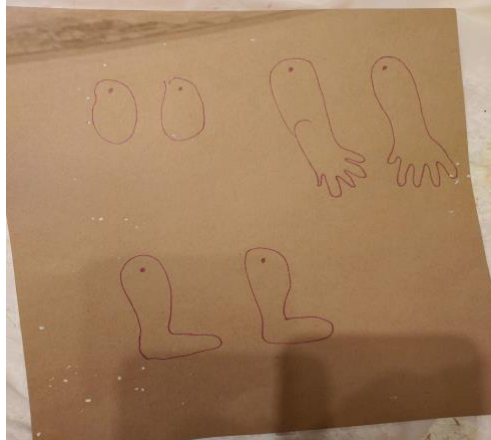
I love "Walk as though you're the happiest person in the world."

Other jewels to integrate into your walking practice:

- Each step brings you back to the present moment, which is the only moment you can be alive.
- Make a mark for the next person to follow. That's the imprint you leave. What imprint are you making? When you make each print on the ground, don't put anxiety on the ground. Mark each print with peace and happiness on the ground.
- Walk as though you can see into the footsteps of someone and you see their anxiety and fear that the person has left in his footsteps. What trace do you want to leave?

Creativity is a great way to enliven your walking meditation.

Remember - the goal is to get your head out of your thoughts, and into your body and the world around you!



If you were a puppet, how would you walk?

Creative nuggets to incorporate into your walking meditation (Indoors, Outdoors, Anywhere)

Pick one of these prompts for 10 steps...if that doesn't feel long enough...slow down your steps!

- 1.) View everything solid as liquid and everything liquid as solid. How does it feel to walk on liquid grass?
- 2.) Put a word to every sound you hear – every gust of wind or squish in the dirt. Write a sound story or make a sound map.
- 3.) Imagine the world is a giant gingerbread house and everything is edible – is that eggplant on the roof shingles? Write about it, draw it...OR create your next meal with those foods (*Oooh! Oooh! If you do this one, take a picture or share a recipe!*)

The more you're in your body, the more awareness you can bring to the world around you. And every second can be too good to miss! Think about it this way: If you use your walking path to bring awareness into your body, you'll be able to take in the stimulation of a busy city, a quaint countryside, or a quiet indoor space with so much wonder. With each step, you can bring joy into your body from wherever you are.

Takeaways for Week #5:

1. Watch Thich Nhat Hanh's walking meditation video and find the gems that resonate with you
2. Pick 10 steps, indoors, outdoors, anywhere to practice your own walking meditation
3. Focus on rhythm and make a sound map of your space
4. Add creativity to your walking practice with one of my three prompts
5. Write out the dialogue your two feet are having when you find a certain rhythm

6. What imprint do you want to leave in each footstep for others to step into?
7. Take your 10 steps sloooowlyyyy - then quickly! - then in between....play with your sense of time.
8. Notice what you notice. Draw a picture, share a story, tell someone about it or take some photos!



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2Curious about sound maps? Check out Find more resources at <https://www.amyoes.com/walk> and posted in our Step Into Joy Facebook Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/walk2discover/>

Partner Challenge:

Ask someone to go on their own walking meditation: Only 10 steps! Then, have a conversation about what you each experienced on your own 10 steps.

Too much? Try 5!

"Every path, every street in the world is your walking meditation path." ~ Nhat Hanh



This week's walking practice inspiration:

Walking as art? Why not? Check out these 10 artists who have done it...And scroll to the end for a list of walking groups and community programs you can get involved in too!

<https://glasstire.com/2012/11/23/the-ten-list-walk-as-art/>

**Find more resources at <https://www.amyoes.com/walk>
and posted in our Step Into Joy Facebook Group -
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/walk2discover!>
Join our zoom call this Sunday 4-5pm EST for more
interactive activities, stories, discussion and sharing. I'll
be sending you the link this week, so subscribe at
www.amyoes.com/walk!**

*You can also share your discoveries on social
media - whether it's a sketch you've done, a map,
photographs you've taken using the hashtag
#stepintojoy OR #lovemydetour*