

VIRTUAL RETREAT: MORNING OFFLINE ACTIVITIES



Retreats are designed to encourage each of us to engage our head, hands and hearts as we journey along. This morning, we invite you to explore the activities below to engage your “hands” and do one that inspires you or come up with your own idea! [Share your reflections](#) about your experience or even a photo if you made something on our pod feed ahead of our next live call!

Do an Act of Kindness: Share kindness with someone you know or someone you don't know.

“When you are kind to others, it not only changes you, it changes the world” - Harold Kushner

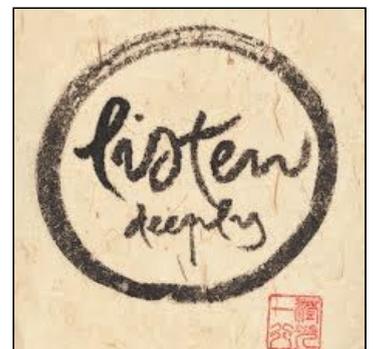


It was World Kindness Day just a couple of weeks ago, and this is a wonderful way to continue the ripples of kindness. Take joy in performing an act of kindness for someone you know, or a complete stranger. By carrying out a kind deed, we pay our happiness forward – bringing joy to the recipient, in the happy knowledge that we have joined a chain of kindness, to be continued on and on. Here [are a few ideas](#) for how you might carry out an act of kindness, be it in the very short or longer term, and [the science on why kindness is so important to humankind](#). Share [your reflections online](#) afterwards.

Practice Deep Listening: Call someone today and have a deep listening conversation.

“Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force... When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.”—Brenda Ueland

Deep listening is a powerful way to show respect and empathy to other people, and even to bridge gaps of understanding. It can be practised at the intrapersonal level, where you listen closely to your own interior experience; the interpersonal level, where you listen deeply to another individual; or the group level, where we listen deeply to many voices at once. By taking the time to call a friend and practise deep listening, you can bring about [transformative change in yourself and others](#). Before you make your phone call, read some tips about how to listen deeply [here](#). Share reflections on your experience [online](#).



Cultivate Creativity: Let your inner child take over and create whatever it is that wants to emerge.

"The question of how to become more creative is not about learning anything, or even doing anything, but about allowing whatever arises to gain expression. To do this, we must bypass the voice inside of us that says stop." -- Nina Wise



How many times have we thought, 'I can't sing', 'I'm not good at painting', 'Creativity is not my thing'. We often associate creativity with perfect products made by "artists" when, in fact, *being creative is about letting go of rigid structures and simply enjoying the process*. Every one of us has an [abundance of creativity](#) inside - we just need to tap into this source and let it flow!

What is your heart calling for? Was there anything you enjoyed as a child that you stopped doing as you grew older? Painting, mindful colouring, poetry, play dough, knitting, doodling, lego, experimental cooking? Whatever excites you, go for it! If you're finding it challenging to reconnect with your creativity, these [tips from Elizabeth Gilbert](#) may inspire you -- or experiment with one of the following activities to get into the flow:

1. Write a Haiku Poem: Haiku is a three-line Japanese poem with a 5-7-5 syllable pattern, made of short, unrhymed lines that evoke natural imagery. [Learn more about haiku](#) & [download a haiku writing sheet](#).
2. Make Ojo de Dios (God's eye, originating from Mexico. The Huichol Indians who lived in the mountains made Ojo de Dios to watch over them). You'll need a couple of short sticks, different colours of wool / yarn and scissors. Follow the online tutorial [through this video](#).

Share a photo of your creation and/or reflections about the experience [online](#).



Write a Gratitude Note: Share your gratitude with someone in your life.

"Wear gratitude like a cloak, and it will feed every corner of your life." - Rumi

The power of gratitude is wide-reaching. Evidence shows it not only brings about joy, yet also [great benefits for the well-being of yourself and those around you](#). Whether you thank an old friend for their ongoing support, or thank a stranger or acquaintance who did something kind for you, any expression of gratitude will make a positive impact. To get your ideas flowing, you can read an example of a gratitude letter and some pointers [here](#). Share reflections about your gratitude experience [online](#).

Make Origami to Share:

"A master of origami said he tried to express with paper the joy of life..."
-- Tor Udall

Making origami hearts can be a beautiful way to focus our mind's attention on the present moment and engage in something creative. You may even like to write a nice message inside for yourself and/or somebody else. [Here](#) is a quick and helpful video that will show you how to do it along with a [step-by-step guide](#). :) For those who'd like a challenge, try making this more [intricate origami heart](#)! Post a photo of your origami creation [online](#)!

