

## Drawing from Nature: Nature Walk Meets Sketching Meets Mindfulness

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**SUMMARY:** Take time out of your day to take notice of the great works of nature that are all around us. In this session, we will take a stroll through camp and practice using our “shema eyes,” our ability to really take in what we are seeing through the process of drawing. It’s not about creating realistic or perfect drawings. It’s about how drawing helps us to see differently.

### GOALS:

- Practice being in the present moment through a creative activity
- Connect the Jewish practice of blessing and praising the wonder of nature to the nature journaling process
- Make space for moments of wander and wonder even when the camp day gets hectic

**AUDIENCE:** Age: Any. Group Size: Under 15 is preferable.

**TIMING:** 45 minutes

**MATERIALS:** pens or pencils for and paper for everyone. You can use printer or scratch paper or sketchbooks. If you are using regular paper, it’s nice to also have clipboards

**SET-UP:** Any walk that has plants and some amount of wildlife like birds or lizards or even bugs is great

### SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – *Introductions*
- 00:05-00:10 – *What is mindfulness?*

- 00:10-00:20 – *Drawing Exercises*
- 00:20-00:40 – *Walk and Draw*
- 00:40-00:45 – *Wrap-up*

## SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:05 – Session leader will gather participants in a quiet space and do a personal introduction and if the people do not know each other, do a quick go-around of intros.

00:05-00:10 – Session leader will ask folks what they know about mindfulness and take some suggestions. Once folks have had some time to think it through, the session leader will explain that for today, we are using the definition that mindfulness is paying attention in the present moment without judgment. There are a lot of ways to practice mindfulness: meditation, breathing, bird watching, washing the dishes in a mindful way. Today, we will be using drawing to facilitate our ability to pay attention in the present moment without judgment and see how it helps us relate to the physical space we are in

00:10-00:20 – Session leader will explain that before we start, we will do some exercises to try to get out of our judgment minds. Drawing can make people anxious and cause you to get caught up in how something will look or how someone else might be better or how someone else might look at our drawings. That is the literal opposite of mindfulness. Feelings of anxiety about how things will look take us out of the present moment and are very clearly full of judgment. We will start with some activities to shake off our feelings of judgment.

Activity One: Session leader will choose a focal point (leaves are good for this) and ask everyone to draw it following two rules: you can't look at your paper and you can't pick up your pen.

Activity Two: Now draw the same focus object but with your non-dominant hand. You can look at your paper, but don't lift your drawing implement.

Activity Three: Draw the focus object in ten seconds. You can look at your paper AND pick up your drawing implement

Session leader will ask participants to share their drawings if they feel comfortable. It is often fun to look at the wonky drawings. SL will ask how that experience was for everyone and take a few answers.

00:20-00:40 – Session leader will start the walk. Along the walk, the session leader will stop the group so that they can draw something. Participants will all draw the same object, and then share something that they noticed about the object while they were drawing it. Session leader should vary the focus object, using something a leaf, a tree, a landscape feature, and if possible, an animal.

00:40-00:45 – Session leader will gather the group together and ask what they noticed in their drawing practice that they think they wouldn't have noticed otherwise. What other benefits do they think this practice has for them? Was anything about it hard? How might they use this in daily life to bring attention to the world around them and have a centering and grounding effect on them?

# CORNERSTONE RESOURCE

