

# Grounded

Mindfulness

Relaxation

Relationships

Movement



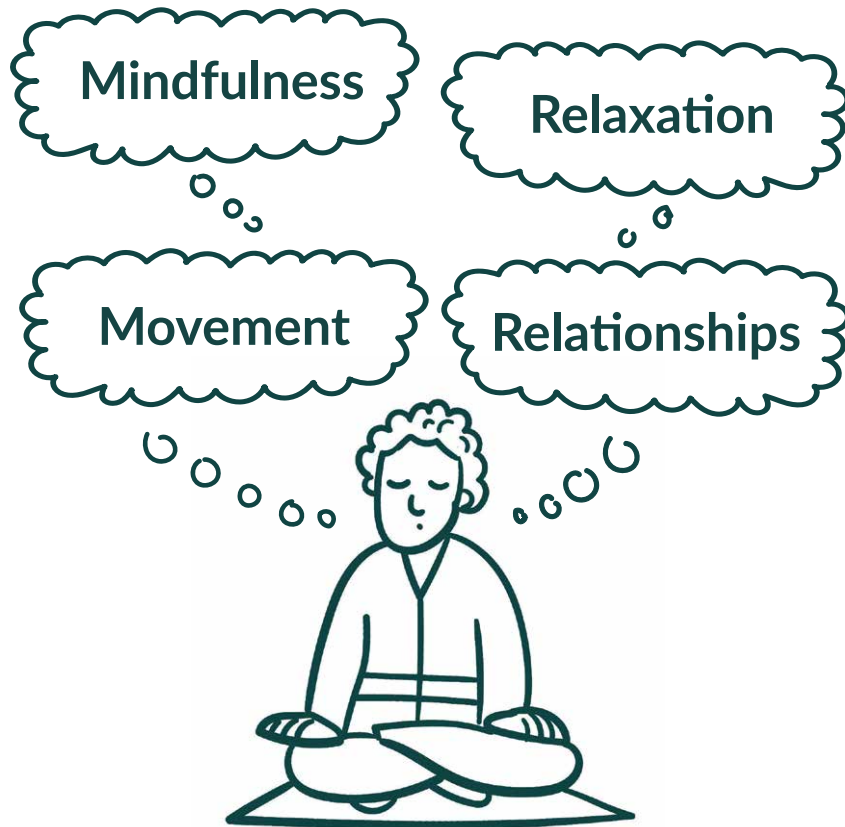
A  
Therapeutic  
Guide



Created by Kazzum Arts and Jocelyne Quennell • Animated by Robin Lane-Roberts

# Grounded - A Therapeutic Guide

This Therapeutic Guide has been developed to support carers and professionals to deepen their appreciation of the impacts of wellbeing practice. Designed to accompany our Grounded animations, each text is the result of a series of enriching conversations between Kazzum Arts and psychotherapist Jocelyne Quennell. We hope that they will support embodied and relational professional practice with young people, enabling creativity, connection and wellbeing to flourish.



Created by Kazzum Arts and Jocelyne Quennell

Kazzum Arts is a multidisciplinary arts organisation providing creative opportunities for children and young people who have been affected by trauma and adversity.

Jocelyne Quennell is Director of the Wellbeing Faculty at the Institute for Arts in Therapy and Education IATE, where she is responsible for training courses in Therapeutic Communications Skills, Therapeutic Wellbeing Practice and Community Wellbeing. She has thirty years of experience working creatively and relationally with individuals and groups, adults and children recovering from trauma, managing mental health challenges and promoting emotional wellbeing towards the fulfilment of human potential. Jocelyne is a Fellow of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy UKCP and former Principal of IATE with a lifelong commitment to promoting quality and standards in the education and training of arts and therapeutic practitioners.

# Body Scan

A quick body scan helps bring awareness to how your body is feeling. It can be very relaxing, and you may feel sensations or tensions in your body that you hadn't noticed before.

## Aim:

Develop an understanding of the impact of sensory approaches.

## Questions:

What might be the impact of a 'Body Scan'?

How can we incorporate these techniques into our interactions with young people?

What should we be aware of to ensure this is a safe activity?

Why is visualisation / mentalisation important?

## Reflections:

Focussing in the 'here and now' can help connect with self and others, re-energise and revitalise. Following awareness of the patterns and flow of energy in our bodies can help understand more about our own inner rhythms, connecting feelings and relaxing the mind.

Having a sense of our whole body, including sensitivity to our skin can remind us of our personal boundaries, where we end, and the rest of the world begins. Body awareness from the top of our heads, scanning through to the tips of our fingers and toes can increase our focus, giving us a feeling of safety, security, and peace of mind. Tuning-in to our emotions and imagination can open-up possibilities for creativity and reflection.

Allowing our awareness of sensory and emotional experience to grow naturally from within can help us respect our unique inner life, changing



ourselves from the inside out. Metaphors and images which come to mind can sometimes express more than words, so visualisation can be a valuable resource to support our understanding of our experiences.

Discovering the ability to play with metaphors and images in our mind's eye, can support the integration of physical, cognitive, social and emotional aspects of development and lived experience.

The symbolic language of the arts, music, dance, poetry and story can open up our creativity and imagination bringing more meaning, value, motivation and purpose to life.

When we are more in touch with ourselves it may be possible to become more empathic towards others, imagining and picturing their different lived experiences with compassion.

# Grounding Technique

This grounding technique will take you through your 5 senses and help you to keep your mind in the present. It can deal with feelings of anxiety or stress, and help to calm you down.

## Aim:

Understand sensory approaches to develop self and co-regulation.

## Questions:

- Why might a sensory approach be important for connection?
- How can we support ourselves to experience a sense of safety?
- What impact does grounding activity have on the Nervous System?
- What is co-regulation and how is it effective?

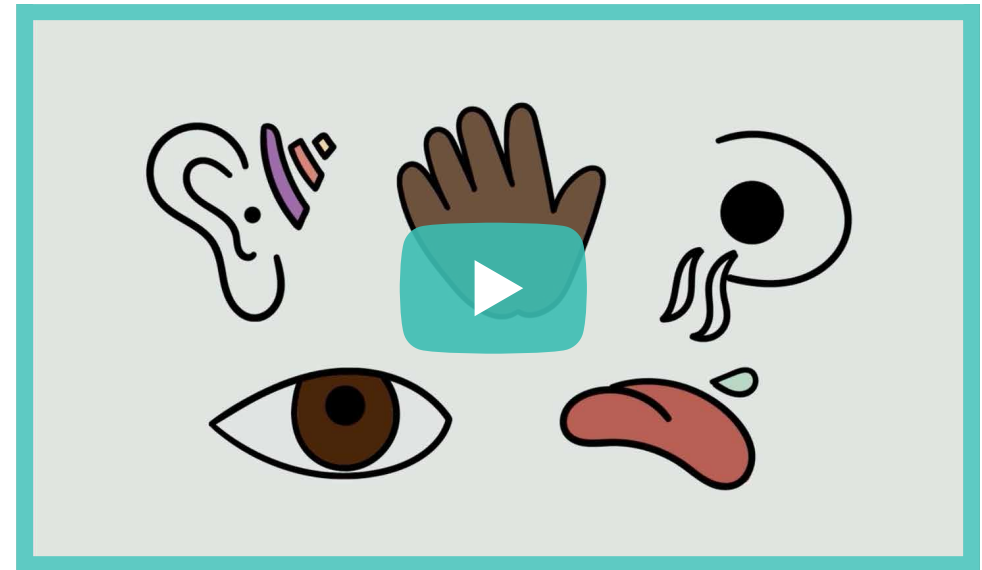
## Reflections:

Being aware of our bodies and sensory experience can help us to be more fully present to ourselves and the world around us. Noticing what we see, hear, smell, taste and touch can open our sensory awareness, contributing to a deeper level of engagement with life.

Sometimes we may be overly exposed to stimulus in our surroundings which can feel invasive or even overwhelming. This may cause emotional dysregulation or distress. This can impact on the nervous system heightening feelings of potential threat or danger.

It can be important to stay grounded in awareness of our bodies and the sensations of our lived experience. Staying in touch with self, finding sources of soothing and promoting calmness, can increase feelings of emotional stability, safety, and security.

Being and becoming more mindful can enable us to expand our awareness of our bodies and the environment with the potential to



breathe more openly and deeply within our lives.

Taking in what we need from the environment through our in-breath and releasing what we do not want with our out-breath can help us sift through our experiences and let go of our defensive strategies. Finding inner resources from within ourselves can enable us to let go of old patterns of self-protection which no longer serve our best interests. Agency enables us to retain what is useful and meaningful, resting and digesting with our needs and longings as well as releasing tension and stress which may be harmful to wellbeing.

Awareness of breathing can enable us to regulate our emotions with compassion and potentially also be more available to others for co-regulation. The body can be described as 'the ground of our being' and the more we can awaken to sensory awareness, the more we may be able to inhabit the experience of feeling at home in ourselves and the world.

# Open Hand Breathing

You can settle your thoughts and help yourself feel calmer by focusing on your breathing. This 'open hand breathing' technique makes it easy to focus on your breath so you can get on with your day.

## Aim:

Appreciate the benefits of breathing together.

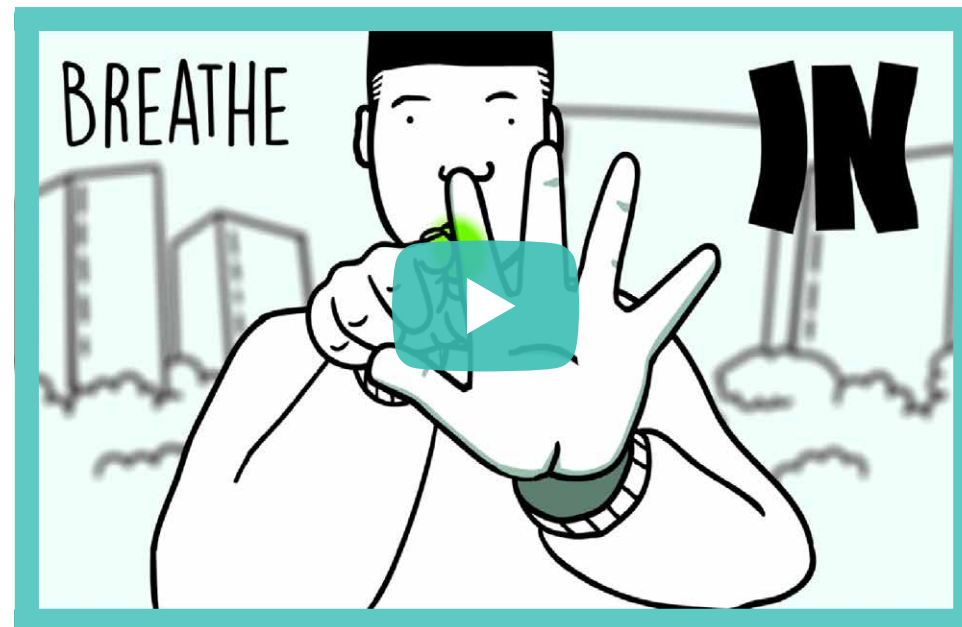
## Questions:

- What are the benefits of deep breathing?
- What impact does breathing have on the Nervous System?
- How might we use breathing activities within interactions with young people?
- Why might breathing together be a symbolically important activity?

## Reflections:

Awareness of breathing can improve our quality of life and sense of connection with self and others. Heightening sensitivity to the out breath can help release tensions and toxic stress with the potential to feel more inspired, ready to take in fresh energy and the spirit of renewal. In extending the out-breath further we can even activate the parasympathetic nervous system which is essential for our ability to rest and digest, engage in social connection and build trusting relationships.

When we breathe in and out with awareness alongside others, we can sometimes become more open, connected and emotionally available. This level and depth of sensitivity to the breath may help us to understand more about the perceptions and experiences of others.



Participating in a simple act of shared breathing, can enable us to see each other more clearly, supporting through sharing in our physical, mental, and emotional life experience.

Increasing our ability to regulate stress, may expand our capacity for mutual awareness and attending to each other with care. Breathing together at the beginning of an encounter or dialogue can help us focus. This can prepare us for further activities, enhancing the quality of what follows. This can also enable more mindful interactions.

Breathing together at the end of an event can enable us to absorb and assimilate what was discovered, taking in our learning and growth in more meaningful and satisfying ways.



# Being in Water

Water gives us lots of physical and mental health benefits. Just seeing and feeling water can improve your mood and help you relax.

## Aim:

Develop sensory approaches to support Children and Young People to remain in contact with nature.

## Questions:

How does water appeal to our 'soft fascination' of Blue Spaces?  
What is importance of the symbolic meaning of water?  
How does water support self-regulation?

## Reflections:

Water has life-giving properties and regenerative power. It is an elemental force of nature which can cleanse, restore and inspire.

Water can calm and soothe in all its manifestations. Whether you are watching a fast flowing stream, the waves of the sea breaking on the sand, a long barge slowly moving along a canal, or simply seeing the reflection of the sun in a puddle or a still lake, water can work its healing balm.

Being close to water helps us access the opportunity to pause, contemplate and reflect on all the issues that may be troubling us. Water can allow us to slow down and connect us to the timeless and infinite - taking a moment to breathe.

Water can also generate great joy. There are few children who cannot recall wanting to rush straight into water, to play with it in a sink, a bath or a pool, delighting in pouring, splashing, and immersing themselves.

When life confronts us with turbulent times, the symbolism of 'going



with the flow' can help remind us of our resilience to cope with the changes we need to face.

The rivers continue to flow, and the tides will come in and out daily so there is a sense of constancy, security and continuity which can come from the power of water. At other times we might find an oasis to quench our thirst and longing for harmony or peace of mind.

Water can be traditionally associated with holy rituals connected to themes like fertility, or rebirth. It can also simply provide a place of leisure where we can dangle our legs and feel the water wash over our feet as we allow ourselves to watch the world go by.

Being close to water can sometimes help ease pain as it frees us to contemplate difficult issues. You can perhaps even experience a catharsis and find release. Water can induce tears when we are moved to cry which can also help alleviate tension, promoting recovery.

The sea's horizon offers perspective, vision, and hope, so when the sun sets over the water, we can perhaps even touch a hint of the sublime.

# Calming Objects

Create a 'calm box' with some favourite calming objects or activities inside. When you get stressed or upset you can go to your 'calm box' to support you in feeling relaxed and grounded again.

## Aim:

Appreciate the relationship between object, memory and emotion.

## Questions:

How can objects build relationships and support young people to share their lived experience?

How can objects support CYP to develop self regulation techniques?

Why is the relationship between memory, objects and emotions important?

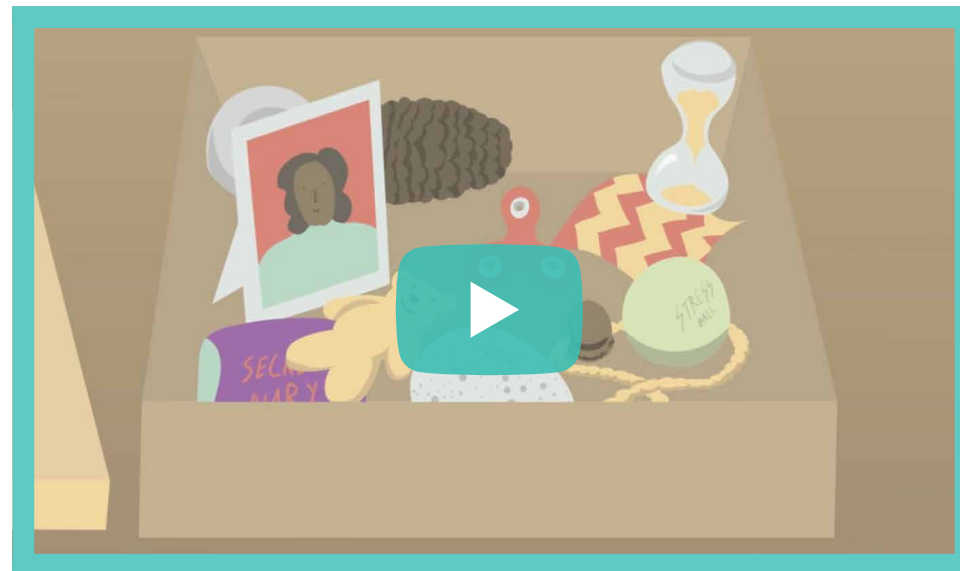
## Reflections:

There is a powerful connection between objects of significance, our memory and feelings. Precious objects can be of immense personal value.

They can help us focus, hold our attention, and soothe us in our moments of confusion, distress or bewilderment. They may also inspire our creativity and play as well as capacity for envisioning. Objects can constellate our emotions, connecting us symbolically to other people, places or events, as well as the rhythm and flow of our lived experience over time.

Gathering pebbles on the shore, for example, is a ritual shared by a great many people. Re-visiting these later in life may enable us to recall happy memories and experiences.

Special objects may support us in remembering where we come from and how far we have travelled, as well as where we may hope to go in our future.



Objects can be evocative and help to place ourselves in the world, containing us in the here and now with a physical manifestation of who we are, what we feel, and how we each experience our lives and where we come from.

Photos of our ancestors can connect us to the strength and meaning of our cultural heritage. Each object can have a different significance depending on which memory or person it connects us to. This can help to bridge our losses and enable us to re-engage with what was important, precious, or valuable in our past.

When we engage with an object we care about, it can evoke another time, place, or someone we loved or who loved us. Objects can carry the value and meaning of another person's presence. This may include the weight of personal grief, sorrow or the sadness of loss, as well as the lightness of the joy, delight, wonder and love of what was shared.

# Happy Place Visualisation

When life and other people get to you, it can help to visualise a happy and safe place in your imagination.

## Aim:

Appreciating imaginative engagement as a technique for wellbeing

## Questions:

Why is visualisation relevant to wellbeing?

How do we encourage CYP to feel safe in visualisation activities?

What role might visualisation play in creating safety, trust and shared experience?

## Reflections:

Opening-up the senses to the imagination can provide a portal to the source of serenity, peace of mind, tranquility, and freedom. The ability to imagine and visualise a safe and happy place can introduce feelings of hope and possibility, building positive visions of ourselves and the world around us.

Not everyone may have experienced happiness or contentment, or know the full extent of joy, freedom, and fulfilment in their lives yet. This does not mean that these qualities will not be available in the future. Therefore, being able to use your imagination can be an optimistic rehearsal for what could lie ahead for you.

Being open to the possibility of being happy may begin a journey to conceiving of a place inside which could feel secure, contented, where you might feel at home, calm and at peace in yourself.



The imagination can sometimes feel as if it has a life of its own. We can envision positive, nourishing and rewarding feelings and ideas as well as positive thoughts about people, places and things. There may, however, be times when we 'imagine the worst'. We can also picture negative, stressful, and challenging possibilities of what could lie ahead.

Befriending the imagination can enhance our ability to conceive of a better world, where we can feel less threatened, become more liberated and ultimately build a more secure sense of self. This can support us invest in a warmer, kinder, more constructive narrative.



# Acts of Kindness

Doing something kind for someone else could make their day and also makes you feel just as good.

## Aim:

Understanding the importance of empathy in the creation of interpersonal relationships.

## Questions:

- What is empathy?
- Where does empathy happen in the brain?
- Why might it be important to build our ability to empathise?
- What impact can empathy make in our lives?

## Reflections:

Compassion for ourselves and each other is the foundation of our wellbeing and happiness. Empathy, sharing and reciprocity contribute to the growth of neuronal pathways in the brain, strengthening our capacity for self-awareness and altruism.

Empathising with the feelings of others and holding them in mind with appreciation and compassion is the cornerstone of human relationships and a healthy functioning society.

Caring for others with genuine compassion can stimulate the release of neurochemicals like oxytocin which can stimulate the flow of energy and emotional impulses throughout the nervous system, bringing greater joy, satisfaction, and wellbeing to everyday life.



Being fully present and available for others, particularly if they are suffering, can be both challenging and rewarding. Knowing that through kindness and generosity of spirit you are making a difference is meaningful even in difficult circumstances. Caring for other people and generating an atmosphere of calm, tranquility and peace is the gift of altruism.

Witnessing empathy between others can build the bonds of attachment which foster community resilience. Giving affection and receiving support help us to connect in more depth and be reminded of the meaning and value of human relationships.

# Hugs

Studies have shown that hugs can help reduce stress and anxiety, making you feel happier and even reducing pain!

## Aim:

Understanding the role of consensual touch in forming relationships

## Questions:

What hormones are released through touch?

What impact does this have?

How does sensory interaction support relationships?

## Reflections:

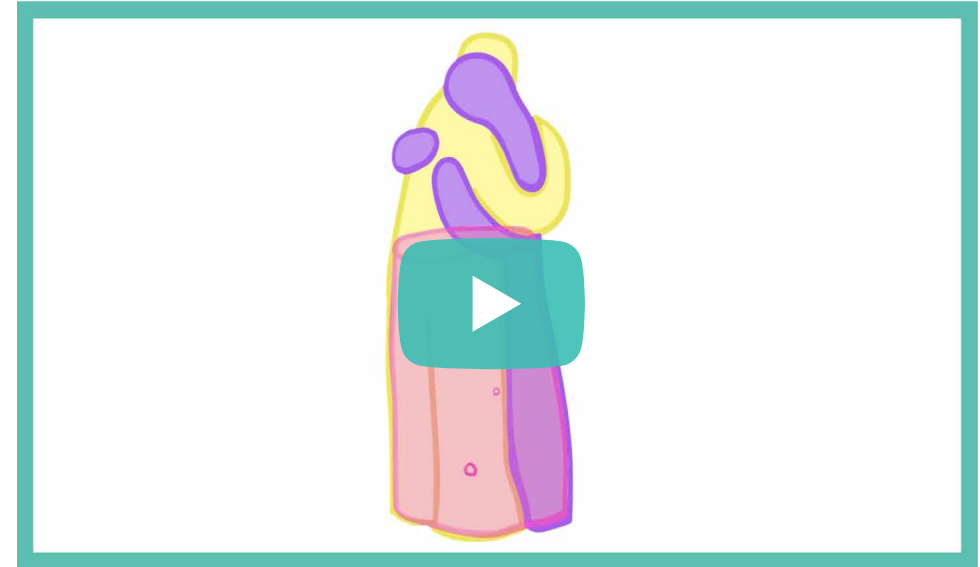
We can soothe ourselves and each other through safe physical contact and touch. The tactile nature of sensory play can produce endorphins which help us to feel better.

In an ideal world everyone deserves to feel nurtured and comforted through the gentle and reassuring touch of another person. A hug can be a way of sharing our humanity.

Remember that not everyone enjoys being touched, and sometimes we can feel vulnerable for reasons related to our personal history and experience. It is always helpful to be aware that physical contact is through mutual consent and is a process which will require sensitivity.

Moderating the challenges of contact, closeness, intimacy, and distance with each individual, can build the bonds of trust through gentle inquiry and mindful communication.

Being able to ask for touch, or equally saying no to being touched can help us develop and maintain our own personal boundaries. Making



choices about how, when, where and with whom we are touched matters to our safety and wellbeing.

Unwanted physical attention causes stress in the mind and body. That is why we always need to learn about saying yes and saying no.

Consenting to a hug and giving permission for someone to provide physical comfort can be soothing, and we may feel emotionally supported through physical contact with others.

When we have established these simple, respectful principles, everyone will be more likely to feel safe and free to communicate in different ways. Touch can be a rich resource for connection, security and inspiration.

# Laughing Out Loud

Laughing increases feel-good chemicals in your body and can help you feel relaxed.

## Aim:

Appreciate playfulness and play based interactions

## Questions:

What is laughter?

What happens in the brain when we are laughing?

What chemicals are released into the body through laughter?

What is the impact of these chemicals in forming relationships and neurogenesis?

## Reflections:

Laughter is a universal language, which is usually an expression of having fun, but it can also sometimes help us befriend our vulnerability. Sharing a laugh with others is a bonding experience which may enable us to become more empathic. This can perhaps help deal with the pain of suffering and even human tragedy through the comic dimensions of life.

Laughter is spontaneous and genuine, unpredictable and cannot be prescribed. We can, through humour and laughter, perhaps share compassionately the unbearable aspects of human experience, as well as increasing our bonds for safety, trust and belonging.

Perhaps laughter can also help us feel less alone in the world, overcoming the barriers which might divide us, increasing our quality of life and community wellbeing.

The contagious nature of laughter can stimulate mirror neurons which may even promote changes in the architecture of the brain in children



and young people. Neurochemicals can stimulate neurogenesis in the brain. Growing new neuronal pathways through our intimate interactions with others is an extraordinary gift of human relationships.

Laughing at the expense of another through ridicule or cruelty can cause fear or shame and be abusive. It can also be a way of deflecting from authentic contact through forms of defensive avoidance. This is different from laughing empathically alongside someone about the shared experience of having to face challenges in life. This can be more cathartic, healing, and reparative, leading to endorphin release, delivering a natural high.

Laughter transcends the barriers of language and can be joyous, glorious, and playful.

# Being Active Outdoors

Getting active outdoors can make us feel fitter and happier. It's good for our brains and even helps us get on better with people.

## Aim:

Understand the impact that Green Spaces can make on wellbeing.

## Questions:

What impact do green spaces have on the Autonomic Nervous System?  
How can this support us to rest and restore, to relax, to be curious?  
What is the significance of experiencing nature?

## Reflections:

Going for a walk outside can open-up a wealth of possibilities particularly when we notice the natural world around us.

Green and blue spaces can stimulate our neuro-chemical responses, calming our nerves and increasing our sense of safety, belonging and peace of mind. Fresh air, sunlight, exercise and nature all combine to lift our spirits and increase our capacity for health and wellbeing.

Sometimes the landscape can reflect our feelings and mood, attuning to our inner life. The atmosphere of the darkening sky in a storm may echo our feelings of tension, anticipation, or melancholy. Equally, when the sun bursts through and lights up the world around us this can connect us to our delight, joy, sense of adventure, passion, and life force.

Being aware that the seasons are patterns of cyclical movement, can help remind us that whatever we feel at any given moment, 'it too can pass'. Nature teaches us that we can be open to change and need not ever become stuck on one feeling for too long.



Noticing our environment and being aware of how growth takes place in the natural world can inspire images of regeneration and new life in our imagination, such as a tree in blossom or a tiny flower growing through the concrete.

Everywhere around us nature is inviting us to engage more deeply with our experience and perception. The skies, earth, trees, rivers, forests, mountains, moon, and stars are all there as resources to help access our resilience and potential.

Being connected to nature can be restorative and transformational, bringing a sense of awe, wonder, serenity, love and even possibilities of touching the sublime in our lives.



# Dancing

Dance to your favourite songs – it will make you feel better and could wake up your mind too.

## Aim:

Understanding the importance of movement.

## Questions:

Why does movement matter?

What does it mean to move?

What is the relationship between movement and memory?

How can movement support well balanced Autonomic Nervous System?

## Reflections:

Music and movement can help integrate the mind, body, and spirit.

Dance promotes physical awareness, emotional self-expression, and the energetic exchange which can happen when sharing an experience with other people.

Music and movement can enable dynamism, creativity and focus. To dance requires spontaneity and improvisation which naturally invites risk-taking, confidence building and the strengthening of trust between people.

Dancing together highlights the joy and poetry of connection between people, which is integral to social engagement and can enhance community wellbeing. Seeing each other's individuality through dance can promote respect for difference, heightening our ability to play, the courage to be original and form meaningful relationships.

Music and movement can stimulate the senses to link the head, heart and gut instincts.



Dancing together can build bridges between people, as we explore the possibilities for intimacy, whilst learning about boundaries in accordance with what feels right for each person. Sensory and emotional regulation support a well-balanced perspective, which can lead to a greater sense of harmony and wellbeing in our lives.

Dancing is an emotional experience that lives within us, in our movement memory. This is key to recalling how we feel in the presence of others. People find it easier to remember how we make them feel rather than what we say.

There is a wealth of unconscious communication in dance and movement which can open up new channels for our lived experience, creating new possibilities in getting to know who we are and discovering more about ourselves in relationship with others.



To view and download the Grounded animations visit:  
[vimeo.com/showcase/7513216](https://vimeo.com/showcase/7513216)

Translated versions are also available here:  
[www.kazzum.org/grounded](http://www.kazzum.org/grounded)

For more information please visit:  
[www.kazzum.org](http://www.kazzum.org)



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