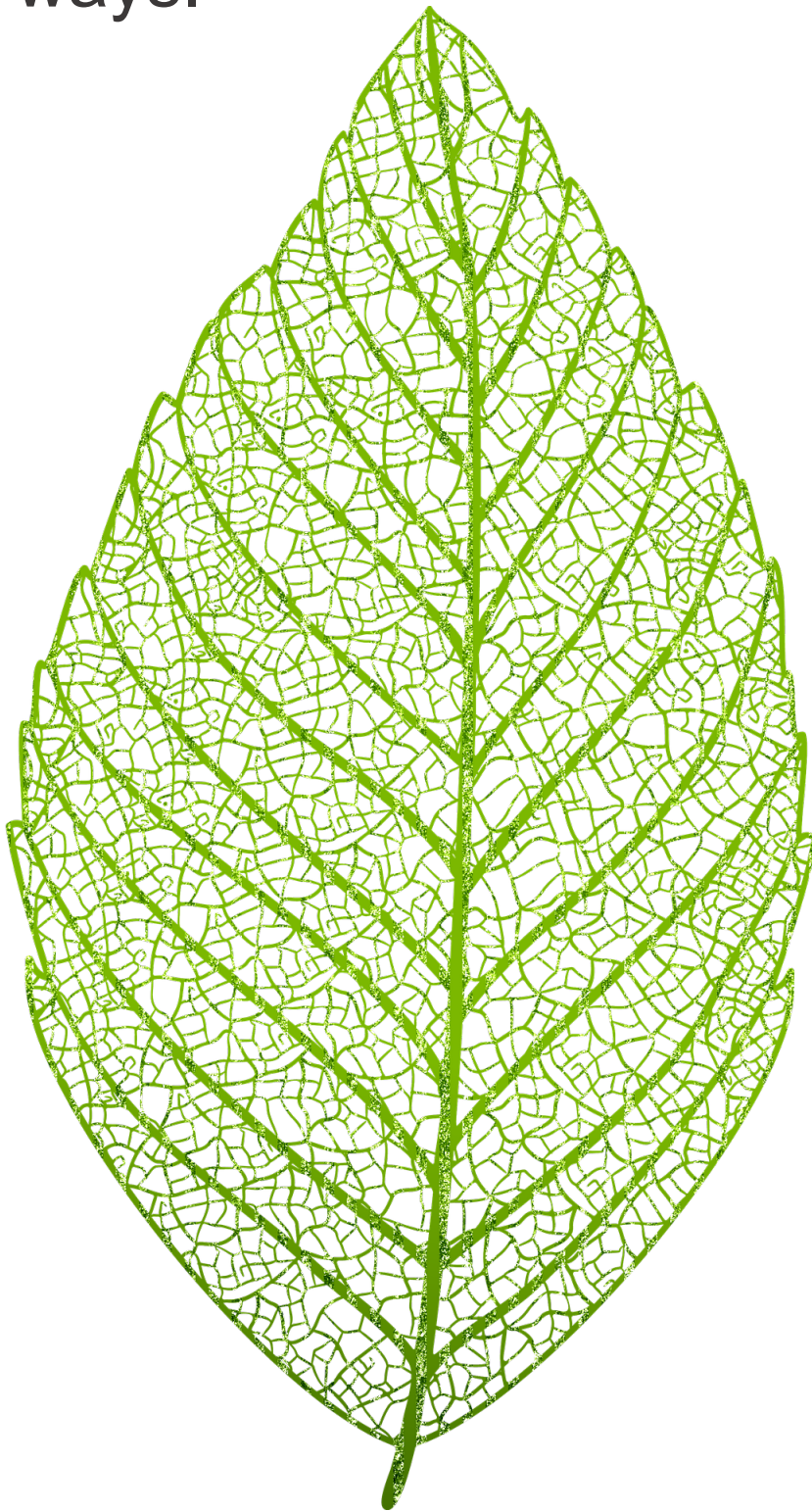


Mindfulness and Happiness

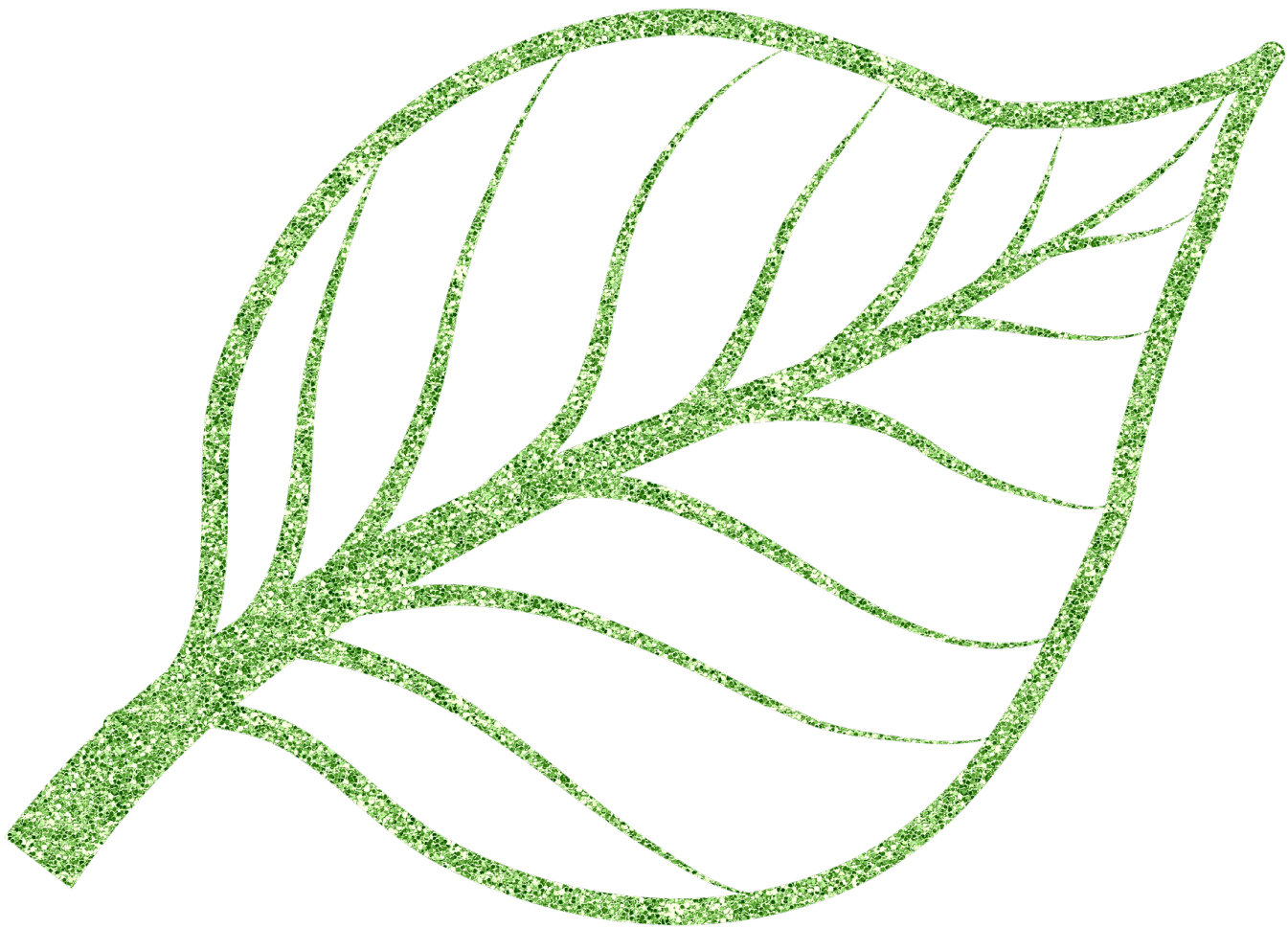


Practicing mindfulness increases your capacity for compassion - for yourself and for others.

With compassion you are able to care for yourself and others in wise and helpful ways.



But there is no one-size fits all
mindfulness practice.



You can find the mindfulness
practice that fits your life
circumstances and state of life
today.

Eight Personality Types

Extroverts

Introverts

Intuitives

Realists

Logical

Pleasers

Guardians

Improvisors



Each of us has traits of these personality types, some more strongly than others.

Throughout life you change, and your personality traits can also change. You may become more introverted or extroverted, more of an improviser or a guardian. Your personality traits can also change when your life circumstances change.

Depending on your state of life and what is happening in your life, different mindfulness practices can be more helpful than others.



EXTROVERTS

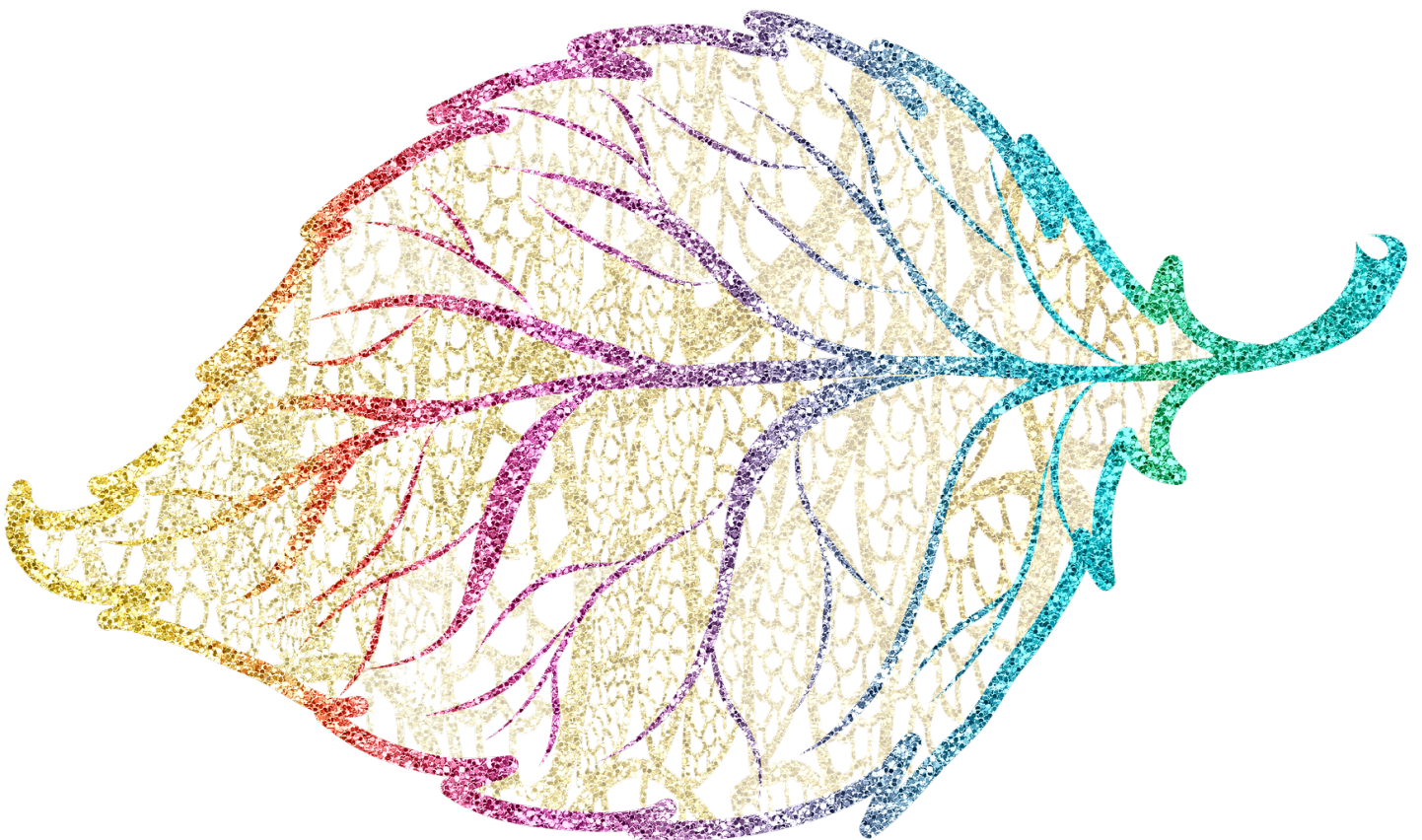
Extroverts are talkative and outgoing. They may think out loud. They get energized by being around people.

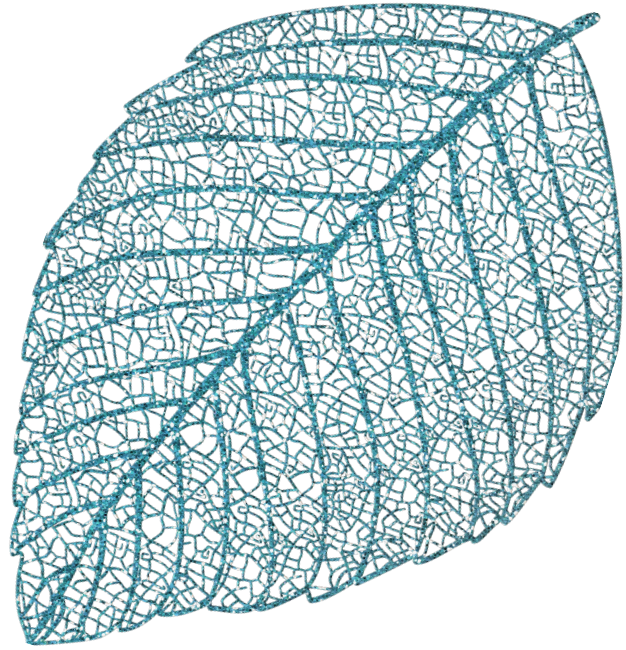


Follow your thoughts.

A common misunderstanding is that mindfulness training means emptying your mind. It is actually just the opposite.

The goal is to be aware of your thoughts, feelings and impulses. Notice when a thought or feeling arises, when it disappears.





Do not judge your thoughts or feelings.

As much as you can and as often as you can, bring yourself back to being aware of your feelings and thoughts.

It is inevitable that you get lost in your thoughts or feelings. Don't chastise yourself if you get lost in your thoughts or feelings.

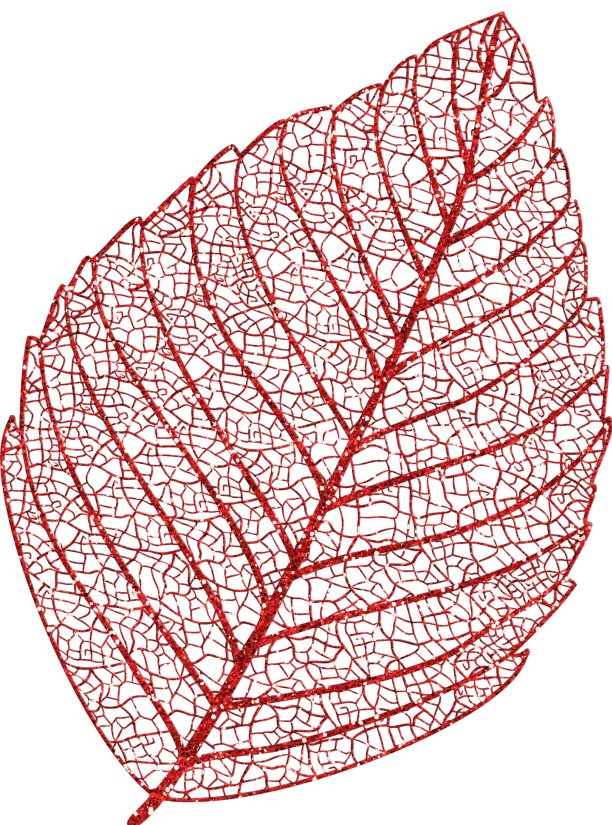
See if you can identify patterns in your thoughts or feelings.

Are there themes?

Do certain feelings come up more than others?

Be curious. Just observe without judgement.

The small but powerful act of bringing yourself back into awareness of your thoughts or feelings is the mindfulness practice, and will increase your capacity for compassion.



INTROVERTS

Introverts are reserved and generally avoid the lime-light. They may enjoy being with people, but it leaves them tired. They recharge from quiet time.



Follow your breath.

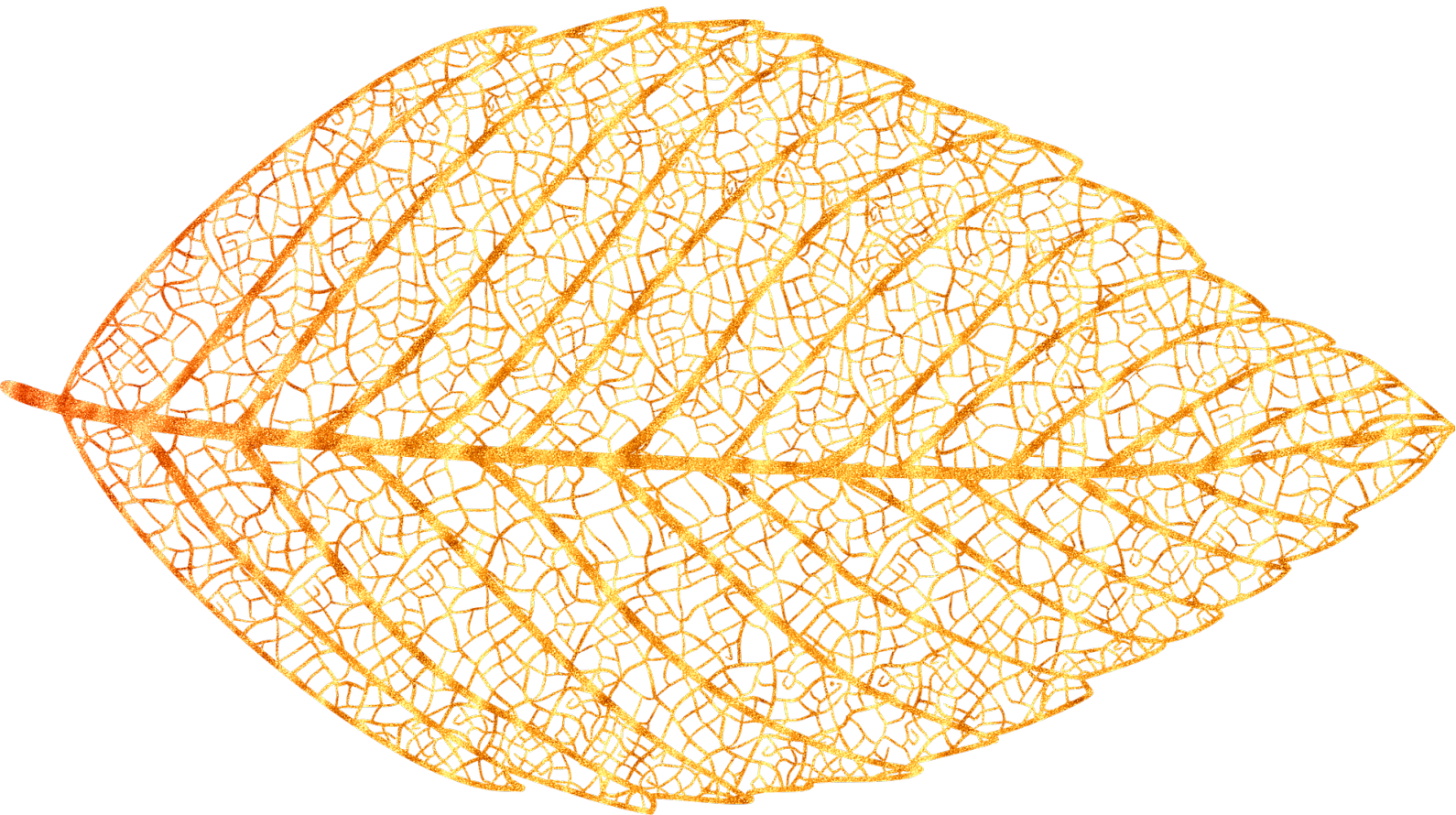
This is one of the most revered mindfulness practices.

Sit silently and bring your focus to your breath.



Each time your mind wanders, bring yourself back to your breath.

Try to concentrate on your breath but do not chastise yourself or judge if your mind wanders.



Just bring yourself back to the breath.

It is the act of bringing your mind back to awareness of the breath that is the mindfulness practice, so each time your mind wanders and you bring yourself back to awareness of the breath, you are building compassion in you.

You might try noting, by counting one for inhale, two for exhale, one, two etc.

When you find your mind wandering while you count, get curious about your breath.

How does it feel in your nose, your mouth, your throat, your lungs when you inhale?

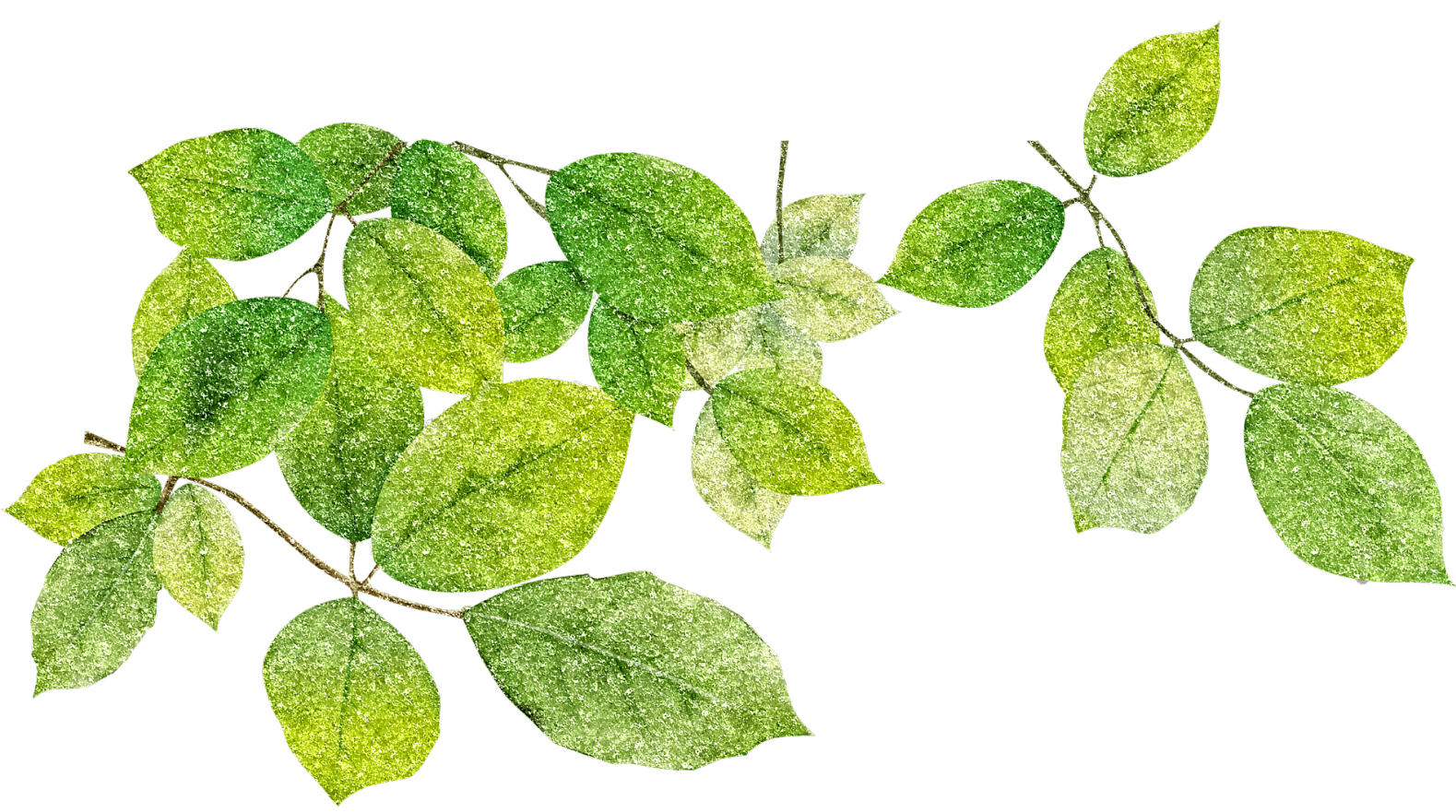
Does the body feel differently when you breathe?

Can you taste your breath?

Where?

How?





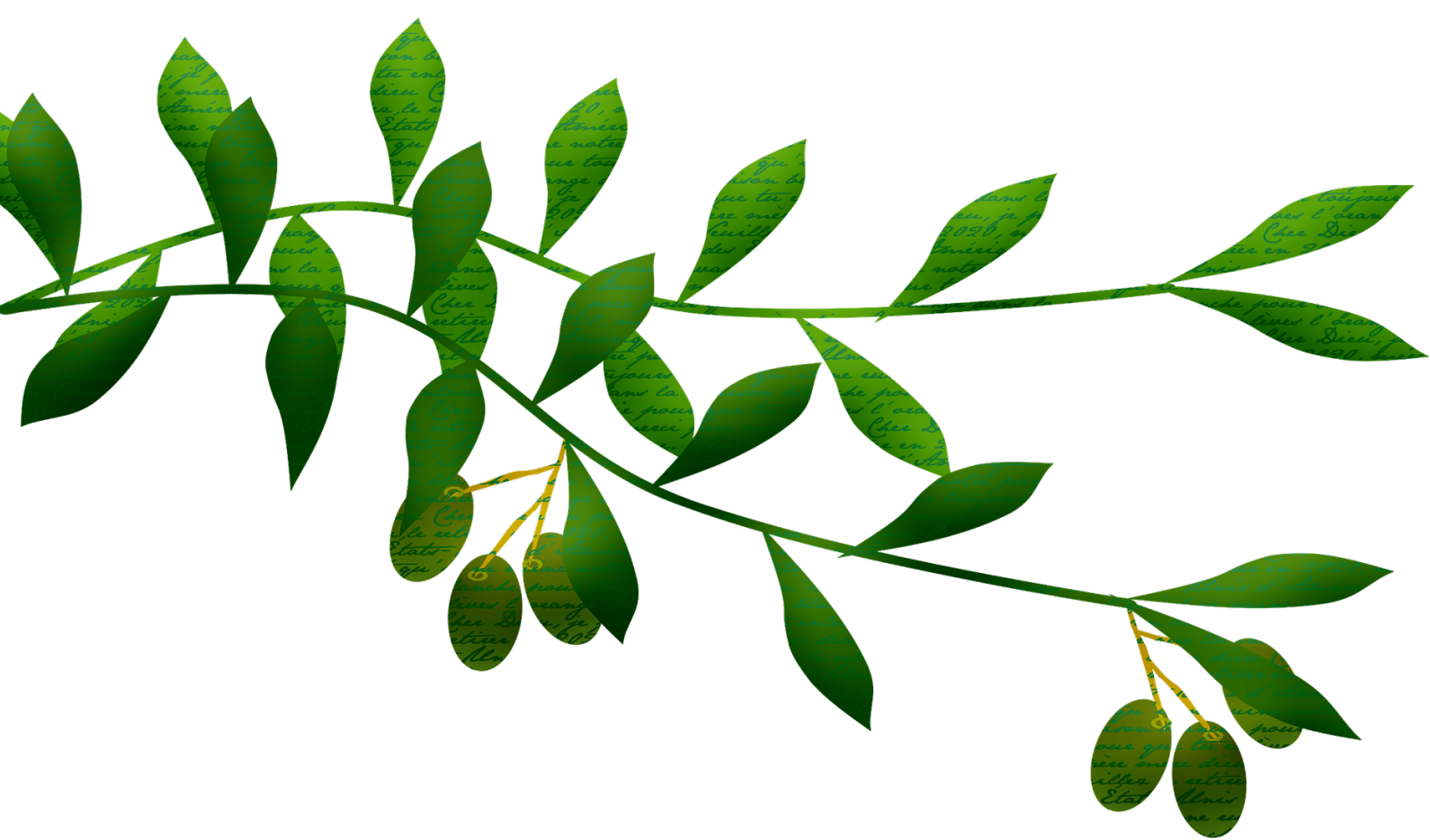
INTUITIVES

Intuitives are big-picture and idea people. They think conceptually. They may seem dreamy but their perceptions are often spot on.



Day dream.

Identify one idea, concept or occurrence and take the time to play it out in all the ways that emerge in your mind.



Stay focused on the object of your day dream. Think about all the alternatives, and the impact of each one.

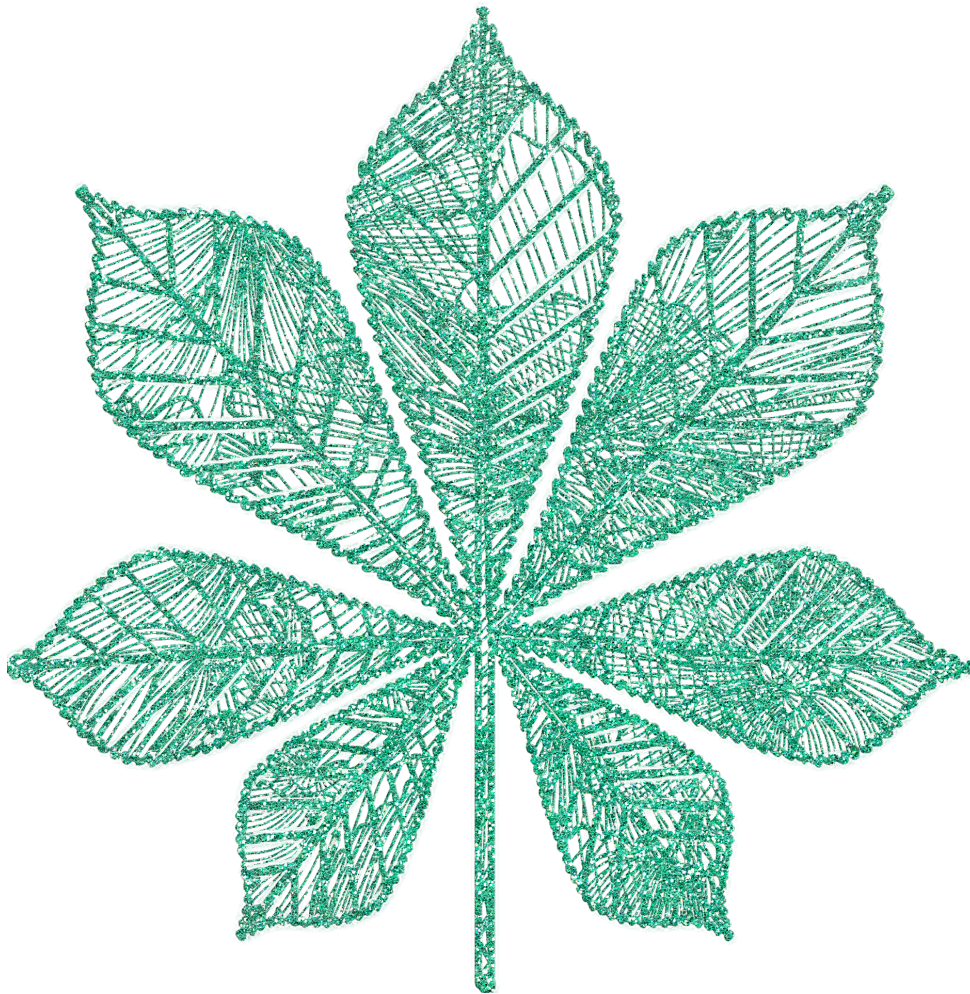
Look at your object from various perspectives. Ask yourself what would it be like in different circumstances – past, present and future.

Give yourself the time to think things all the way through and to let your mind wander down the paths as you play it all out.



REALISTS

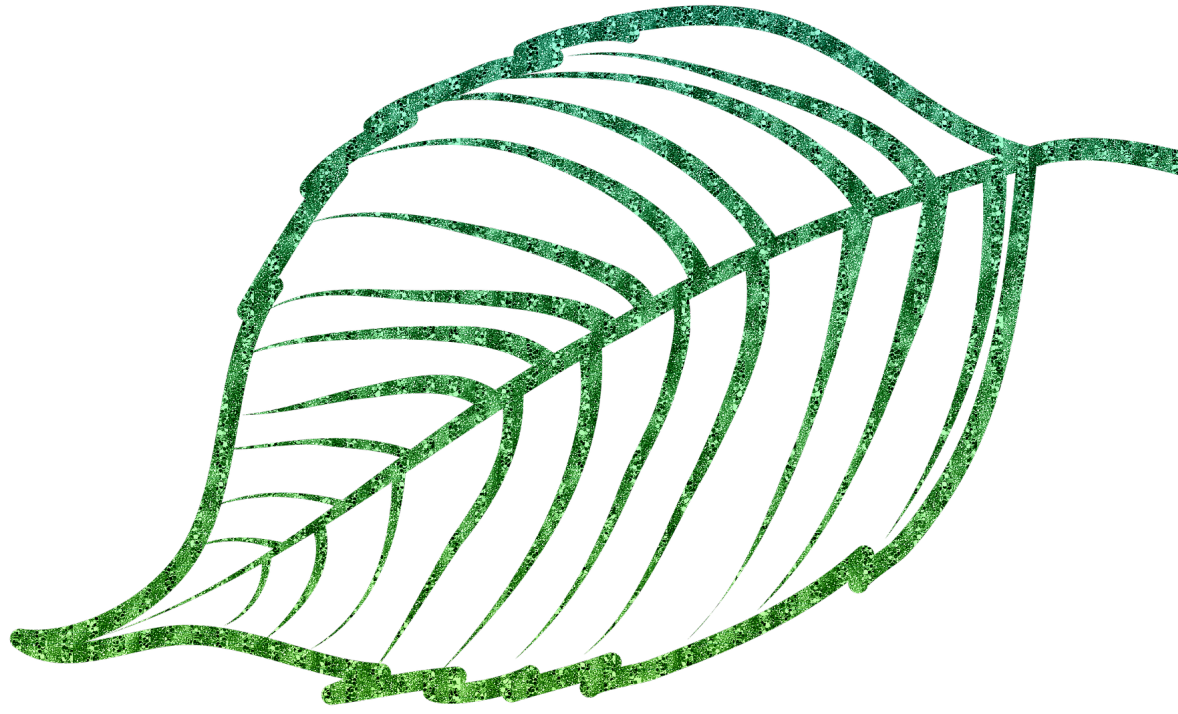
Realists tend to be focused on specific and literal things. They pay attention to detail. They are often focused on reality.



Body scans bring awareness to different parts of your body, from the top of your head to the tip of your toes.

You may want to just scan the outside of your body (head, eyes, nose...ankle, foot, toes), go into great detail (right little finger tip, little finger middle joint...) or include your insides (hair on the head, skin over skull, skull, brain, blood vessels etc.).





You can do body scan in a crowded train or alone in a silent room.

You can take 1 minute to do this, or an hour or more.

Start with your toes or the top of your head and bring your awareness to that part of your body.

Note if there is feeling there and if so, what it is. If there is none, note that

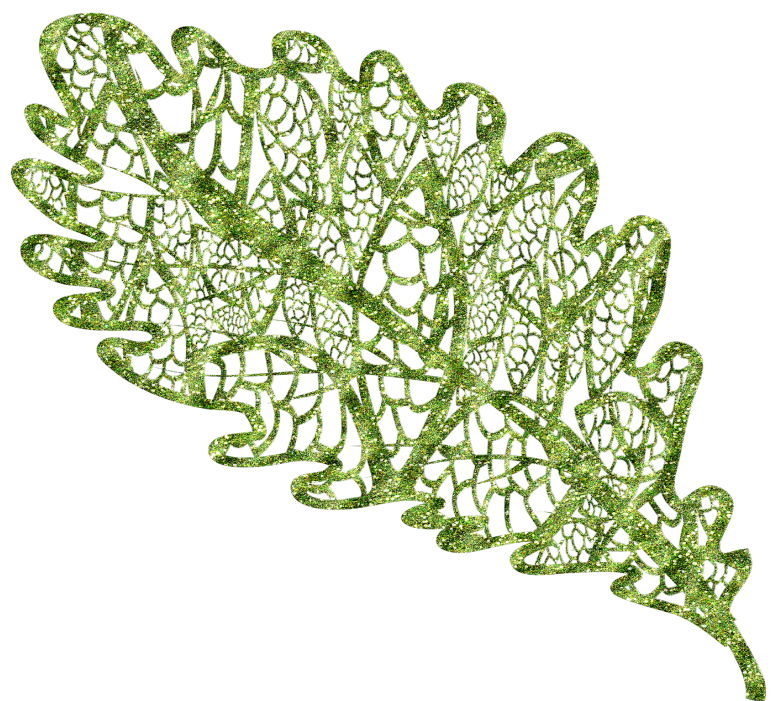
Note if there is feeling there and if so, what it is. If there is none, note that.

Do not judge.

If there is pain, just note it.

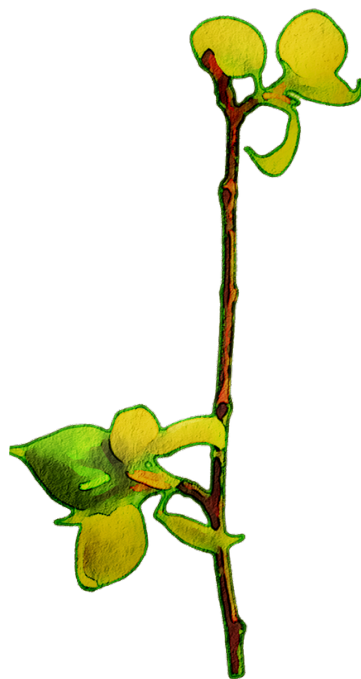
Each time your mind wanders, bring it back to the last place you remembered in your scan.

This is a great way to practice mindfulness and help yourself wind-down for sleep too, or use time otherwise spent fretting when you can't sleep.



LOGICAL

Logical minded people use logical reasoning. They are level headed. They hold fairness & justice highly.



Practice mindfulness of sounds.

Whether in a quite private place or noisy public space, with music playing or in silence allow yourself to listen.

Each time your attention strays bring your focus back to listening to the sounds that are occurring.



Close your eyes if you can, or softly focus in front of you.

Note each sound as it arises.

Note as it disappears.

Note the feeling that accompanies that sound.

Do you like it?



Is it annoying, painful or nerve wracking?

Allow the feeling or thought that comes up with the sound to arise as well, noting it, then noting as that thought or feeling disappears.

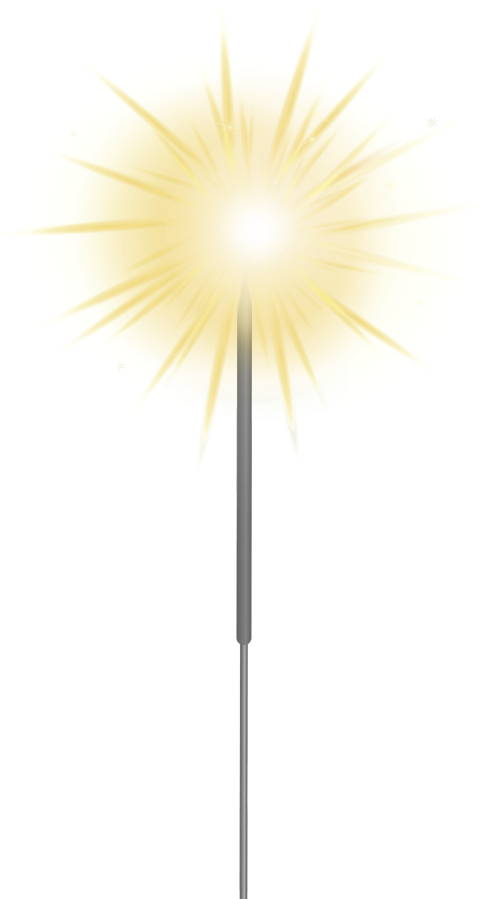
If a story comes up about the sound, such as where it comes from or a meaning attached to it, just notice your mind thinking, and then bring your mind to focus again on sounds.



A variant of this exercise is to play music, and allow yourself to get completely lost in the music, bringing yourself back into the music each time thoughts arise.

PLEASERS

Pleasers are warm and empathetic. They are usually forgiving. They seek harmony and see the best in people.



Loving Kindness is a mindfulness practice of loving yourself and others and wishing for health, happiness and ease for yourself and others.



Sit or lie down in a quiet safe place.

Imagine you are looking at the person or pet you most love in the world.

Allow your heart to fill with love and silently say to that person or pet from your heart “may he/she be happy, may he/she be without fear, may he/she be at ease.”

Imagine someone else you love, and extend the love you were feeling to that person, silently saying to that person “may he/she be happy, may he/she be without fear, may he/she be at ease.”

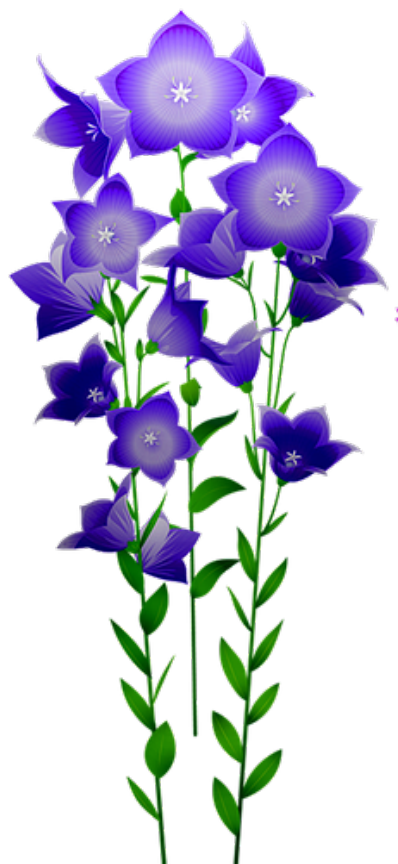


Now bring to mind someone you feel neutral about, and extend the love to that person, silently repeating the same phrase.

Next bring to mind someone who you do not like, even hate and extend love to them, repeating the same thing again.

Last, again bring to your mind the image of the person or pet you most dearly love, and say the phrase “may he/she be happy, may he/she be without fear, may he/she be at ease.”

Finish by extending the love to yourself, and the phrase “may I be happy, I be without fear, may I be at ease.”

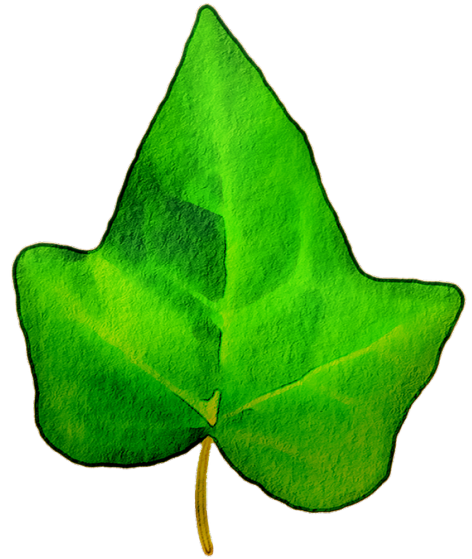




GUARDIANS

Guardians are rule followers. They generally do not like ambiguity. They prefer not to be surprised, and can have a hard time recovering from a surprise.

Practice mindfulness while you clean the house or do any other mundane tasks, but focus exclusively on exactly what you are doing.

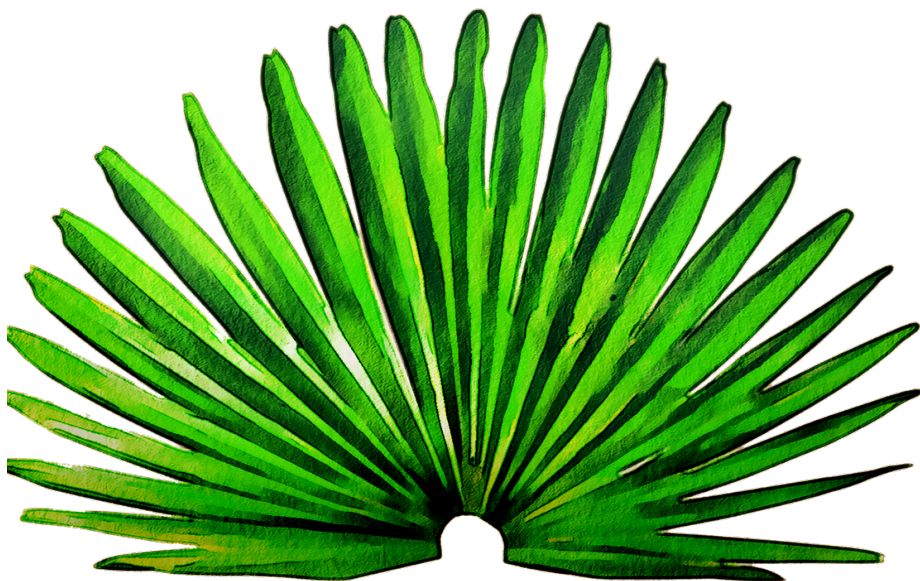


Pay attention to every detail of what you are doing and notice every aspect of your actions.



Notice how your hands feel, the texture and temperature of the vacuum tub or dish cloth, the dust bunnies in the corner.

When your mind wanders, worries, starts thinking about the future or gets impatient to finish, bring yourself back to focusing on exactly what you are doing in that moment.



IMPROVISORS



Improvisers are open minded and spontaneous. They like surprises and new situations.

Be mindful of the beauty around you.



Stare at the sunset.

Gaze at the clouds.

Lay down under a tree and look into the
branches.



Keep your mind focused on the beauty. See every detail, every change as time passes.

Be fully aware of what you are seeing.

Note your feelings and thoughts as you behold, and if your mind wanders, bring yourself back to seeing as closely as possible the object of your mindfulness practice.





Mindfulness and Happiness is a tool from Happiness Alliance's How to Be Happy ©
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