

# MINDFUL WALKING ACTIVITY

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Going out and walking the streets in which we live can help us become more aware of the people, the strengths and the challenges that surround us.

Mindful walking is about purposefully walking and being in the present, getting to know our neighbourhoods and practising gratitude.



**Other ways we can help you connect with your community:**

- This mindful walk activity can be used as part of a group or club.
- Get your friends involved in CUF's Walk Towards Hope winter challenge. [Learn more.](#)
- Use our [Look-Up Tool](#) to learn more about where you live.



## Guidance for Mindful Walking

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### BEFORE

- You can go alone, in twos and threes, or as a bigger group. Consider the practicalities and safety considerations for different group sizes. For example, choose well-lit areas or consider walking during the day rather than in the darker evenings. If you are walking alone, please consider your personal safety.
- Plan a suitable route with accessible start and finish points. Walk around the town boundary, down the high street or some of the key spaces and buildings where people in your community gather.
- Use the term 'walking' in an inclusive way and consider accessibility for people using mobility aids. Think about how many roads you will cross, the terrain and any areas that might feel unsafe.
- Select a group leader and plan a short briefing for participants (see 'Gathering' section overleaf).

## GATHERING

- If you are walking with a group you can start by talking together about your community before you go out. What are you grateful for? What concerns you?
- Remind everyone of the safety considerations and describe the route. Make sure everyone knows the finish point in case anyone gets separated from the group.
- Suggest things people might want to look out for and reflect on as they are walking.

### Things to reflect on:

- Families, schools, churches, police and hospitals – what challenges might they be facing at the moment?
- Any local issues you know about. You can use CUF's [Look-up tool](#) to help you.
- The service provided by people responsible in any position of authority – for teachers, police, local politicians and parents.
- Faith leaders and faith communities in the places of worship that you pass - What do they bring to your community?

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## DURING

- You can reflect silently as you walk, or you can stop from time to time to talk with your group. You might want to take notes or a photo of something you see to remind you later.

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## AFTER

- Share with others what you have experienced and noticed. Share your insights. It will encourage others – as well as yourself.
- Think about going at different times and in different weathers to reflect on how the area changes.



## Tips and ideas for mindful walks with all ages

Bear in mind the ages of your participants when planning your walk. Some older folk and children will be slower, may not be able to walk as far and might struggle on uneven or hilly terrain. You might want to build in more frequent and longer breaks, or even a pit stop of refreshments half way round at a local café, pub or community space.

If you are including children in your walk you will need to spend time checking that you have the appropriate health and safety and safeguarding procedures in place. **Children should not walk on their own.**



For children, you could keep their attention by producing a simple 'I-spy' list for them to complete. Questions could include:

- How many different types of trees can you spot?
- How many shops do you pass? What are they selling? Think of all the people who provide our food, clothes and everything else we need.
- How many people have you seen on your walk?
- How many places of worship are there?
- How many schools do you pass? Be thankful for the teachers and staff who work hard to teach and care for the pupils.
- Can you spot a doctor's clinic, hospital or pharmacy? Say thank you for everyone who keeps us healthy and looks after us when we're sick.

## Prayer walking in Kirkdale, Yorkshire

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*“As part of CUF's Growing Good course we started regular prayer walks around our villages. As well as taking our prayer outside of the church building and being more visible, we've also made new connections with local businesses and organisations.*

*We stepped out and we accepted people's generosity and hospitality, which led to new partnerships and a new sense of being in the community.”*

