



## Walking Meditation

Even though we are staying home for a while, we still have the option of getting outside and walking. We can walk for aerobic exercise. AND we can walk as a means of drawing closer to God. The Center for Action and Contemplation's founder Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, had this to say in his daily meditation for Saturday, December 3, 2016:

### Practice: Walking Meditation

Jonathon Stalls, a Living School student and founder of Walk2Connect, writes about learning how “we share a common journey of wanting to love and be loved; that we want to feel safe, comfortable, and connected; that we want to belong—somewhere. . . . We’re afraid of exposure and vulnerability. We’re afraid of the unknown. We’re afraid to be wrong. We’re afraid of abandonment. We’re afraid of weakness, of truly trusting, and the fragility of letting go.” [1]

Stalls offers this wisdom from Thich Nhat Hanh:

When we practice [mindfulness], we are liberated from fear, sorrow, and the fires burning inside of us. When mindfulness embraces our joy, our sadness, and all our other mental formations, sooner or later we will see their deep roots. With every mindful step and every mindful breath, we see the roots of our mental formations. Mindfulness shines its light upon them and helps them to transform. [2]

Stalls continues:

I can't think of a better way to bring mindfulness practice into our body and into the outside world than through walking, strolling, or rolling at one to three miles an hour. It changes everything. It trains us, both on the inside and the outside, to begin seeing God, the Great Spirit, in ourselves and in others in such foundational ways. This humble posture invites us into the fragile details behind our own breath, the curious creatures high in the trees, and the struggle in being a pedestrian in today's time. Whether it's twenty minutes or four hours, mindful walking can invite new ideas, new ways of seeing, and new ways of understanding with every step. [3]

I invite you to step outside and walk mindfully, present to God's presence in all things.

### References:

[1] Jonathon Stalls, “What Really Frightens Us?” *“Evolutionary Thinking,” Oneing, Vol. 4, No. 2* (CAC: 2016), 99-100. Learn more about Jonathon's work at [walk2connect.com](http://walk2connect.com).

[2] Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* (Berkeley: Broadway Books,

1999), 75.

[3] Stalls, "What Really Frightens Us?", 100.

Priest Marianna Gronek created the following Walking Meditation for a recent Epiphany Vestry retreat. May it bring you joy and draw you closer to the Creation and the Creator.

### **Awakening Walking Meditation**

*Walking meditation is slow and involves taking purposeful small steps.  
When you are ready, take a deep breath, and begin with a blessing.*

*To come home to yourself* by John O'Donohue

May all that is unforgiven in you  
Be released.

May your fears yield  
Their deepest tranquilities.

May all that is unlived in you  
Blossom into a future  
Graced with love.

*Continue on your walk. Remember to stop, inhale deeply and look around you. Feel free to reach out and touch things! God has brought you to this moment, this spot, this beauty is intended just for you.*

*When you are ready, read the following poem.*

*When I am Among the Trees* by Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees,  
especially the willows and the honey locust,  
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,  
they give off such hints of gladness.  
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,  
in which I have goodness, and discernment,  
and never hurry through the world  
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves  
and call out, "Stay awhile."  
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, "it's simple," they say,  
"and you too have come  
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled  
with light, and to shine."

*Again, when you are ready, continue on your walk.*

*At the turning to return, and with intentionality, stop and practice the following:*

Breathing in “I have arrived”; Breathing out “I am home”  
Breathing in “In the here”; Breathing out “In the now”  
Breathing in “I am solid”; Breathing out “I am free”  
Breathing in “In the ultimate”; Breathing out “I dwell”

*As you began with a blessing, so shall your walk be blessed in its returning. Take and hold the love and peace in this blessing by John O’Donohue.*

*To come home to yourself* by John O’Donohue

May all that is unforgiven in you  
Be released.

May your fears yield  
Their deepest tranquilities.

May all that is un-lived in you  
Blossom into a future  
Graced with love.

<https://plumvillage.org/mindfulness-practice/walking-meditation/>