Relaxation

In the current situation and with the amount of news coming at us, it is important to take time for yourself. Let’s challenge ourselves to slow down and look longer at this painting by Mark Rothko. I invite you to spend five minutes looking at this painting, (for a silhouetted image go here.)

Guided Art Meditation –

• Start by getting in a comfortable seated position. This can be on the floor or in a chair.
  o Begin mindfully breathing in and out through your nose. Do this several times trying to not be distracted by other thoughts.

• As you are able to slow your breath, begin looking at the painting. Select one spot in the painting to focus on.
  o What colors do you see?
  o What shapes do you see?
  o What do you notice about the texture?
  o What emotions do you normally associate with those colors?

• After you have done this for a bit, close your eyes, continue your deep breathing and try to imagine the painting.

• When you are ready open your eyes and look at the painting again.
  o Do you see anything different?
  o Did anything surprise you?
  o What did you notice about the painting? About your demeanor or physical state?

For more information about this artwork click here.

Resource –

• Enjoy free online yoga classes from YogaBalance in Manchester.
• For more tips for slow looking can be found here.
Activity: Relaxation putty

Materials:

- cornstarch
- lotion
- container to mix ingredients
- food coloring (optional) NOTE: the food coloring will temporarily stain your hands, so you may want to wear gloves
- essential oils (optional) NOTE: I went with lavender for extra relaxation, but use any scent that you enjoy

Directions:

- Add about 1/4 cup cornstarch to your container along with a few pumps of lotion. The exact proportions will vary from lotion to lotion, so have fun and experiment!
- Keep adding lotion until the cornstarch starts to form a smooth dough. If the putty is too crumbly, add more lotion. If it gets too sticky, add more cornstarch.
- Once you reach a smooth consistency, you can add color with a few drops of food coloring or scent with a few drops of essential oils. Squeeze in your hands to mix everything together.

Tips: Have fun and don't be afraid to get messy! Experiment with a variety of scents and colors, and then feel yourself relax as you play with your creations.