

Mindfulness Monday

**Creating Moments of Calm for Individuals
Impacted by Opioid Use Disorder – August**

Stairway to Peace Guided Imagery Meditation to Support Nervous
System Regulation for Those Affected by Opioid and
Stimulant Use Disorders

Christina Walter

August 24, 2026



**Opioid
Response
Network**

Working with communities.

- ✧ The SAMHSA-funded *Opioid Response Network (ORN)* assists states, organizations and individuals by providing the resources and technical assistance they need locally to address the opioid crisis and stimulant use.
- ✧ Technical assistance is available to support the evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery of opioid use disorders and stimulant use disorders.

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Working with communities.

- ✧ The *Opioid Response Network (ORN)* provides local, experienced consultants in prevention, treatment and recovery to communities and organizations to help address this opioid crisis and stimulant use.
- ✧ *ORN* accepts requests for education and training.
- ✧ Each state/territory has a designated team, led by a regional Technology Transfer Specialist (TTS), who is an expert in implementing evidence-based practices.



Contact the Opioid Response Network

✦ To ask questions or submit a request for technical assistance:

- Visit www.OpioidResponseNetwork.org
- Email orn@aaap.org



ORN Evaluation Survey Link

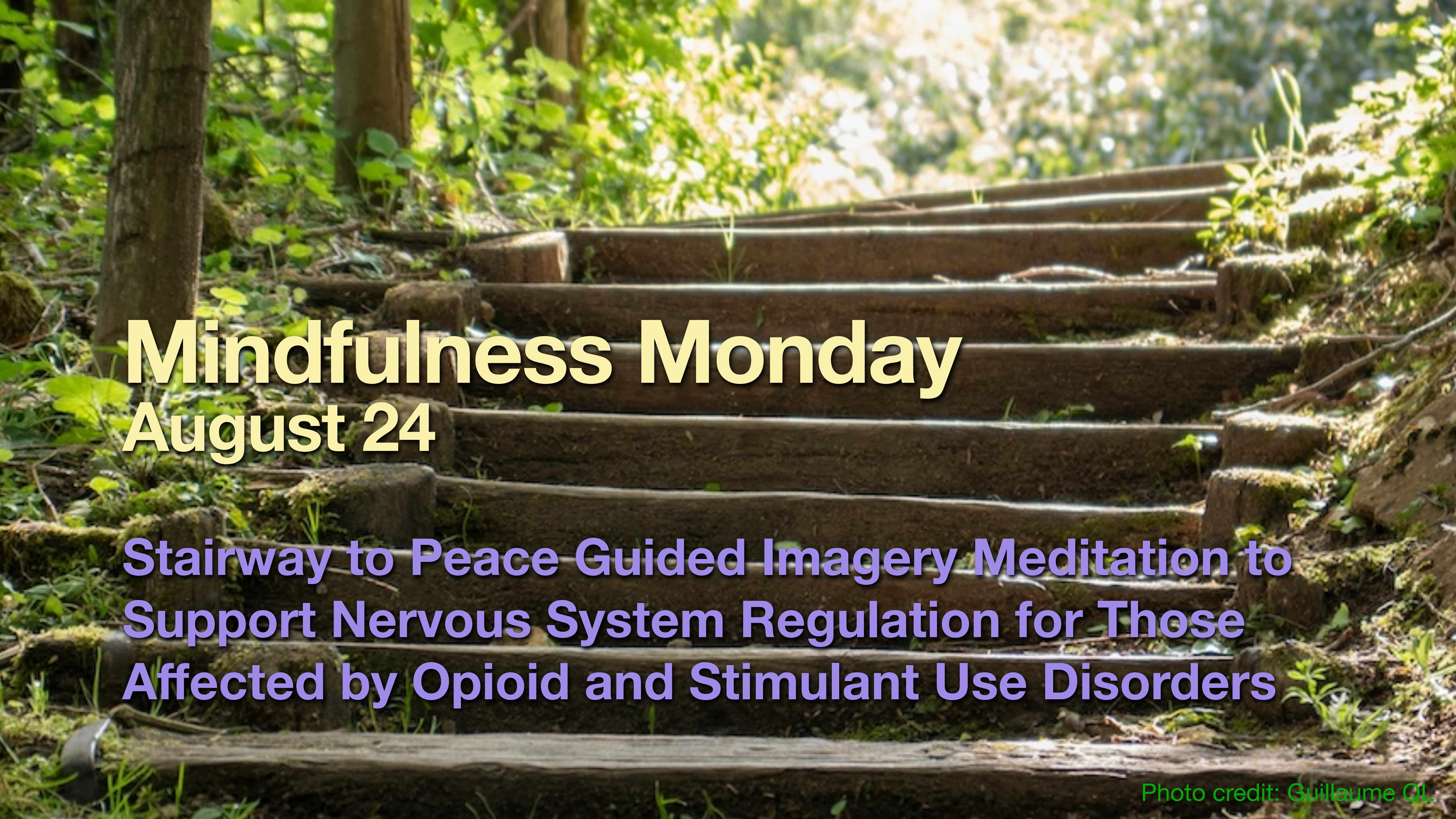
The grant that provided funding for this training requires that we request you to complete the brief survey linked below. Your feedback is important and provides support for this type of work to continue. Scan the QR Code to access the SAMHSA feedback survey.

<https://lanitek.com/P?s=608341>

The survey will ask about your satisfaction with the training program you just completed as well as some basic demographic information. Your responses will help the Opioid Response Network improve the services they provide.



Thank you in advance for completing this survey!



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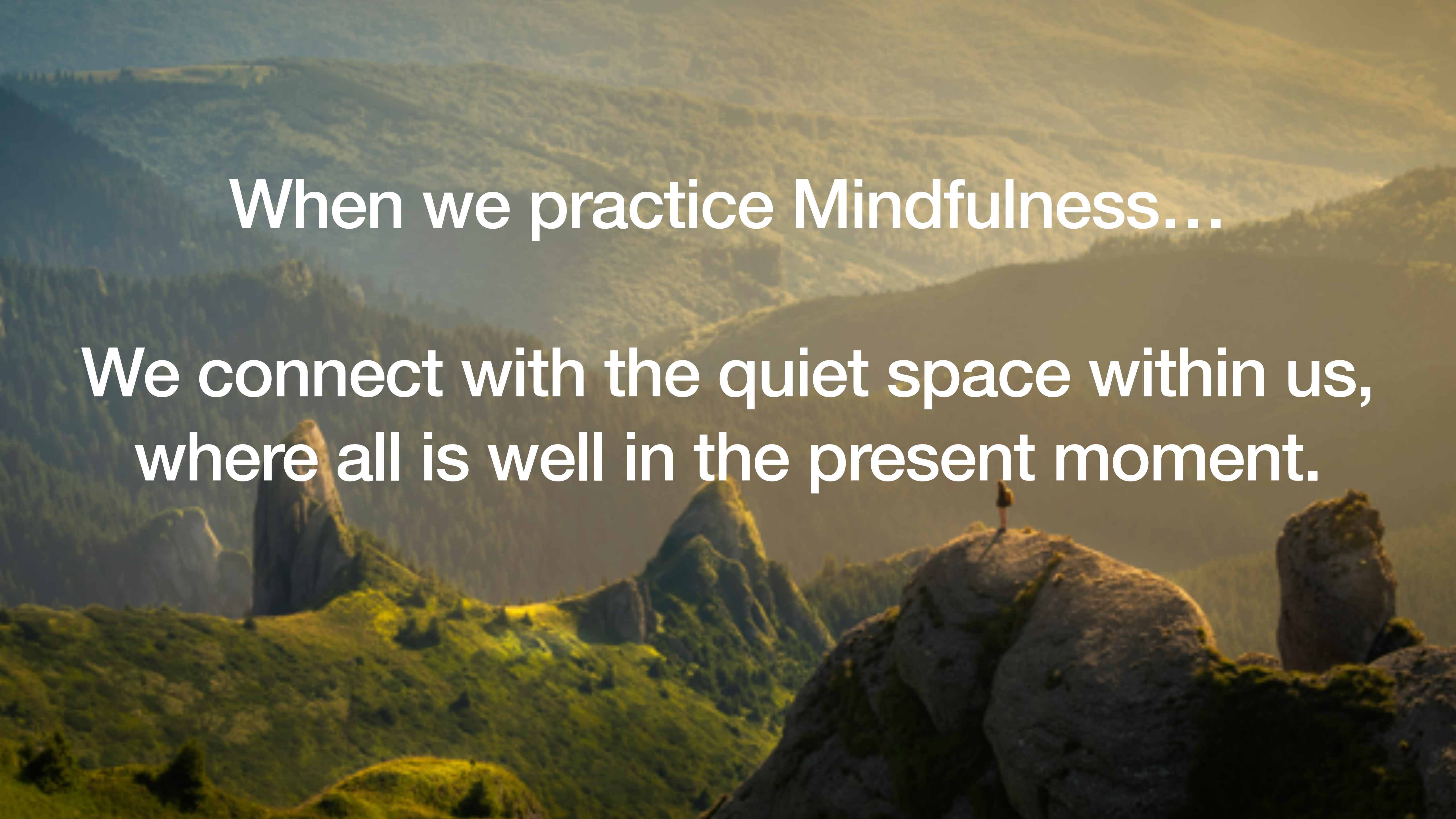


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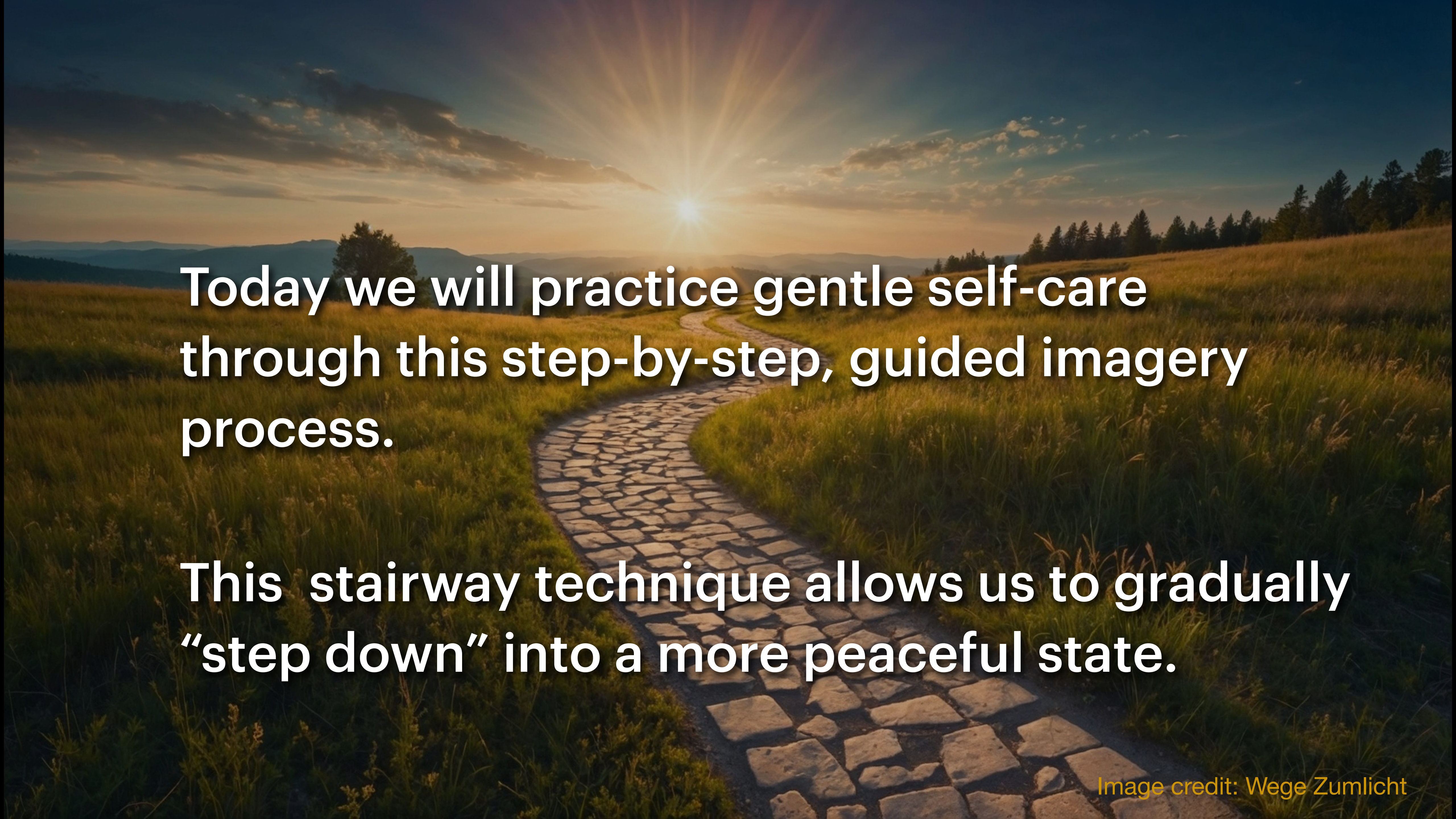
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A person is standing on a large, rounded rock formation in the foreground, looking out over a vast mountain range. The mountains are covered in green vegetation and are bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise. The sky is a mix of blue and orange hues. The overall scene is peaceful and majestic.

When we practice Mindfulness...

We connect with the quiet space within us,
where all is well in the present moment.



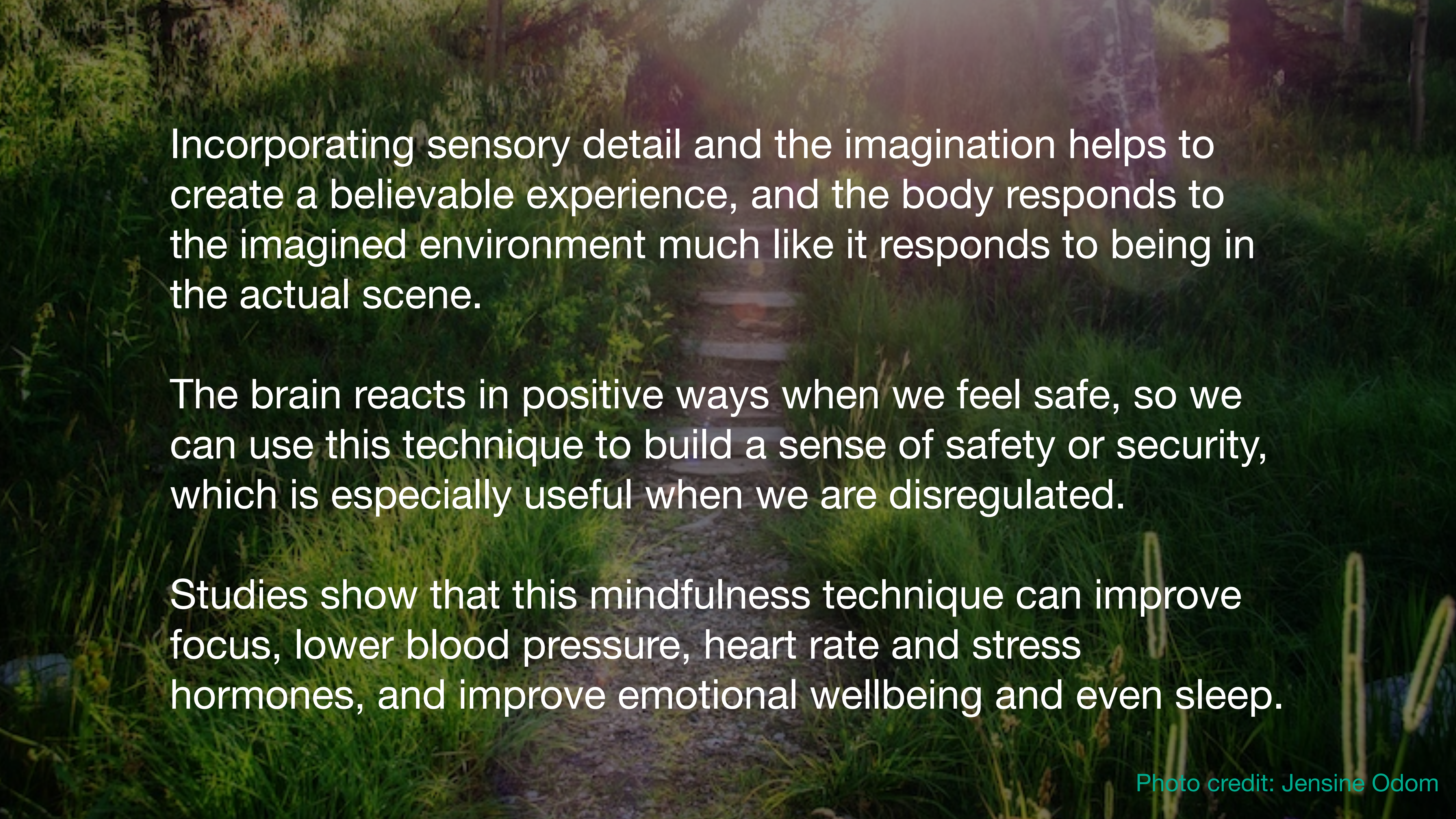
Today we will practice gentle self-care through this step-by-step, guided imagery process.

This stairway technique allows us to gradually “step down” into a more peaceful state.

Why guided imagery exercises are effective when used for mindfulness?

When we imagine ourselves in a calming environment, we disrupt the anxious or looping thought patterns of the mind to create a sense of calm.

Calming the mind naturally activates our parasympathetic nervous system, which is our body's “rest and digest” state.



Incorporating sensory detail and the imagination helps to create a believable experience, and the body responds to the imagined environment much like it responds to being in the actual scene.

The brain reacts in positive ways when we feel safe, so we can use this technique to build a sense of safety or security, which is especially useful when we are dysregulated.

Studies show that this mindfulness technique can improve focus, lower blood pressure, heart rate and stress hormones, and improve emotional wellbeing and even sleep.

How does using our senses in the imagining process enhance this effect?

- Anchors the mind, giving it a job to do
- Trains the brain to focus using many senses at once
- Deepens the mind-body connection
- Provides a sense of groundedness in the present moment
- Activates our body's rest response

Our Practice today:

- Shutting down the eyelids if you're comfortable, we'll begin with a few deep belly breaths, giving ourselves permission to let go of anything we don't need for the next 20 minutes.
- We continue to breath, giving our bodies permission to relax, imagining that with each breath, we inhale relaxation, and with each exhale, we release tension and stress.
- We imagine we are in a lush, green forest. We feel safe here, and we know we can completely relax and enjoy the scenery. As we walk along, we can hear our steps on the leaf-scattered ground, we can smell the earth and the foliage around us, and we can hear distant birds in the trees.
- We notice the comfortable temperature and the very slight breeze touching our skin as we walk, and we feel ourselves relax more deeply with every moment here.
- We come upon a stone stairway leading down, and for some reason, we know that we will feel even more at ease when we descend it.
- We take the first step, feeling the solid stone under foot. We make our way down, and with each step, we feel lighter, more calm. As we step onto the earth at the bottom, we feel completely relaxed and content. We even have a sense of empowerment, knowing we can return to this place any time we choose.
- We return to the present moment feeling the peace we gathered on our journey.



How was that for you?

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