
APPENDIX 12.1: Treasure Chest Meditation

Note for educators: When offering guided meditations, it is helpful to practice timing and reading the script at a quieter volume, just loud enough so that everyone can hear your words. You may consider amplification through a microphone if you are managing a large group. The tone of delivery can be conversational. The rhythm for guided meditations is often measured, with longer pauses between paragraphs, and your rate of speech may be slightly slower than your usual pace.

Script

Let's take a moment to reflect on a sacred moment of our own. In these next few minutes, I will walk you through a guided meditation. You are all invited to participate in this experience. However, you can choose not to meditate today. If you have unwanted memories of bad events when you close your eyes, you might find this activity inappropriate for you at this time. Instead, you might focus on my voice with your eyes open through this activity. You are welcome to do whatever feels safe for you. Now, let's begin.

Just breathe. Settle into your seat with your hands resting comfortably and your feet touching the floor. You can close your eyes if you feel comfortable doing so. Otherwise, feel free to settle your gaze on a space that's close to you.

Allow your attention to begin to turn inward. You can always return to your breath when you feel lost or your mind wanders. In. Out. Remember, there is no right or wrong way of doing this exercise. Just breathe. (pause)

See if you can picture a treasure chest in your mind. This sealed treasure chest that contains your most precious memories. Consider the size of your treasure chest—how big is it? How heavy? Perhaps your chest is made of wood, wicker, or lined with fabric. Notice its colors and how it sits in your mind.

Now imagine unsealing and opening your treasure chest. Inside this box are your memories. Here are your life's treasured moments, collected in one place—as snapshots or moving pictures. You begin sifting through your chest of memories.

As you move through your memories, see if you can find one sacred moment. Maybe you had a special encounter with another person, maybe you were outdoors, maybe you heard a piece of music, or maybe you were doing something seemingly ordinary. In any case, it is a moment in time that feels set apart from the others, when you connected with something greater than yourself. Perhaps it's a moment that lifted you up. A moment that feels timeless. A moment that opened your heart to something really real. A moment of deep connection. Perhaps, as you hold this moment in your mind, the edges of it even glow.

Now imagine the essence of this moment washing over you and into you. Warmly enveloping you into this sacred memory. Drawing you into your sacred moment. Perhaps you are wholly absorbed into this scene.

Notice what's ahead of you, behind you, around you in this moment. Recall the sounds of this moment. The temperature. Any tastes, fragrances, or movements in the scene. Breathe in this sacred moment and draw what you need from it, whether it be comfort, meaning, or love. Take in all that you need. Continue to be in this sacred space for the next couple of minutes. (pause)

Now that you have been filled by this moment, allow yourself to let go of it until next time. It will always be there for you. You can return to your treasure chest at any time. Now gently turn your attention outward, into the room, into the present, and all through your body. When you feel ready, open your eyes.

APPENDIX 12.2: Treasure Chest Meditation—Reflection Prompts

1. What was in your treasure chest? Please feel free to write or doodle what you envisioned.
2. What makes a moment sacred to you? More specifically, what types of emotions could be involved in these moments? What kinds of thoughts might come up when you are having a sacred moment?
3. How does your response to Question 2 compare with Pargament et al.'s (2014) conceptualization of sacred moments? What are some similarities and differences between your view of sacred moments and Pargament's?
4. If you had a hard time finding a sacred moment, what do you think might have gotten in the way?

APPENDIX 12.3: Treasure Chest Meditation—Assignment

1. What was it like for you to hear about other people's sacred moments? What kinds of thoughts and feelings did you have?
2. What are some examples of sacred qualities that have occurred in your life? The sacred qualities include transcendence, boundlessness, deep interconnectedness, ultimacy, and spiritual emotions.
3. What are some research questions about sacred moments that could be developed? For example, you might have hypotheses about specific predictors and consequences of sacred moments or how different populations might experience sacred moments.