Balancing the Stones: Start with Mindfulness

Give each person some stones of various sizes to hold in their hand and invite them to take a deep breath while studying the stone. Then, asked the following questions:

What does the stone feel like in your palm?
Heavy or light?

What is the texture of the stone? Smooth or rough?

What is the color and shape of your stone?

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Before you start the next part, guide participants in a body scan, checking in with how their body and minds feel. Invite them to share if they want. Next, help them to activate their patience, focus and stillness of mind as they try to balance several stones together. Perhaps play some nature sounds, (perhaps a YouTube video with some gentle flowing water with birds?), in the background while you are doing it (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvM-pnzRDYE).

Ask participants to pay ultra attention to where each stone connects to the one beneath it, seeing if they can sense if balance is going to happen or not. The slower that each person moves, the better. Ask them to tune into their bodies again and see if there is a difference, (hopefully they will report more stillness, quiet, focus, or calmness—if they aren’t overly worried when the stone falls or if they can’t get them to balance—but talk about that too if that is the case).

Discuss how you are building stone towers but that they aren’t meant to last. Just with relaxation practice, we must create and return to relaxing moments, again and again and again in order to feel cool, calm and collected overall. Stone towers can be built again and again to achieve this sense of feeling calm inside.

Secret Stone of Stillness

A stone can serve as a triggering symbol for calm. When your feel it in your palm, it signals your body to calm down, to quiet, to re-center. Then, next time you see families or children struggling to focus, gently place a stone in his/her hand to symbolize calmness. Do it quietly, gently, and without words and this will begin to be your shared secret stone of stillness. Develop a way for him/her to return it just as calmly and secretly to you.