**Working with Anxious Thoughts: Clouds in the Sky**



**Why Practice this Tool?**

When we experience a lot of anxious thoughts, we often feel overwhelmed. It's really important for us to identify anxious thoughts because we are often not fully aware of all the thinking taking place. When we experience anxious thoughts, our body recognizes that and creates anxious sensations in the body. The mind recognizes those anxious sensations and, in turn, creates more anxious thinking. It creates a cycle that is difficult to stop. Learning how to identify an anxious thought and then let it go helps us to interrupt this cycle.

**Steps:**

When you notice you are stuck in a loop of anxious thinking,

1. Pause and just for a moment settle into your body. Choose a place to sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Begin to imagine that you are lying down on a warm, grassy hill on a summer day. The breeze is blowing slightly and you are looking out at a beautiful, blue sky filled with clouds.
3. Allow this image to become as full and as real as you can. Maybe you can feel the warmth of the sun on your body or birds singing in the distance.
4. Whenever you notice an anxious thought or body sensation, for a second just notice it. Then imagine placing that thought on a cloud and letting it go, watching as it drifts through the sky.
5. If you notice tension in the body-or a thought of worry, place whatever you are experiencing on a cloud and let it drift away.
6. Continue this practice until you feel more relaxed and at ease.

Check out this video for a guided practice: Clouds in the Sky