



GLOUCESTER
CATHEDRAL

Your 7-day taster **Re-frame Your Now™** Mindful Photography Programme

Stay Calm and Connected
and get Creative





Our vision for Gloucester Cathedral is to seek to be ‘in tune with heaven and in touch with daily life’. This is an inclusive approach that focuses on God’s vision for human wellbeing and the flourishing of all creation.

We have been delighted to work with **Ruth Davey** at **Look Again** to develop this thought-provoking resource. In doing so, we have drawn on both the Cathedral’s vision and our spiritual roots as a Benedictine Abbey.

The Rule of St Benedict, that guided the life of the Abbey, gives wise insights about Christian living, with practical suggestions about how to put those insights into practice. At its heart is a rhythm of prayer, study, work, hospitality and re-creation that helps us to be mindful of how we are living each day. It encourages us to keep a balance between the different aspects of our lives. These rhythms are accessible to those of Christian faith, other faiths and none.

The Cathedral values its spiritual inheritance from the Benedictine monks. They contemplated the beauty and variety of the world as a way of being present to themselves, to others and to God. Enabling each other to find those points of stillness, peace and connection remains as important as ever. We are very pleased to commend mindful photography as a way of caring for our own wellbeing and engaging afresh with God’s world.

See page 16 for a Prayer of St. Benedict.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Braddock'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Canon Dr Andrew Braddock

Introduction

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We have partnered with **Look Again** to create this resource using mindful photography – a combination of mindfulness and photography – to help you slow down, improve your wellbeing, build resilience and use your creativity to take positive action.

What is mindful photography?

Mindful photography is using our sight and a camera as an anchor to help us become more consciously aware of the present moment. It is experiencing the process of creating photographs in a non-judgmental, compassionate way.

Ruth Davey, 2017

The activities below use the five senses to focus on a few key attitudes of mindfulness: **the beginner's mind**, **curiosity**, **acceptance**, **gratitude**, and **compassion**.

You may like to have a special '**Re-frame My Now**' notebook and write down any ideas, insights or words of wisdom you may gather along the way.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks with compassion on the world; yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; yours are the hands with which he is to bless now. **Teresa of Avila**



Nature connection

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All of the activities can be done in your home. Some of them however can be done outdoors in nature and we encourage you to do this whenever appropriate and possible to get the maximum health benefits.

Please note: If you have a garden, do the activities there or you may want to go on walks in your neighbourhood or favourite nature destinations. If this is not possible, and you are confined to an indoor space, you can find photos of nature in books or magazines or watch nature programmes online. Scientific evidence now proves that even looking at photos of nature can help to improve wellbeing.



You may want to read the **National Trusts and the University of Derby's recent Noticing Nature report:**

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/get-connected-to-nature>



Also, a wonderful podcast on **BBC Sounds** about the therapeutic benefits of nature – inside and out:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3csytzt>



Create your own Look Again frame

A viewfinder can be really helpful, allowing you to view the world differently before you get your smartphone or camera out.

See page 13 for a template

Preparation

Before you start each activity

Find a quiet place to sit.

Be still and quiet for a few minutes.

You may want to close your eyes or simply lower your gaze and focus on the floor.

This will help to still your mind and get into a more creative headspace.

Use what you see as an opportunity to be curious, to take notice of your surroundings, wherever you are. Try to imagine you are seeing it all for the very first time, as a young child might.

Use your eyes to become more appreciative and grateful for what you have.

You may want to print out our weekly guide and put it on your fridge for easy reference and to jog your memory.



Before you create a photo

Slow down, breathe, look and look again.

Take your time to look and really see.

Enjoy the process of allowing yourself to be in the moment.

There is no rush.

Decide what you'd like in the frame and what you choose to leave out.

Breathe.

When you are ready, mindfully and consciously create your photo.



Note: Keep things simple – this is not about the tech!

Also you may want to take a moment to reflect after completing the task and write about your experience in your notebook and to share the photos with others. The activities could be done over a course of a day if this works better for you.

Week one

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Use your sight to look again at colour

Choose one colour. Slowly walk around your home and/or garden for at least 15 minutes noticing this colour. Get up close. Once you've looked around, create five mindful photos of your chosen colour.

1

Use touch to look again at texture

Choose a small area of your home or garden and spend 10 minutes looking carefully at all the different textures you can find there. Look at contrasts: soft – hard, smooth – rough etc. Create five mindful photos.

2

Use hearing to look again at sounds

Choose a corner of your home or garden. Bring your awareness to any sounds you can hear. Be curious and accept them for what they are. Create up to five mindful photos of whatever is making the sound or of something else that will remind you of this moment in time.

3

Use smell to look again at liquid

Choose your favourite drink. Bring your awareness to any smells present as you slowly pour your drink into a glass/mug/cup. Create up to five mindful photos of it from different angles before you drink it, savouring any smells as you do so.

4

Use taste to look again at food

Pick a meal you'd like to photograph today. Create up to five mindful photographs of it – from preparation to eating the food. Be mindful of all the hands that have made this meal possible – from earth to plate. Give thanks. Remember those who may be hungry at this time.

5

Use connection to look again at people

Connect with people in your life. With love and compassion, choose someone to have another look at as if for the first time. Create three photographs of them. This does not have to be their face. Look at them creatively. What is their story? If you live alone, find photos of someone you love and create photos of the photos. Or you can do this when on an online call.

6

Use yourself to look again at action

Have a look at your hands as if for the first time. What do they say about you? What story to they tell? Reflect on what you do with your hands. Take three mindful photos of some or all of your hands. Make a commitment to doing something positive with your hands today to either care for yourself, someone else or the earth. Create a photo to document this.

7

Week Two

- Day 1** Choose another colour
- Day 2** Find new textures
- Day 3** Focus on new sounds
- Day 4** Choose another liquid
- Day 5** Choose another meal
- Day 6** Connect with another person
- Day 7** Commit to a new action

Repeat this process every week. Use your imagination to find variations to the themes.

Look again at light

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Look again at light using a candle

If it is safe to do so, light a candle, or hold the thought of light in your mind. Use this time to be still, reflect and give thanks.

Lighting a candle means different things to different people. For some it is a way of remembering a loved one, a moment of reflection or of saying a prayer.

For Christians, a candle represents the light of Christ in the world. It is a symbol of love and hope.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

You may wish to pray as part of your preparation for this activity. It can be a helpful way of recollecting God's presence. You may wish to use a short verse from Scripture such as 'the Lord is my light'.

Photograph the candle to capture its light, consider warmth, colour and feeling. You can keep this with you to return to at any time to give light and hope.



Connect and share

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Use this time to inspire and encourage others

Connect with your family, friends and colleagues

Share your photos, ideas and insights on social media.

You may want to share your photos to Gloucester Cathedral's social media pages:



@EngageGlosCath



@GloucesterCathedral



GloucesterCathedral

You can also share with Look Again tagging @lookagainphotography on Facebook and @lookagainphotos on Instagram

Use: #ReframeYourNow

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7



Our background

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A little bit about... Ruth and Look Again

Ruth launched Look Again in 2012 to bring together her love of photography with 30 years experience of working in international contexts and in business and community development, as a project manager, facilitator and trainer.

Along the way, she had her own experiences of mental health challenges. A few years ago, as a way of recovering from a 'breakdown', she combined the things she enjoys the most - photography, nature, walking and mindfulness – and found that learning to see her life with fresh eyes helped her in ways that nothing else did.

She now runs mindful photography courses and training programmes for individuals and organisations – in person and online – to help people improve their mental health, wellbeing and resilience. She still offers photography commissions too!

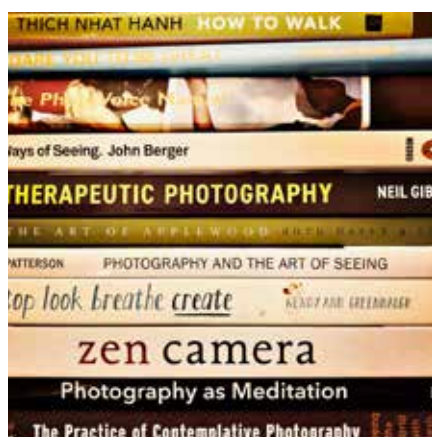
Clients include: **Gloucester Cathedral**, **Canon**, the **NHS**, **Gloucestershire County Council**, the **National Trust**, and **The University of the West of England**.

She is a fellow of the **Royal Society of the Arts** and is currently shortlisted for the **Culture Arts and Wellbeing Alliance's Climate Change Award**.

Her key values are **equality**, **integrity** and **courage**.

Ruth grew up in a Christian family and now feels most at home with the Quakers.

See www.look-again.org for more about Ruth's story.



Validated by academic research from the University of Gloucestershire

In 2019, the University of Gloucestershire evaluated a 9-month Look Again project funded by Gloucestershire County Council, concluding that the Look Again approach to mindful photography as an intervention is effective in increasing levels of participant wellbeing and mental health for both men and women.

All measured outcomes show improvement in comparisons of before and after self-completion questionnaires.

Importantly, participants value the ability to learn mindfulness and photography skills to use to support their day-to-day lives beyond the timeframe of the project.

A full report of the research is available on the **Look Again website** (<https://www.look-again.org/mindful-photography-methodology>)

Look Again is working with the university on a further two research projects in 2020.



Next steps

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If you'd like to stay in touch with Ruth, please feel free to sign up to the Look Again newsletter here: www.look-again.org

Ruth also runs mindful photography face to face and online courses to help you or your organisation (your staff, team or service users):

- improve mindset, mental health and wellbeing
- build resilience in a fast changing world
- gain awareness, clarity, and focus
- clarify your vision and tell your authentic visual story

For more information and a friendly chat please contact Look Again:

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www.look-again.org

You can connect with Look Again at:



Twitter

@LookAgainPhotos



Facebook

@lookagainphotography



Instagram

@lookagainphotos



LinkedIn

ruth-davey



YouTube

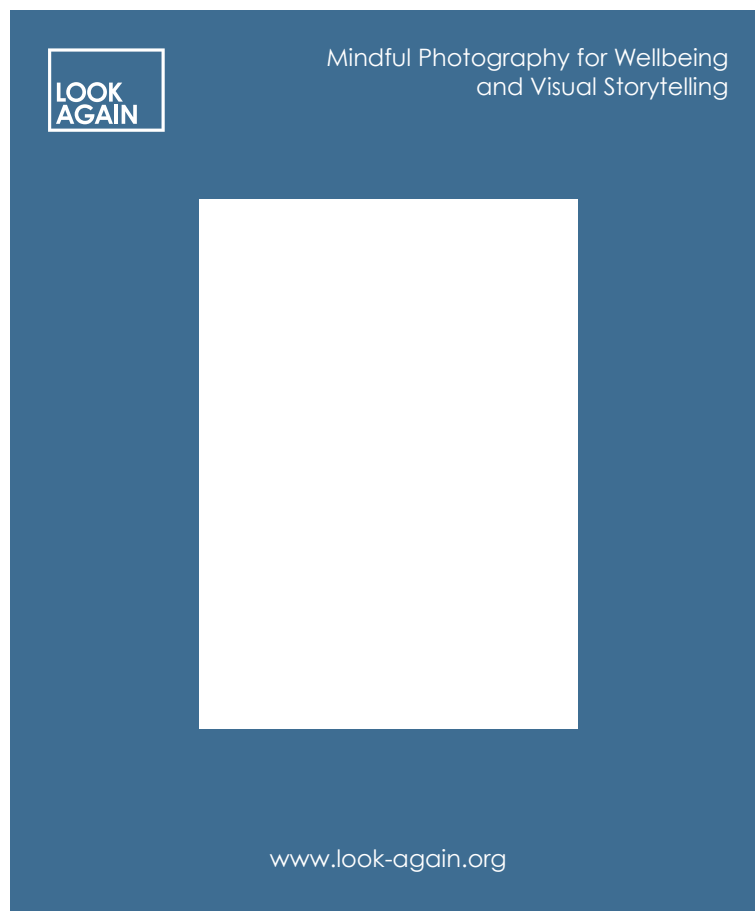
Ruth Davey



Whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

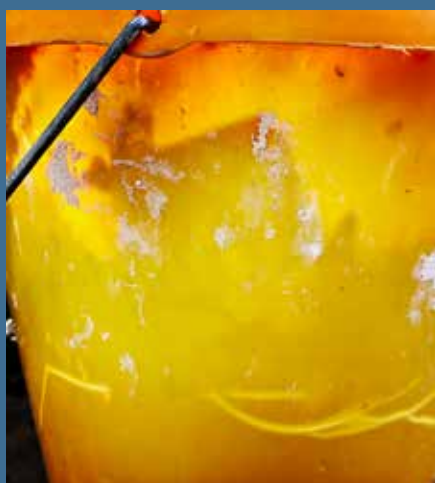
Philippians 4:8

Feel free to print and cut out the viewfinder below, this will assist with our mindful photography programme. Alternatively, please use this as a guide and cut out a viewfinder from an old cardboard box or cereal packet.



Your notes

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Prayer of St Benedict

Gracious and Holy Father
Give us the wisdom to perceive you
Intelligence to understand you
Diligence to see you
Patience to wait for you
Eyes to behold you
A heart to meditate on you
And a life to proclaim you
Through the power of the
Spirit of Jesus Christ Our Lord
Amen

With kind support from:



look-again.org