

Quiet Hour

For Group Leaders

Helping People Reduce Stress
and Feel Inner Peace Outside

Heather Chase and Ken Beller



This program's content and activities are for informational purposes only and are not a substitute for professional medical advice. The authors and publisher assume no liability for accidents, injuries, or losses sustained by anyone who engages in the activities herein.

Copyright © 2024 by Heather Chase and Ken Beller

No part of this program may be reproduced or distributed without written approval from the publisher, except for uses permitted under fair use, such as in scholarly articles, critical reviews, or specific educational contexts. Valid licensees may replicate and distribute content for relevant educational activities.

For permission requests, write to the publisher, addressed "Attention: Permissions Coordinator," at the address or email below.

LTS Press
P.O. Box 4165, Sedona, AZ 86340
info@LTSPress.com
QuietHour.org

Images are for illustration purposes only, and do not imply endorsement.

Cover photo: NPS Photo / Ann Schonlau VIP

Contents

WHY QUIET HOUR	1
Today's Noise and Stress Problem.	2
An Appealing Solution.	2
What Is Quiet Hour?	3
Benefits for Group Leaders	4
PLANNING	6
Quiet Hour/Half-Hour Checklist.	7
Choose Location.	8
Publicize (<i>Optional</i>)	9
Coordinate with Others (<i>Optional</i>)	12
PREPARING.	13
Get Materials	14
Confirm Guidance.	15
Full Guidance	16
Handling Potential Challenges	18
Quiet Hour One-Page Summary.	19
Quiet Half-Hour One-Page Summary	20
Participant Survey	21
Participant Gift	22
LEADING.	23
Deliver Guidance	24
Handle Potential Challenges.	24
EVALUATING.	25
Review Participant Surveys	26
Review Group Leader Surveys	26
Identify Improvements	26
Group Leader Survey	27
CONCLUSION & MISC.	28

WHY QUIET HOUR



Today's Noise and Stress Problem

Rumbling traffic, blaring car alarms, pinging message alerts, upsetting twenty-four-hour news—today we are more bombarded with noise and stress than ever. We might try to ignore them or get used to them, but they take a bigger toll on us than we realize.

They are such a problem that the World Health Organization considers noise from traffic one of the worst environmental stressors for humans and calls stress the health epidemic of the twenty-first century.

Chronic noise causes stress, which in turn causes health problems. In fact, as published in the *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, and other sources, research shows that health risks of chronic noise exposure may include:

- Increased stress hormones
- Sleep disturbance
- Hearing impairment and tinnitus
- Triggers for people with post-traumatic stress disorder
- Changes in the immune system
- Hypertension and ischemic heart disease
- Diabetes
- Aggression, violence, and other anti-social behaviors
- Anxiety, depression, and other psychiatric disorders
- Birth defects
- Early death (In the EU, noise is considered a factor in ~10,000 deaths per year.)

An Appealing Solution

To reduce the impact of noise and stress, we might be tempted to hide out and wear ear plugs all the time. But there is a more appealing solution: quiet breaks in natural settings. Research study after study shows exposure to quiet and nature reduces stress. In fact, this has been confirmed in well over a hundred studies.

For example, research shows people who spend at least two hours in nature each week report significantly better health and well-being.

Publications by the American Heart Association, the American Psychological Association, and

other sources reveal that some benefits of time in nature may include:

- Reduced stress/mental distress
- Decreased anxiety and depression
- Better mood/happiness
- Increased energy
- Improved heart health
- Increased positive social interactions
- Better self-esteem and concentration
- Increased memory, creativity, and work satisfaction
- Increased sense of belonging, meaning, and purpose in life
- Living longer

Plus, research indicates nature can meet psychological and emotional needs that are difficult to meet any other way.

But, in today's noisy, hectic, high-tech world, these benefits are out of reach for most people. That's where Quiet Hour comes in. It can help bridge this gap and bring the benefits of quiet and nature to many more people.

It offers people something they value but are missing. Research by Arizona State Parks & Trails, the City of Detroit, and other sources show that of more than 6,500 people, 83% said a key benefit of outdoor recreation is promoting mental health. More than 4,000 public comments show that what 80% of people want to do in parks is relax in nature. And, more than 100 studies show a key perceived benefit of outdoor recreation is stress reduction.

But of 30 organizations' more than 300 guided outdoor programs, zero focus on promoting mental health, relaxing in nature, or stress reduction. Again, Quiet Hour can help bridge this gap and deliver this key benefit.

What Is Quiet Hour?

Quiet Hour and Quiet Half-Hour is an easy way to help people reduce their stress and feel inner peace outside. Unlike most group activities or interpretive programs, it's not about learning a skill or information. It's about enjoying nature as a refuge from the pressures of modern life. It makes getting the benefits of quiet and nature easy.

The program is based on a simple, 4-step process of:

1. Center
2. Breathe
3. Notice
4. Appreciate

Woven into this process are nine techniques or influences that research indicates have a calming or uplifting effect, including:

1. Exposure to Nature
2. Hearing Quiet and Natural Sounds
3. Pausing Electronic Device Use
4. Earthing/Grounding (directly touching the earth)
5. Extended Exhale Breathing (breathing out longer than breathing in)
6. Sensory Awareness (noticing sensations)
7. Effortless Attention/Soft Fascination (being aware without having to concentrate)
8. Opportunities for Awe (chances to feel wonder or amazement)
9. Gratitude

Benefits for Group Leaders

Leading Quiet Hour or Quiet Half-Hour is easy and unique. Basically, you set up the framework and nature does the rest. It's like nature is your co-facilitator.

What are Quiet Hour's benefits for you as a leader? What will you get besides a happiness boost for you and your group?

You'll get a new, inclusive way to serve audiences. It's for everyone, including people with disabilities, urban residents, non-English speakers, and other underserved groups.

That's because it's audience-centered, being customizable, highly experiential, and offering participants a meaningful personal benefit. It's done seated and is multisensory. It can easily be delivered in a second language since it doesn't involve much speaking. And it's trauma-informed, emphasizing things like participants' sense of safety and choice.

You'll also get a new way to turn nature into a stress-relief and mental wellness resource. You'll help people enjoy nature in a new way—not by learning about it, playing in it, working in it, or exercising in it, but by feeling inner peace in it. And this feeling will probably increase people's appreciation for your organization and nature for bringing them that experience.

It'll probably also increase their sense of stewardship. We protect what we care about, and we care about what we've had meaningful personal experiences with. Through Quiet Hour, you'll help people have those experiences with nature. Then they'll probably make more nature-friendly choices, like not littering—not because they have to, but because they want to.

You'll get a program that's flexible. You can offer it in any natural spot, from a desert to a rainforest, a city park to a campground. You can offer it in any season, at any time of day, and for either an hour or a half-hour.

You'll also get a program that's easy to incorporate into your schedule. It can be led by anyone after less than an hour studying the *Quiet Hour Training for Group Leaders* program..

It's easy to conduct. It has a relaxed pace and doesn't require much speaking or materials or any physical fitness or special expertise. Plus, it's easy to lead because nature is your co-facilitator.

It's also easy to measure. You'll get to see how effective it is through the included optional surveys.

And you'll get a program that's versatile. You can offer it as a stand-alone activity, or as an addition to other activities. For example, if you're leading an educational nature walk, you could start it with Quiet Half-Hour or a shorter version, and then do the walk. Starting with it will probably help participants feel more settled, more personally connected to the area, and more interested in learning about it during the walk. By adding a version of Quiet Hour, you can enhance nearly any outdoor activity.

You can also offer it as an addition to other mental wellness services, like counseling. It's appealing since it's easy, stigma-free, and almost instantly relaxing. Also, the group sessions offer social support without social pressure. They let people rest in nature together without having to talk, concentrate hard, or worry about being judged. Adding Quiet Hour like this can help people feel more at ease, connected, and open to other services.

To sum it up, Quiet Hour gives you a one-of-a-kind way to engage current audiences and attract new ones. It's potentially transformative since it can improve how people manage their stress and care for nature, and they can keep practicing it on their own for the rest of their lives.

So, it's win-win for you, your organization, your participants, and nature.

PLANNING



Quiet Hour/Half-Hour Checklist

Necessary	Optional
<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. PLANNING (>2 weeks before)</p> <p>a. Choose Location Any natural spot, ideally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet, Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Easily Accessed <input type="checkbox"/> Some Seating <input type="checkbox"/> Restroom Nearby <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve, if Needed 	<p>b. Publicize</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Brief Announcement <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media Images <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <p>c. Coordinate with Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Request Language Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange Practice Run
<p><input type="checkbox"/> 2. PREPARING (~1 day before)</p> <p>a. Get Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Watch or Clock <input type="checkbox"/> Full Guidance or Summary <input type="checkbox"/> Misc. for Safety/Comfort <p>b. Confirm Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Preview Guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participant Survey, Pens <input type="checkbox"/> Participant Gift <input type="checkbox"/> Audio, Playback Device, Speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Test Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Write Introduction Customization
<p><input type="checkbox"/> 3. LEADING (during)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Handle Potential Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Play Main 4-Step Process Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Offer Part. Surveys &/or Gifts
<p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. EVALUATING (after, optional)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">None</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review Participant Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Review Group Leader Surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Identify Improvements

Choose Location

To offer Quiet Hour or Quiet Half-Hour, the first stage is planning your session. This is best done at least two weeks before your event.

In planning, first choose a location for your session. If you already hold seated outdoor programs in a natural spot, like a small outdoor amphitheater, it'll probably be fine and you can skip this step. If you don't have a location, here's how to choose one.

You can choose any natural spot, but here are some features to look for. It's ideal if the spot is relatively quiet and natural. Your group will have a better experience somewhere away from human-made noise like traffic and with more biodiversity than, say, a sports field.

It's also good if the spot is easily accessed. This accommodates people with mobility challenges and everyone really, even people who might just be tired and not want to walk very far.

Also, it's good if the spot has some seating or room for you to set out folding chairs. Some people might sit on the ground. But for people who don't want to, or can't, it's good to have at least a few regular seats too.

And it's good if there's a restroom relatively close, so people can use it beforehand and be comfortable during the session.

A spot doesn't have to have all these features, it's just nice if it does. Do the best you can with what's near you and what fits your group.

Lastly, make sure you reserve the spot early, if that's needed.

It's an extra bonus if a spot is by water. Water tends to be soothing, attracts wildlife like birds, and makes a spot more interesting.

What if you have trouble finding a spot, or you'd like to try a new one? For help finding a spot, you can search the following online natural space locators:

- [AllTrails.com](https://www.alltrails.com)
- [DiscoverTheForest.org](https://www.discovertheforest.org)
- [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov)

These locators are mostly in the U.S. If you're in another country, an online search should help you find similar locators for that country.

Publicize (*Optional*)

Once you've chosen a location, then you can publicize your event. This is optional. If you already have a group formed, like a class of students you're already teaching, you can skip it. You only need to publicize if you need to attract participants.

To publicize, here's a brief announcement you can use. One for Quiet Hour and one for Quiet Half-Hour.

Quiet Hour

Enjoy a break from noise and busyness. Experience a peaceful process to help you de-stress and relax in nature. This seated program is for all abilities, ages 12 and up.

[DAY, DATE, START TIME, END TIME, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER]

Quiet Half-Hour

Enjoy a break from noise and busyness. Experience a peaceful process to help you de-stress and relax in nature. This seated program is for all abilities and ages.

[DAY, DATE, START TIME, END TIME, LOCATION, PHONE NUMBER]

Just re-type it and change what's in brackets to your event's details—the timing and location. Feel free to add extra details, like whether reservations are required. Requiring them would let you know how many handouts to make, if you choose to offer them. Then share the announcement wherever your audience might see it.

There are some images you can post on social media: one for Quiet Hour and one for Quiet Half-Hour. You can download them from the links under the "Planning" video in the *Quiet Hour Training for Group Leaders* program. After you download the images, add your event's details in the blank areas, and share the images online.

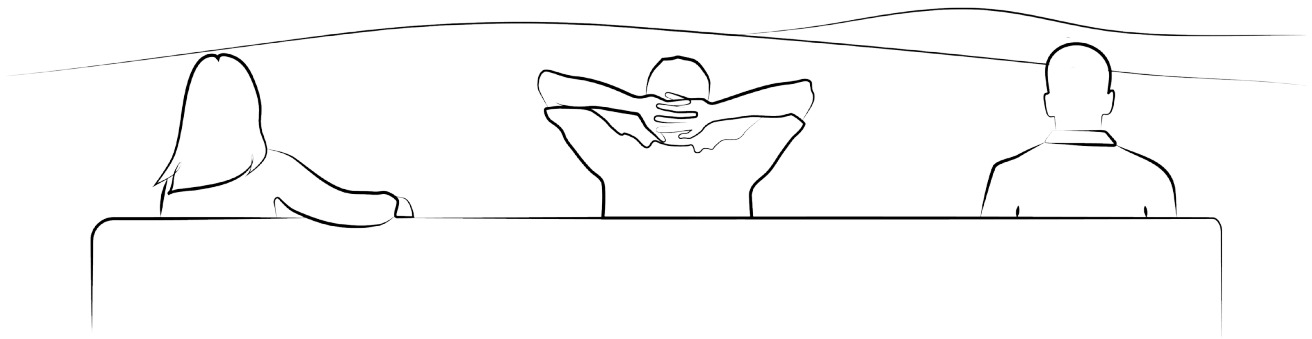
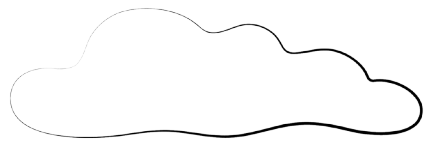
To publicize offline, following is a flyer: one for Quiet Hour and one for Quiet Half-Hour.

Just print the page, then add your event's details in the blank area. There's also room at the bottom to add extra information, like whether reservations are required, or your organization's logo.

Then you can post the flyers on bulletin boards, and have it added to your organization's newsletter, if it has one.

With all the publicity tools, if the session will be in two languages, you can add that in the blank areas.

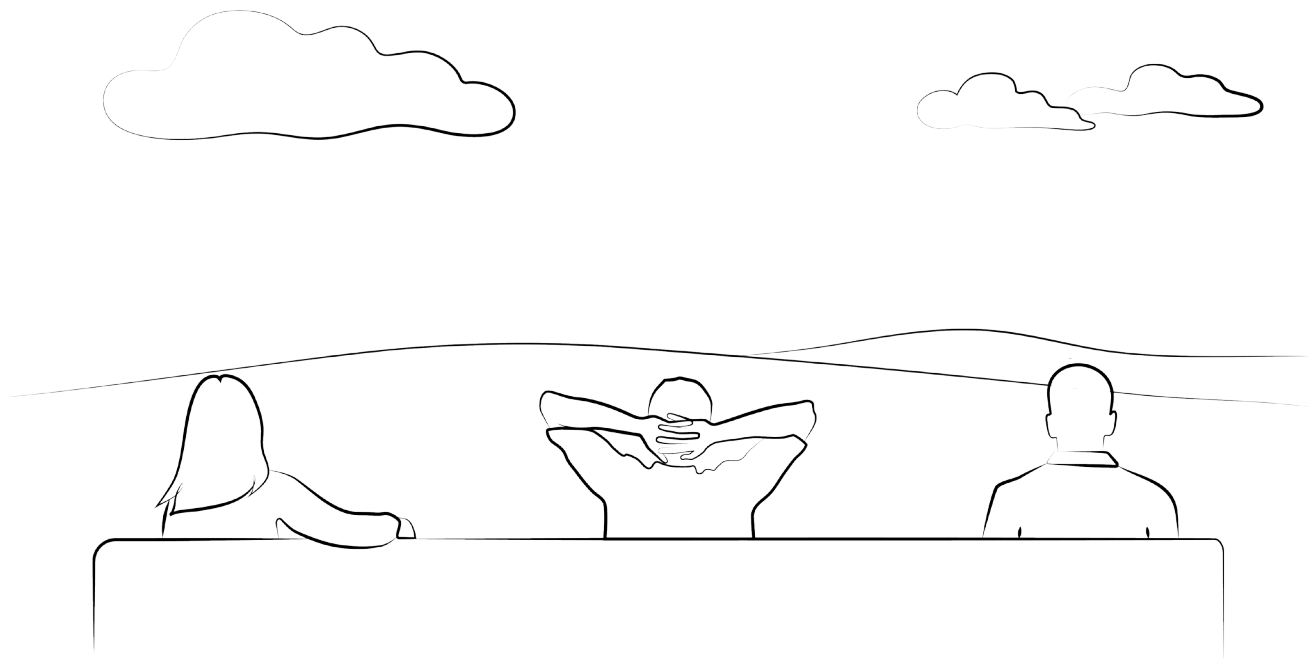
Quiet Hour



Feel Inner Peace Outside

Enjoy a break from noise and busyness. Experience a peaceful, 4-step process to help you de-stress and relax in nature. This seated program is for all abilities, ages 12 and up.

Quiet ½ Hour



Feel Inner Peace Outside

Enjoy a break from noise and busyness. Experience a peaceful, 4-step process to help you de-stress and relax in nature. This seated program is for all abilities, ages 12 and up.

Coordinate with Others (*Optional*)

Another optional thing you could do is coordinate with others, if you need to.

One part of this is to request a language interpreter, like a sign language interpreter, if needed. Since Quiet Hour has a relaxed pace, there's plenty of time for an interpreter to deliver it with you in another language. This can make your event more inclusive.

A second part is to arrange a practice run. Before you lead your first session with an actual audience, you could practice with colleagues or volunteers. If time is short, your practice run could be the half-hour version. It has the same steps as the hour version, just with less time in each step. Either way, it's best to set up a practice run in advance, so people have time to fit it into their schedules.

Once you've chosen a location and, if needed, publicized your event and coordinated with others, you'll be finished with the planning step.

PREPARING



Get Materials

At least a day or so before your event, you'll want to prepare for it, so it goes smoothly.

The first thing you need to do to prepare is get your materials. There are some necessary materials and some optional ones.

The first necessary material is a watch or clock to keep track of the time.

The next necessary materials are mostly printouts, all of which are at the end of this section.

The second necessary material is a printout of either the Full Guidance or the One-Page Summary of it. You can say the guidance in your own words, but to make it easier, it's written word-for-word so you can read it if you want. It's best to use the full version at least the first time or two you lead the program.

Once you're familiar with the Full Guidance, you could switch to the One-Page Summary. It has brief reminders of what's in the full version. For the timing, the summary also has the running total, to help you stay on schedule.

If you plan to lead many sessions with the One-Page Summary, you might want to laminate it, to make it more durable and weather-resistant out in nature.

For the last necessary materials, feel free to add anything else that might be needed for your group's safety or comfort.

There are also some optional materials you might like to add.

The first two are the following handouts. One is the Participant Survey, along with pens, one of each, for each participant. The other is the Participant Gift, one for each participant.

The Participant Survey is helpful if you want to collect people's feedback about the session. The Participant Gift is a pocket-sized summary of Quiet Hour and Quiet Half-Hour, to help people keep doing the process on their own in daily life after the session.

If you want to offer these handouts, there are 3 surveys per page and 4 gifts per page. Print them on cardstock as many times as you need for one survey or gift for each participant. Using cardstock makes the surveys easier to write on outdoors and makes the gifts more durable. After you've reproduced them, just cut them out on the dotted lines.

If the session will be in two languages, you can have the Participant Survey and/or Gift translated to the second language. Then print and cut them out to offer as well.

The timing on the participant gift is for individuals only, not group leaders. Don't use it to lead a group session. The timing for you as a group leader is different because you'll have more steps.

There are some additional optional materials. You can say all the guidance yourself. Or, for part of it, the Main 4-Step Process, we've made audio recordings for you.

You can download the recordings, for Quiet Hour or Quiet Half-Hour, from the links in the *Quiet Hour Training for Group Leaders* program.

Then, make sure you have the file on the playback device you'll use for the session, and that the device is charged.

Lastly, depending on the size of your group, you might need a separate speaker that is strong enough for everyone to hear the recording outside.

Confirm Guidance

The next step in preparing is to confirm the guidance to get a feel for it. It's what you'll be saying to your group. The middle part is the heart of the program—the Main 4-Step Process. You can either say it or play the audio. The audio makes your job easier and lets you relax along with the group.

Either way, here's an important point about how all the guidance is written. The words in capitals, brackets, and italics are notes to you or words for you to fill in. Don't say them as they're written.

For example, you would not say, "2. Agreements, 4 Minutes." Instead, you'd only say what's in regular font, starting with, "To get those benefits..." If you want, you can highlight the notes to you to make it easier to see the difference.

Then, if you want to use the audio for the Main 4-Step Process, test it with the device and speaker you plan to use. Also, adjust the volume

so everyone in your group will be able to hear the recording outside. If the playback device has a screen, plan to place it so participants will not see the screen.

Next, if you'd like to make the session more relevant for your specific audience, you can customize the introduction by writing a few extra sentences.

For general audiences, customizing isn't needed since Quiet Hour and Half-Hour are designed for them. But, for a group of students, you could add how quiet time in nature can inspire discovery and creativity. Or for a group of employees, you could add how quiet time in nature can support a healthy work-life balance and help prevent burnout.

After you've gotten your materials and confirmed the guidance, you'll be finished with the preparing step.

Full Guidance

Say the following as written or in your own words, except words in *[CAPITALS, BRACKETS, AND ITALICS]*, which are notes to you or words for you to fill in.

[INTRODUCTION, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

Welcome. *[IF AVAILABLE, ASK, OR HAVE AN INTERPRETER ASK, IN A SECOND LANGUAGE, “WELCOME. DOES ANYONE NEED INTERPRETATION IN THIS LANGUAGE?” IF SO, MAKE TIME FOR IT AND, IF NEEDED, SHORTEN THE NOTICE—IT ALL STEP.]*

Thank you for being here today. I’m *[NAME, TITLE]*. Today we’re in for a treat. We’ll get a rare break from noise and busyness and have a chance to de-stress, relax, and connect with nature in a new way.

We’ll do this through a peaceful process. It’s a blend of techniques that research indicates can help relax our bodies, calm our minds, and improve our mood.

[AGREEMENTS, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

To get those benefits, and let everyone else get them, it helps if we can follow two agreements.

Agreement 1 is to detach from devices. We’ll turn off our phones, smart watch, cameras, etc., or put our phones in airplane mode. And we’ll put them away in our pockets or bags. We won’t use devices unless something is urgent. In that case, we’ll step away. If we want to take pictures, we’ll wait until after the program.

Agreement 2 is to maintain quiet. Other than me guiding you through the process, we won’t talk or distract others unless something is urgent. If we have to leave early, we’ll leave very quietly.

Other than those two things, everything else is optional. This is your experience. If you don’t feel like doing a step, that’s completely fine. Please just honor the agreements, as a courtesy to everyone else.

Do you have any questions? *[ANSWER AS BEST YOU CAN.]*

Okay, do we all agree to the two agreements of detaching from devices and maintaining quiet? *[LOOK FOR EVERYONE TO NOD.]* Okay, let’s silence our devices and put them away. *[PAUSE.]* And let’s start maintaining quiet, except for my guidance.

[GET COMFORTABLE, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

If you like where you are, feel free to get comfortable. Or you can move somewhere else. You might sit on the ground or lie down, but please stay close enough to hear me. *[PAUSE]* Can everyone hear me? *[LOOK FOR EVERYONE TO NOD.]*

Okay, if you like, you can rest your hands on the ground or take your shoes and socks off and rest your bare feet on it. *[PAUSE]* Feel free to settle in and relax.

[MAIN 4-STEP PROCESS] [SPEAK SLOWLY. PAUSE BETWEEN SENTENCES FOR TRANSLATION (OPTIONAL) AND ~10 SECONDS (FOR QUIET HALF-HOUR) OR ~20 SECONDS (FOR QUIET HOUR). OR PLAY THE MAIN 4-STEP PROCESS AUDIO (OPTIONAL). IF THE AUDIO PLAYBACK DEVICE HAS A SCREEN, PLACE IT SO PARTICIPANTS DON'T SEE THE SCREEN.]

[1. CENTER, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

Welcome to here and now. Feel free to let everything else in your life pause. For now, you can let it all go. Maybe imagine your stress evaporating into the air. Here and now, you can rest.

[2. BREATHE, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

Now, you might become aware of your breathing. You might gently extend your exhale, like inhale 1, 2, 3, exhale 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. You can keep breathing this way on your own.

[3. NOTICE]

[NOTICE—FEELING, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

You might notice what your body is feeling. Maybe feel your seat or the ground supporting you. Maybe feel the air. Or, if there are some natural things beside you, within arm's reach, feel free to feel them.

[NOTICE—SEEING, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

Feel free to notice what you're seeing. What colors and objects are here? What do you see nearby? What do you see further away?

[NOTICE—HEARING, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

You might notice what you're hearing. What are the main sounds? What are the quieter sounds? In between the sounds, can you hear quiet?

[NOTICE—SMELLING, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

You might notice what you're smelling. Maybe keep smelling the air. Or, if there are some natural things beside you, within arm's reach, feel free to smell them.

[NOTICE—IT ALL, Q½H 5, QH 10 MIN.]

Maybe notice it all together, the whole natural system here. Let your awareness open and expand. We'll be in this step longer than the others, so you can relax and just be. *[OPTIONAL: ABOUT 70% OF THE WAY THROUGH, SAY:]* If you like, can you relax 10% more?

[4. APPRECIATE, Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

Now, you might feel grateful for something here, maybe the fresh air or the quiet. You might appreciate it all, everything here that added to your experience. Lastly, maybe appreciate yourself for taking time to do this process. Well done. *[TURN OFF AUDIO, IF USED.]*

[CONCLUSION (RETURN TO YOUR NORMAL SPEAKING RATE.), Q½H 2, QH 4 MIN.]

I appreciate you being here today and giving this a try. Did you like it? *[LOOK FOR NODS.]* Was it relaxing? *[LOOK FOR NODS.]*

You can take this process back into your daily life and repeat it at other times, in other places. You can do it all, or just parts of it, in any natural spot to relax and enjoy nature more.

[OPTIONAL] I'd really like to know what you thought of today's program. So, I'd appreciate it if you'd please fill out this short survey. *[SHOW.]*

[OPTIONAL] If you'd like help doing this process on your own, feel free to take one of these small summary cards. *[SHOW.]*

Thanks again. I hope you have a peaceful rest of your day.

[HANDOUTS, (OPTIONAL) Q½H 3, QH 6 MIN.]

[OFFER PARTICIPANT SURVEYS AND PENS. IF ANYONE CAN'T FILL OUT THE SURVEY ON THEIR OWN, HELP THEM. OR, IF THERE'S A LANGUAGE INTERPRETER, ASK THEM TO HELP. THEN COLLECT COMPLETED SURVEYS.]

[OFFER PARTICIPANT GIFT FOR PARTICIPANTS TO TAKE.]

Handling Potential Challenges

The following is not part of the main narration unless needed. If the following challenges arise, handle them using your best judgment or these suggested responses.

[HUMAN-MADE BACKGROUND NOISE]

Often stress comes from resisting what is. To reduce that stress, we can relax our resistance to the sound and shift our focus to more pleasant natural sounds. Also, humans are part of nature, too, and we can let their sounds blend with the other sounds.

[UNPLEASANT WEATHER]

Often stress comes from resisting what is. To reduce that stress, we can relax our resistance to the weather, let it be what it is, and shift our focus to something positive about it. For example, wind can be uncomfortable but also refreshing.

[RESTLESSNESS]


Feel free to stretch a bit. *[PAUSE]* You're welcome to turn and face a different direction. *[PAUSE]* If you like, extend your exhale for a few breaths. *[PAUSE.]* Now, maybe imagine you're a toddler, experiencing a place like this for the first time, with wonder and delight. *[RESUME FROM WHERE YOU WERE BEFORE THE BREAK. IF NEEDED, SHORTEN THE STEP CALLED NOTICE—IT ALL.]*

[DISRUPTIVENESS]

[QUIETLY TAKE PARTICIPANT ASIDE. ASK IF THEY NEED ANYTHING. REMIND THEM OF THE AGREEMENTS. IF THEY CONTINUE BEING DISRUPTIVE, FOR THE SAKE OF THE GROUP'S EXPERIENCE, QUIETLY SAY IT SEEMS THIS PROGRAM MIGHT NOT BE A GOOD FIT FOR THEM. ASK IF THEY'D BE HAPPIER LEAVING AND DOING SOMETHING ELSE.]

Quiet Hour One-Page Summary

Once you are familiar with the full guidance, feel free to print this shorter version and laminate it to use often. Then use its prompts as reminders of the steps in the full guidance and say them fully in your own words. To be trauma-informed, say them not as orders, but as optional invitations.

Step	 Approx. Minutes	~ Running Total
[INTRODUCTION] Welcome, Interpretation? Benefits of this	4	4
[AGREEMENTS] Detach from devices, maintain quiet, Questions?	4	8
[GET COMFORTABLE] Can move, rest hands/feet on ground, relax	4	12
[CENTER] Let everything else pause, rest here and now	4	16
[BREATHE] Maybe extend exhale, in 1, 2, 3, out 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4	20
[NOTICE–FEELING] Seat or ground, natural things beside you	4	24
[NOTICE–SEEING] Colors, objects, near, far	4	28
[NOTICE–HEARING] Main sounds, quieter sounds, quiet	4	32
[NOTICE–SMELLING] Overall scent, individual natural things	4	36
[NOTICE–IT ALL] For a longer time, relax, just be	10	46
[APPRECIATE] Something here, it all, yourself for doing this	4	50
[CONCLUSION] Can use this in daily life in other times and spots	4	54
[HANDOUTS] [OPTIONAL] Survey and/or Gift	6	60

Handling Potential Challenges

[HUMAN-MADE NOISE] Relax resistance, shift focus, humans are part of nature, too


[WEATHER] Relax resistance, shift focus to something positive about it

[RESTLESSNESS] Stretch, face different direction, extended exhale breathing

[DISRUPTIVENESS] Take aside, ask if need anything, remind of agreements

Quiet Half-Hour One-Page Summary

Once you are familiar with the full guidance, feel free to print this shorter version and laminate it to use often. Then use its prompts as reminders of the steps in the full guidance and say them fully in your own words. To be trauma-informed, say them not as orders, but as optional invitations.

Step	 Approx. Minutes	~ Running Total
[INTRODUCTION] Welcome, Interpretation? Benefits of this	2	2
[AGREEMENTS] Detach from devices, maintain quiet, Questions?	2	4
[GET COMFORTABLE] Can move, rest hands/feet on ground, relax	2	6
[CENTER] Let everything else pause, rest here and now	2	8
[BREATHE] Maybe extend exhale, in 1, 2, 3, out 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2	10
[NOTICE–FEELING] Seat or ground, natural things beside you	2	12
[NOTICE–SEEING] Colors, objects, near, far	2	14
[NOTICE–HEARING] Main sounds, quieter sounds, quiet	2	16
[NOTICE–SMELLING] Overall scent, individual natural things	2	18
[NOTICE–IT ALL] For a longer time, relax, just be	5	23
[APPRECIATE] Something here, it all, yourself for doing this	2	25
[CONCLUSION] Can use this in daily life in other times and spots	2	27
[HANDOUTS] <i>[OPTIONAL] Survey and/or Gift</i>	3	30

Handling Potential Challenges

[HUMAN-MADE NOISE] Relax resistance, shift focus, humans are part of nature, too

[WEATHER] Relax resistance, shift focus to something positive about it

[RESTLESSNESS] Stretch, face different direction, extended exhale breathing

[DISRUPTIVENESS] Take aside, ask if need anything, remind of agreements

Participant Survey

If you like, print this page on cardstock as many times as needed, cut out the surveys, and invite participants to complete them at the end of each session.



Did you enjoy Quiet Hour/Half-Hour? Yes No Date: _____
Was it relaxing? Yes No
Did it help you feel closer to nature? Yes No
Comments or suggestions (optional):

Did you enjoy Quiet Hour/Half-Hour? Yes No Date: _____
Was it relaxing? Yes No
Did it help you feel closer to nature? Yes No
Comments or suggestions (optional):

Did you enjoy Quiet Hour/Half-Hour? Yes No Date: _____
Was it relaxing? Yes No
Did it help you feel closer to nature? Yes No
Comments or suggestions (optional):

Participant Gift

If you'd like to offer parting gifts for participants, print this page on cardstock as many times as needed, cut out the cards, and offer them at the end of each session for participants to take.



Quiet Hour Process			Quiet Hour Process		
In a Natural Spot	~Minutes for ½ hr.	~Minutes for 1 hr.	In a Natural Spot	~Minutes for ½ hr.	~Minutes for 1 hr.
Agreements	1	2	Agreements	1	2
Get Comfortable	3	6	Get Comfortable	3	6
Center	3	6	Center	3	6
Breathe	3	6	Breathe	3	6
Notice—Feeling	3	6	Notice—Feeling	3	6
Notice—Seeing	3	6	Notice—Seeing	3	6
Notice—Hearing	3	6	Notice—Hearing	3	6
Notice—Smelling	3	6	Notice—Smelling	3	6
Notice—It All	5	10	Notice—It All	5	10
Appreciate	3	6	Appreciate	3	6
QuietHour.org			QuietHour.org		

Quiet Hour Process			Quiet Hour Process		
In a Natural Spot	~Minutes for ½ hr.	~Minutes for 1 hr.	In a Natural Spot	~Minutes for ½ hr.	~Minutes for 1 hr.
Agreements	1	2	Agreements	1	2
Get Comfortable	3	6	Get Comfortable	3	6
Center	3	6	Center	3	6
Breathe	3	6	Breathe	3	6
Notice—Feeling	3	6	Notice—Feeling	3	6
Notice—Seeing	3	6	Notice—Seeing	3	6
Notice—Hearing	3	6	Notice—Hearing	3	6
Notice—Smelling	3	6	Notice—Smelling	3	6
Notice—It All	5	10	Notice—It All	5	10
Appreciate	3	6	Appreciate	3	6
QuietHour.org			QuietHour.org		

LEADING

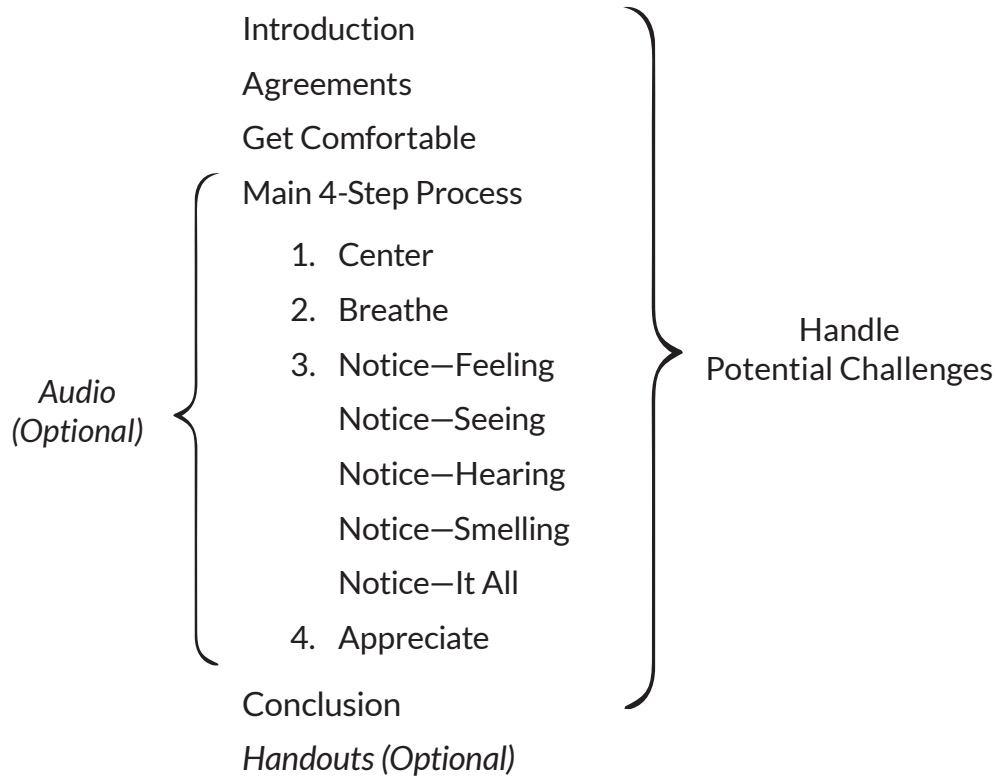


Deliver Guidance

After planning and preparing, you'll be ready to lead your session the day of it. The process for leading is the same for Quiet Hour and Quiet

Half-Hour. The only difference is the timing in each step, as shown on the Full Guidance and the One-Page Summaries.

Quiet Hour/Half-Hour Session Structure



To lead your session, deliver the guidance using the Full Guidance or One-Page Summary. Between the Get Comfortable step and the conclusion, if you chose to use the audio recording

of the Main 4-Step Process, you'll play it. After you say the conclusion, if you chose to offer the Participant Survey and/or the Participant Gift, you'll offer them.

Handle Potential Challenges

Anytime during the session, you might need to handle challenges that happen. To do so, you can use the suggestions written after the Full Guidance

or your best judgement. To make up time lost from handling challenges, shorten the Notice—It All step, since it's the longest and near the end.

EVALUATING



After your session, you might like to evaluate how it went. This is optional, but it's a nice way to see the impact you made.

Evaluating is the last step on the checklist. It doesn't have any steps in the necessary column, since all of it is completely optional. The first part is very easy.

Review Participant Surveys

If you offered the participant surveys, read what people wrote on them. You could stop there.

Or, as an extra option, you could log the survey results into a spreadsheet, summarize the results,

and share the summary with your colleagues or supervisor. If this process reveals an impressive statistic or quote, you could use it to promote future sessions by adding it to the announcement, flyer, etc.

Review Group Leader Surveys

Another optional evaluation step is to collect feedback from group leaders. This is especially helpful if you and your colleagues do a series of sessions, with sessions led by different leaders.

To get feedback from leaders, at the end of the series you can give them the following Group Leader Survey. Just print the page and give one to each leader.

Next you can repeat what you did with the participant survey by reading what leaders wrote on their surveys, with the extra option of then logging the results, summarizing the results, and sharing the summary with your colleagues or supervisor.

Identify Improvements

Then you can reflect on both the participant summary and the group leader summary and work with your colleagues to identify any improvements to make your future sessions even better.

That brings us to the end of the evaluating step. Again, it's completely optional. You can do none of it, some of it, or all of it. In any case, it's the last part of the checklist.

Group Leader Survey

Name: _____

Date: _____

Did you enjoy leading Quiet Hour/Half-Hour?	Yes	No
Was leading it easy?	Yes	No
Was it meaningful for you and/or participants?	Yes	No
Should we continue offering it?	Yes	No

What about it did you especially like?

What about it could be improved?

CONCLUSION & MISC.



The very last part of the process is not on the checklist. It's that, hopefully, you'll notice your participants are more relaxed and happier than before the session. And you'll enjoy the great feeling of a job well done!

We hope leading Quiet Hour is a big success for you. It's another way you're making a positive difference in the world. Thank you so much. We're cheering you on!

Related Books

Golden: The Power of Silence in a World of Noise, by Justin Zorn and Leigh Marz

The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative, by Florence Williams

Into the Forest: How Trees Can Help You Find Health and Happiness, by Dr. Qing Li

The Power of Tranquility in a Very Noisy World, by Bernie Krause

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, by Richard Louv

About the Authors

Heather Chase and Ken Beller are award-winning authors and course creators who have decades of study and experience in various stress reduction methods. One of their books, *Great Peacemakers*, has won more than 30 awards

and is endorsed by 3 presidents and 3 Nobel Peace Prize winners. They have developed and delivered popular training programs for dozens of large organizations, from the U.S. Navy to the NBA. They live in the American Southwest.