

COMMON WEAL COMMUNITY ARTS

Artful Isolation Activities

Week Fifteen: Upside Down and Backwards with Mooky



Mooky grew up in Cumberland, Ontario and has been working as a professional clown since she was 15 years old. She was one of two featured clowns in Cirque du Soleil's *Varekai* and has performed at London's Royal Albert Hall, San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts, and the Sydney Opera House. Mooky now calls Regina home. Here, she operates a production company dedicated to making comedies for screen.

This activity is possible thanks to a partnership with the [Heritage Community Association in Regina, Saskatchewan](#).



Get in touch with your inner clown by exploring new approaches to your daily routine!

What is Upside Down and Backwards? Upside Down and Backwards is an exploration of the LEAST efficient way to complete a task. The activity is inspired by the art of clowning, a form of performance rooted in physical comedy. Clowning transcends language and cultural barriers by finding the absurd in the everyday.*

Why Upside Down and Backwards? This activity aims to disrupt your daily routine, engaging your imagination and challenging you to be playful. In Mooky's own words, "we get so accustomed to doing activities the exact same way every day that we run on autopilot. This affects us in many ways, including limiting the vast range of movement our bodies are capable of. There are so many creative ways for us to move through the world. We can walk, slide, scoot, slither, spin, or hop on one foot, yet we tend to do our daily tasks the exact same way, every day. The 'most efficient' way isn't necessarily the best way. Now is a great time to open our minds to new ways of being—fun ways, silly ways, contemplative ways! This type of exploration can open new neural pathways and allow you to discover different movement possibilities, exercise your physical range of motion, and have a laugh as you explore doing everyday tasks in the most creative way you can!"

* Adapted from the [American Theatre Wing](#).

Suitable For: All ages or, as Mooky says, “everyone who wears clothes.” She also notes that “three and four year olds may be particular experts at this subject, whereas some adults may need extra encouragement.”

What You’ll Need: Time! This activity isn’t for a day when you have a dentist appointment at 10:00am! Pick a time that you don’t have to go anywhere and won’t be in a rush. You’ll also need some articles of clothing, a warmed up body, and your imagination. You may wish to have a camera on standby to capture some of the silliness.

Getting Ready:

- Check out [this video](#) starring Gloria, Mooky’s Clown persona. What was your favourite part? Have you ever thought about alternative approaches to everyday tasks? Consider, why do you do certain tasks the same way day after day? What would it be like to break your routine and explore new ways of being?
- Warm up your body. Stretch, jog in place, dance, or do jumping jacks! You’ll be moving in all different ways and you don’t want to pull a muscle putting on your socks.
- Clear some space and lay out the clothes you’re going to get into. Be creative and play with things like hats, scarves, and glasses, in addition to your everyday wear!
- Play silly music mood enhancing music if you wish. Songs like [Baby Elephant Walk](#), [What’s Happening!!](#), and [Yakety Sax](#) lend themselves well to this activity.



Activity:

- The challenge: Get dressed to go outside in the LEAST efficient way possible.
- Set the clock to see how SLOW you can go! Have you ever taken five minutes to put on a single sock?! Now’s your chance! Moving slowly can be super fun and it’ll also allow you to be mindful not to hurt yourself or knock over a lamp!
- Consider, what shapes can you make while getting your socks on? Can you scoot into your jeans? Do a headstand into your hat? Twist into your tights?
- Challenge yourself to get dressed with only one hand! Think you could [tie your tie with just one hand](#)? Discover different ways of getting dressed, giving yourself plenty of time to explore new movements and play!

Reflection:

- How did you feel about the challenge? Did you get frustrated? Were you able to laugh at your difficulties?
- What did you learn about the ways your body moves? Did you discover any ridiculous shapes you didn’t know your body could make?
- Think about what other routines you observe each day. What else can you do differently?
- Share your photos with us via Facebook or Instagram, tagging [@skcommonweal](#) and using the hashtags [#cwclown](#) and [#cwneighbours](#).