

FIND STILLNESS IN THE PRESENT MOMENT  
THROUGH A GUIDED MEDITATION USING CLAY.



# Clay Meditations

Live Workshop  
June 28, 2020

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# Clay Meditations

Find stillness in the present moment through a guided meditation exploring clay. At the end of this workshop you will have experienced a grounding meditation and invited a spontaneous sculpture into this world. Simple clay and found objects are the only supplies required.

## Supplies:

- A slab of clay this can be air dry, regular, porcelain or paper. You can work with most types of clay however I would encourage you to choose a type of clay that works well with water i.e. not polymer clay. You will want to have enough clay to hold in the palms of both of your hands or more. We will be spending time moving and being with the clay so choose a more fluid clay that will offer you a better experience. However, it isn't necessary if all you have is polymer on hand that can work in a pinch as well. If you have any questions let me know!
- A collection of objects to leave marks and imprints in the clay. This may be a stick, sharpened pencil, seashell, leaves etc. Think about having 3-5 objects that can either leave an imprint in the clay or be used as a tool to shape the clay. No rules here just anything you feel drawn too!
- A pen and paper for writing.
- A hand towel and small dish of water. We will be moving back and forth between having our hands wet/dirty and writing.

*We begin with a poem:*

### Ode to Dirt

Dear dirt, I am sorry I slighted you,  
I thought that you were only the background  
for the leading characters—the plants  
and animals and human animals.  
It's as if I had loved only the stars  
and not the sky which gave them space  
in which to shine. Subtle, various,  
sensitive, you are the skin of our terrain,  
you're our democracy. When I understood  
I had never honored you as a living  
equal, I was ashamed of myself,  
as if I had not recognized  
a character who looked so different from me,  
but now I can see us all, made of the  
same basic materials—  
cousins of that first exploding from nothing—  
in our intricate equation together. O dirt,  
help us find ways to serve your life,  
you who have brought us forth, and fed us,  
and who at the end will take us in  
and rotate with us, and wobble, and orbit.

—Sharon Olds

# Prepare

Consider how the poem connects to you personally.

In this meditation explore seeing the clay as a "living equal."

Listen to it.

Resist the urge to judge it.

Give yourself permission to have nothing at the end of this but just a deepening relationship.

As you work with the clay consider

*"how am I like this clay?"*

*"In what ways have we experienced the same things?"*

# Meditation with Clay:

*Begin by closing your eyes & connecting to your breath & surroundings.*

Progress through these explorations with the clay with presence & awareness:

- Hold it feeling the weight & temperature
- Squeeze it offering gentle & firm resistance
- Pull & rip it apart in big pieces & small
- Roll it into round & long shapes.
- Wash the clay with water
- Use a tool to cut away from the clay
- Use an object to make marks & imprints
- Create something such as a shape or figure & then wash it away or destroy it.

## Write

After your meditation write a few lines of poetry or expressive voice that explore the original questions as to

"how am I like this clay?"

"In what ways have we experienced the same things?"

When you feel complete underline 2-3 key phrases or words.

Choose 1 that feels important to explore.

## Trust Your Impulse

Take this important word or theme & softly welcome it into your creative exploration. Trust your impulses and begin playing and exploring the clay. Wait to see if a shape or an image emerges that feels connected to your theme. Using the skills and techniques you explored in the meditation (rolling, cutting, water, imprint etc) work with your clay trusting your impulses and see what spontaneous sculpture emerges.

When your creation feels complete you may want to give it a title or write another poem in response to it.

To close your exploration you may want to keep your creation, paint it or leave it natural. Destroy your creation or find a natural space outdoors to leave it and let the natural elements return it to the earth.