Caterpillar Walk

A. Focus Attention
B. Concentration, exploring sensory awareness
C. Day/forest, thicket
D. 2-5 (per leader)
E. 6 years and up
F. Blindfolds

TAKE YOUR children to a secluded, secret spot. After blindfolding them, arrange them in a line, caterpillar fashion, with each child placing his hands on the shoulders of the child ahead of him. Tell them that as you lead them along they are to listen to, smell, and feel their surroundings as completely as they can. Make frequent stops along the way at points of interest, such as unusual trees and rocks, or to smell a fragrant flower or bush. The more variety there is along the route, the better. To add variety, walk on and off trails, follow a dry stream bed, or go in and out of sunny forest clearings.

When you have gone as far as you think is appropriate, remove the blindfolds. The children must now try to find their way back along the route to the starting point. Sometimes, before they start back I'll ask them to draw a picture or map of what they think the course and the areas we passed through look like. This helps them to translate into pictures the sounds, smells, and touches they've experienced. The sound of ducks might indicate a pond or marsh; fragrance would mean flowers. As much as possible, allow the children to find the way back on their own.

Caution: blind caterpillars more than five segments long become quickly entangled and hard to manage.

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A. Direct Experience
B. Exploring, orienting, sensory awareness
C. Day/anywhere
D. 2 or more
E. 6 years and up
F. Blindfolds

THIS IS a shorter version of **Caterpillar Walk.** Blindfold your children and tell them you are going to lead them to a spot not too far away. Ask them to explore their surroundings with their hands until they know the spot well. When they are satisfied, lead them back—still blindfolded—to the starting point. Take the blindfold off and ask them to find the spot they explored with their hands.