



115 ABEHAVIOR

BODY SCAN GUIDE

Sit or lie down in a comfortable place like the floor, couch or bed. If you start to feel relaxed, sleepy, or your mind drifts, try to remain alert and aware of the present moment.

Gently close your eyes. Let your shoulders drop down and away from your ears. Bring your attention to your breathing. Breathe in and out slowly, allowing yourself to continue to breathe naturally.

The aim of this exercise is to bring awareness to the feelings or physical sensations in different parts of your body. Your mind is probably used to labeling these sensations as good or pleasurable; or bad, uncomfortable, or even painful. For this exercise, notice what you feel without judgment – for example, do you notice tingling, warmth, pulsating, tightness, or other sensations? Again, it's not about whether these sensations are good or bad, it's just about noticing them.

Continue to breathe at your own pace, allowing each breathe to come as it may, without any conscious effort to change your breathing. Notice your lungs slowly fill with air when you breathe in and deflate when you breathe out.

Now, bring your awareness to where your body makes contact with the floor, couch or bed. On each out breath, allow yourself to let go of any resistance and sink even deeper into the surface below you.

Scan your left foot for any sensations. Simply become aware of any feelings. Scan your left calf. Notice and allow all sensations that may be present. Scan slowly, up through your thigh. Allow yourself to feel any and all sensations.

If you become aware of tension, or other intense sensations in a particular part of your body, visualize sending your breath to that area. Using the breath brings a gentle awareness to the sensations present in your body, without trying to change them. If you don't feel anything it does not mean you are doing anything wrong.

Now, scan for any sensation in your right foot, your calf, and your thigh. Simply notice all sensations and feel what is happening. Continue to bring awareness, and a gentle curiosity to the sensations in your right leg.

The mind will wander away from the breath and the body through thoughts from time to time, which is normal. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently acknowledge it, and then return your attention to the part of the body you intended to focus on.

Now focus on your stomach. Feel it rising as you breathe in. Sinking as you exhale. Your heart rate may slow down. This is normal. Remain aware of your stomach, your breath. Breathe in... and out... continuing to notice any sensations in your stomach area.

Now scan for any sensations in your left hand and arm. Simply become aware of the different sensations and feel what is happening. Continue to bring awareness, and a gentle curiosity to the sensations. Again, If you don't feel anything at the moment, that's okay.

Scan for any sensations in your right hand and arm. Continue to bring awareness, and a gentle curiosity to the sensations.

Come back up to your chest. Continue scanning up along your neck, and to your face. Feel the sensations in your jaw, your throat, your ears, and your face. Notice the back of your head and neck resting and relaxing. Bring your awareness the top of your head.

Now, take a moment to notice how all your body parts are connected. Let any sensations come to you. Just notice what kind of sensation it is – tingling, warmth, coolness, heaviness, floating. Accept all feelings that arise and accept that all sensations and feelings slowly and gradually change. This is just another part of you.

Continue to focus on your breathing for as long as you like. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and give yourself a few minutes to bring attention back to your surroundings.

