

Simple Body Scan

What is the body scan? A deep investigation into the moment-to-moment felt experience of the body. By bringing awareness and acceptance to whatever sensations you feel in the body, the body scan can be helpful in working with stress, anxiety, physical pain, and a racing mind because it increases the capacity of your pre-frontal cortex to self-regulate your nervous system, helping you feel more at ease.

Setting up for Body Scan

- Lying down or sitting up – whatever feels most comfortable.
- Choosing to close the eyes (allows for more focus) or keep them open, whatever feels more comfortable.
- If lying down, placing something under your head to keep your head level and neck aligned in order to feel comfortable.
- If lying down, maybe placing a cushion under your knees OR drawing your knees up with your feet flat on the floor, which may be more comfortable for your back.
- When your attention wanders into thoughts or other distractions, that is completely natural and okay, when this happens, gently bringing your attention back to feeling the sensations of your body.
- Note, at any point, giving yourself permission to back off if something does not feel okay to you.

Instructions for Body Scan

- Start by taking three deep, slow, deliberate breaths.
- Continue by bringing your attention to the entire body. How does the body feel? Noticing temperature and vibrations: cold, warm, comfortable, relaxed, tense, or nothing at all? Whatever you are feeling or not feeling is okay. Just remain curious and non-judgmental toward your experience.
- Next bringing your attention to the soles of your feet and feeling all the sensations you can notice. You might feel tingling or prickly sensations, heat or cold, energy or numbness, relaxation or tension...or nothing at all – whatever you are feeling or not feeling is okay.
- When you are ready, moving your attention from the soles of your feet up into the feet themselves.
- To the ankles.
- Scanning up through the body to your lower legs, knees, upper legs, hips, buttocks, lower belly, back and torso, chest, shoulders, arms and hands, and finally the neck and head, all the way to the crown of the head.
- Now shifting your awareness to your entire body, head to toe, just feeling and appreciating the experience of being fully present to the aliveness of experience of your body.
- If closed, slowly opening the eyes and moving mindfully to a seated posture to bring the session to a close or continuing with body scan until you fall back asleep (if you are trying to fall asleep).