

Focus on the Present - The Body Scan

"You must learn to be still in the midst of activity, and to be vibrantly alive and responsive." Indira Gandhi

Read through the script below and practice it yourself or ask a partner, friend or teacher to guide you through the body scan with the script below -

1. Make yourself as comfortable as possible, lying on the floor with your head supported, arms by your side, palms facing up, legs straight out in front of you and allowing your feet to comfortably fall to the sides
2. Gently close your eyes
3. Let go of any concerns about the past the future for this short time
4. Becoming aware and notice any areas of contact between your body and the floor
5. Take a deep breath in and gently let it go
6. Now, allow your breath to find its natural rhythm
7. Become aware of any sensations connected to the breath as it flows in and out of your body
8. Notice any areas of tension in your body, and with each outbreath release any tightness, allowing your body to soften as if melting into the floor
9. Notice any sensations in the body: sense temperature, the movement of air across your skin, tingling or perhaps no sensations at all
10. Now, gently bring your attention to your feet, feel the pressure of both heels resting on the floor, rest your attention on your toes, the space between your toes and notice any sensations present in your feet
11. Move your attention through your body, part by part, working up the legs to your chest, from your palms up to your shoulders and on up to your forehead. And if thoughts or feelings arise, just notice them, let them go and direct your attention back to sensations in your body
12. Allow your awareness now to expand and include a sense of your whole-body lying-in stillness
13. Take a few moments at the end of this practice to bring gratitude to the many parts of your body that function miraculously from moment to moment, whether with or without your attention
14. When you are ready, gently wriggle your fingers and toes and remember you can check in to the sensations of

Tip

Many people come to mindful meditation hoping to switch off and calm down only to be confronted by a 'waterfall' of unsettling thoughts. You may even feel that this practice makes you feel worse. Recognising this constant inner chatter is the first step to working with your mind more effectively so ... acknowledge the thoughts, in a non-judgemental way and let them pass, much like clouds in the sky perhaps.