

Body Scan Meditation

- **Prepare Your Space:** Find a quiet, comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed. Lie down on a yoga mat or sit in a supportive chair. If that isn't possible, this practice can be done standing and in just a minute or two.
- **Deep Breaths to Begin:** Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Inhale slowly through your nose, allowing your belly to rise, then exhale fully through your mouth.
- **Engage Your Body:** Start by focusing your attention on your feet. Feel the sensation of them touching the ground or the surface beneath you. Notice any areas of tension or relaxation.
- **Sequential Scan:** Slowly move your attention upward, scanning each part of your body systematically. Pay attention to sensations in your ankles, calves, knees, thighs, and so on, all the way up to your head. Scan all sensations without prioritizing; the weight of your body as the floor or chair supports you, the sensation of your clothing against your skin, the temperature, your hair brushing against your skin, an itch sensation as it arises and fades away. Do your best to simply notice without judgement or interpretation.
- **Be Present:** As you scan each area, be fully present with whatever sensations arise. Resist the urge to judge or analyze, simply observe and experience. You'll first notice obvious sensations but as you continue to scan up and down the body, you'll begin to notice more subtle sensations. Just continue to notice as you move your focus of attention.
- **Investigate Sensations:** If you come across tension in your shoulder, for example, resist the urge to try to 'fix' it. Lean into the sensation. Where specifically is the tension? Is it general or localized? On the surface or deep in the muscles? If there is an ache, is it soft or sharp? Steady or throbbing? Examine the sensations with the detachment and objectivity of a scientist. The idea is to investigate to get under the mind's label of the sensation (e.g. "my shoulder is sore") to the actual 'now' experience.
- **Return to the Present:** Use the sensations in your body as a doorway back to the present moment. Whenever your mind starts to wander, gently bring your focus back to the physical sensations you're experiencing.
- **Express Gratitude:** When you're ready to finish, take a few more deep breaths and express gratitude for this time spent reconnecting with your body. Slowly open your eyes and transition back to your day with a renewed sense of presence and awareness.

By practicing this body scan regularly, you'll strengthen your ability to stay grounded in the present moment and cultivate a deeper connection with your body and mind.