

Mindfulness: Meditation 2 - The Body Scan

Meditation 2 - The body scan.

[bell chimes].

This is a guided body scan meditation. So lying on a mat, or a thick rug, or on a bed. Allowing the eyes to close, if that feels comfortable. Letting the hands lie alongside the body. And the feet uncrossed, falling away from each other. And noticing the sense of the body as a whole, lying here. The contact between the body and whatever is supporting you.

[silence].

And as you lie here, reminding yourself that we're not trying to get anywhere, or striving to achieve any special state. The intention here is to spend time with each region of the body, in turn, cultivating awareness of what's already here. So, we're not looking for anything special to happen, but allowing things to be just as we find them. So letting go of the tendency to want things to be a certain way. Or to judge how you're doing. Simply following along with the instructions as best you can. And whenever the mind wanders away, as it will tend to do, bringing it back, without giving yourself a hard time.

[silence].

So now, at a certain point, bringing your attention to the sensations of the breath down in the abdomen. *[pause]*. Noticing the stretching of the abdomen wall on the in-breath, and the falling away on the out-breath. Seeing if that's true for you.

[silence].

And now gathering the attention and moving it down the body to the feet. *[pause]*. Noticing what sensations there are in both feet when the attention arrives here. *[pause]*. Sensations in the toes. *[pause]*. The soles of the feet. *[pause]*. The heels. *[pause]*. The top of the feet. *[pause]*. What's here right now? *[pause]*. If there are no sensations, then simply registering a blank. Or if they're very subtle, then simply noticing this. This is your experience right now. There is no right way to feel. Simply allowing the attention to remain here.

[silence].

Now taking a deeper breath. *[pause]*. And on the out-breath, letting go of the feet. Letting them dissolve in awareness, and shifting the attention to the ankles. What sensations are here? *[pause]*. And taking a deeper breath, and on the out-breath, letting go of the ankles and shifting the attention to the lower legs. Dwelling here for a few moments. *[pause]*. Noticing any sense

of contact with whatever you're lying on. Being fully alive to any and all sensations there may be, from the surface of the skin, as well as from inside the legs.

[silence].

Now taking a deeper breath, and on the out-breath, releasing the attention from the lower legs, and shifting to the knees. Letting the attention rest here. *[pause]*. Not thinking about the knees, but sensing directly what's here right now. Noticing what sensations change, and what stays the same. Seeing what's true for you right now.

[silence].

And at a certain point, taking a deeper breath. *[pause]*. And on the out-breath, letting go of the knees and shifting the attention to the thighs. *[pause]*. What do you notice here? Maybe sensations of contact with clothes on the surface of the skin, sensations of heaviness or lightness, pulsing, vibration, any and all sensations.

[silence].

And now, when you're ready, on an in-breath, imagine the breath could come into the body, flowing all the way into the legs, right down to the feet, and back again on the out-breath, up and out of the body. So that you're imagining or sensing what it would feel like if the breath could fill the legs as you breath in, and empty from the legs as you breath out. Just playing with this sensation for the next few breaths if you choose.

[silence].

And now taking a deeper breath, and as you breath out, letting go of the legs, allowing them to dissolve in awareness, and shifting the attention to the hips and pelvis. The right hip. *[pause]*. The left hip. *[pause]*. And the whole basin of the pelvis, and the organs in this region. Perhaps imagining that the breath could flow into this region on the in-breath, and out again on the out-breath.

[silence].

Then taking a deeper breath, and on the out-breath letting go of the hips and pelvis, and shifting the spotlight of attention to the back, starting with the lower back.

[silence].

Then on an in-breath, expanding the field of awareness to take in the middle of the back.

[silence].

And then again to take in the upper back, including the shoulder blades. Until you're holding the whole of the back in awareness. Breathing with the back.

[silence].

Now taking a deeper breath into the back. *[pause]*. And as you let go of the breath, letting go of the back as well, and moving your attention to the front of the body, to the lower abdomen. Seeing what sensations there are waiting for you here, as your attention moves into this region. Feeling sensations as you breath in and breath out.

[silence].

From time to time, you may find yourself getting distracted, thoughts, daydreams, worries. Or the feeling of wanting to hurry up, to move on. Feelings of boredom or restlessness may come. Sometimes pulling quite strongly for your attention. And when this happens, it's not a mistake. Nothing's gone wrong. Simply taking the opportunity to notice these feelings and distractions, acknowledging them. Perhaps noticing how their affecting the body. Then, without judging yourself in any way, bringing the attention back to where you had intended it to be. Now in the lower abdomen. Breathing.

[silence].

And at a certain point, taking a deeper breath. And on the out-breath, letting go of the abdomen, and shifting attention to the chest. What sensations are here? As you cradle this part of the body in awareness. Moment, by moment, by moment.

[silence].

And at a certain point, taking a deeper, more intentional breath into the chest. *[pause]*. And when you're ready, as you let go of the breath, letting go of the chest as well, and shifting the attention to the hands and arms. Holding both hands and arms center stage in awareness now.

[silence].

Now taking a deeper breath, and on the out-breath, letting go of the hand and arms, and shifting attention to the shoulders and neck. What sensations are here? Attending. Being here for them, whatever they are. Breathing with them.

[silence].

Then taking a deeper breath, and on the out-breath, letting go of the shoulders and neck, and moving the attention to the head and face. Starting with the lower jaw, and the chin. *[pause]*. The mouth, and lips. *[pause]*. The nostrils. *[pause]*. The surface of the nose. *[pause]*. The cheeks. *[pause]*. And the sides of the face, and the ears. *[pause]*. The eyes. The eyelids. *[pause]*. The eyebrows. And the space between the eyebrows. *[pause]*. The forehead. And the sides of the forehead, the temples. *[pause]*. And the scalp. And now imagining the breath could fill the whole head, and that you could feel the breath on the back of the face as it comes in. Refreshing and renewing with each in-breath.

[silence].

Now imagining that the breath could fill the whole body as you lie here. Breathing into the whole body, and out from the whole body.

[silence].

And now letting go of any intentions for the breath, and simply lying here. Allowing the body to be just as it is. *[pause]*. A sense of coming home to the body. Allowing yourself to be just as you are. Complete. And whole. Resting in awareness. Moment by moment.

[silence].

[bell chimes].