

# Body Scan Meditation Webinar Handout

## Overview

This webinar introduced a 20-minute body scan meditation.

## Introduction to Body Scans

If you are like many people, you probably feel as if you live more in your head than in your body. Through a body scan meditation, you can begin to understand how stress and anxiety can affect you and your body and learn how to live better — even when you are experiencing illness or physical pain. The body scan brings attention to different parts of the body, beginning with the feet and ending at the top of the head.

## Body Scan Meditation

Take 20 to 30 minutes to complete this body scan. The script below was adapted from *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook* written by Bob Stahl and Elisha Goldstein.

*To start, take a few moments to become still. Do a mindful check-in, being aware of the present state of your body and mind and simply allowing any waves of thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations to just be as they are.*

*When you feel ready, gently shift your focus to the breath. Breathe normally and naturally. Breathing in, be conscious that you are breathing in — and when breathing out, be conscious that you are breathing out. At times, the mind may wander away from the awareness of your breathing. This is only natural. When you recognize this, come back to the breath, breathing in and out with awareness again.*

*Now, gently shift to the body scan. To start, bring awareness to the bottom of the left foot where you feel the contact of your foot on the floor. Be sensitive to what is being felt. Feel the heel, ball, and sole of the foot. Feel your toes and the top of the foot and back into the Achilles tendon and up into the ankle.*

*Next, move your awareness up to the lower left leg, feeling into the calf and shin and their connection to the left knee. Be present. Let your awareness now rise up to the thigh, sensing into the upper leg and its connection above into the left hip.*



*Now, shift your awareness to the right foot and bring awareness to where you feel the contact of your foot on the floor. It could be the back of the heel or the bottom of the right foot. Sense into what is being felt — being fully aware of the heel, ball, and sole of the foot.*

*Next, be aware of the toes and the top of the right foot and back into the Achilles tendon and up into the ankle. Next, move your awareness up to the lower leg, feeling into the calf and shin and their connection to the knee. Be continuously present — as you were with your breathing at the beginning of this exercise.*

*Let awareness now rise up into the right thigh, sensing into the upper leg and its connection above into the hip. Gently withdraw your attention from the right hip and move your attention to the pelvic region. Be mindful.*

*Now, lift your awareness to the abdomen and into the belly. As in previous parts of the body, allow and accept whatever sensations you feel. Now, move your attention to the tailbone and begin to sense the lower, middle, and upper parts of the back. Feeling any sensations allow any tightness to soften and let what is not softening be as it is. Let the awareness now shift into the chest, into the heart and lungs. Next, become aware of the ribcage and sternum.*

*Now, gently withdraw attention from the chest and shift awareness into the fingertips of your left hand. Feeling into the fingers and palm, and then the back of the hand and up into the wrist. Proceed up into the left forearm, elbow, and upper arm, be aware of any bodily sensations.*

*Now shift awareness to the fingertips of the right hand. Feeling into the fingers and palm, and then the back of the hand and up into the right wrist. Proceed up into the right forearm, elbow, and upper arm.*

*Let the awareness now move into both shoulders and then up into the neck and throat. Be present to any sensations, thoughts, or emotions. Now bring your awareness into the jaw and then gently into the teeth, tongue, mouth, and lips. Allowing any resonating sensations to go wherever they need to go and allowing them to be — without trying to change or control them.*

*Feel into the cheeks, nose, the eyes, and the muscles around the eyes. Soften these areas. Feel into the forehead and the temples. Let the awareness move into the top and back of the head. Be completely present. Now, expand the field of awareness to the entire body from head to toe to fingertips. Connect from the head through the neck to the shoulders, arms, hands, chest, back, belly, hips, legs, and feet.*

*Feel the body as a whole, with its various physical sensations, thoughts, and emotions. Breathing in, feel the whole body rising and expanding on an inhalation and falling and contracting on the exhalations.*



*As we come to the end of this body scan, congratulate yourself for taking this time to be present. Slowly wiggle your fingers and toes. When you are ready, gently open your eyes and take a gentle stretch.*

