

BODY SCAN

Being mindful is to have a conscious awareness of the present moment; to allow the full experience of humanness to occur—allowing thoughts, feelings, sensations, whatever shows up to simply exist. The conscious mind is our objective or thinking mind, however the subconscious mind stores and retrieves everything that has ever happened to us and controls 90% of our lives. The practice of being present provides access to the subconscious mind and Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), which contains an enormous amount of knowledge, memories, wisdom and recovery processes that we are likely underutilizing.

One of the primary ways to access the subconscious mind is meditation. It can simply be a period of awareness where you stop everything you're doing and simply pause to notice what shows up in stillness and silence. The Body Scan is one practice that can help you to begin to manage your subconscious mind.

Find a quiet, comfortable place to lie down or sit. Put aside anywhere from 5-45 minutes for the scan. The time you allot will affect how slowly or quickly you move from one area of your body to another.

1. Gently close your eyes and begin by focusing your attention on the physical sensation of breathing slowly and deeply (Inhale through your nostrils and exhale through pursed lips. **Breathing Tempo: IN – 8 sec. HOLD – 4 sec. EXHALE – 12 sec.**), and any other physical feelings while you're lying or sitting.
2. Move your attention to the toes of your left foot. Feel any sensations in your toes, or note the lack of sensation. If you feel tension in your toes or in your mind, try to release it. If you can't release it, just let it be, always with an attitude of receptivity. If your attention wanders off into thoughts, gently bring your attention back to your left toes.
3. When you're ready, upon exhalation, mentally leave your toes and move your attention to the sole of your left foot, then to the heel and then to the ankle, following the same instructions as for the toes.
4. Following the same instructions as in #2, withdraw your attention from one area of your body and move it to the next area in this order: The lower left leg, including the calf, the shin, and the knee.
 - The left thigh—front and back—and its connection to the left hip.
 - The right toes, the sole of the foot, the heel, the ankle, the calf, the shin, the knee, the thigh, the connection of the thigh to the right hip.
 - The pelvic region and its organs.
 - The abdominal region and the organs of the digestive system.
 - The tailbone and then up the back from the lower to the middle to the upper back.
 - The chest, including the heart, the lungs, the breasts.
 - The fingertips of your left hand, the back of the hand, the palm, the wrist, the forearm, the elbow, the upper arm.
 - The fingertips of your right hand, the back of the hand, the palm, the wrist, the forearm, the elbow, the upper arm.
 - The shoulders and armpits, up into the neck.
 - The jaw and then the teeth, the tongue, the mouth and lips.
 - The cheeks and sinuses, the eyes, the muscles around the eyes, the forehead, the temples, the ears.
 - The back of the scalp up to the top of the head.
5. To finish your full body scan, shift your attention back to your breath and transition back into activity by moving slowly and deliberately. Practicing meditations like this can help focus your mind and help you to become more aware of the felt sense within your body. Pausing permits the subconscious to give you access to your unlimited potential and the vast amounts of wisdom that can help you shift habits and support recovery. The more in tune you are with your behaviors and patterns the more self-empowering. Furthermore being fully engaged in each moment will allow you to have more vital and enriching experiences in all aspects of your life.