

MINDFUL BODY SCAN

WHAT IS A MINDFUL BODY SCAN?

Body scans are an open awareness meditation that brings awareness to body sensations by having the participant move their focus head to toe noticing sensations within their body (Khazan, 2019; McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010).

WHY IT WORKS

Body scans provide us with an opportunity to experience our body as it is, without judging or trying to change it. They allow us to notice and release any sources of tension the we weren't aware of before, such as a raised shoulders or clenched jaw muscles (Yalim, 2018).

Body scans help bring our awareness back to the present moment, allowing us to practice self-regulation so that we are able to make decisions based on values rather than reacting to emotions and past decisions that may have not served us (Baltzell & Summers, 2017).

Body scans also help to cultivate a receptive awareness of our bodies which helps with things like aversion to discomfort, negative body image and anxiety about pain and illness. (Burk, 2014).

MINDFUL BODY SCAN

This meditations should be done in a place that is quiet and free of as many distractions as possible.

Begin by getting comfortable. This practice can be done:

- Sitting in a relaxed manner with feet flat on the floor and hands resting on their lap
- Lying, with their head supported and hands resting by their sides.
- Eyes can remain open or closed, but the gaze should be soft.

STEP 1

STEP 2

Take several long, slow, deep breaths. Breathing in fully and exhaling slowly. Breathe in through your nose and out through your nose or mouth. Feel your stomach expand on an inhale and relax and let go as you exhale

STEP 3

Bring the attention to the top of your head...your forehead... your eyes... your mouth... your jaw... notice any sensations you feel in these areas...

STEP 4

Now move down to your shoulders... your chest... your upper back... the middle of your back... your lower back... stomach... and ribs... notice the sensations in these parts of your body.

STEP 5

Bring your awareness back to your shoulders...your arms...your wrists...your hands... notice the sensations in these parts of your body

STEP 6

Bring your awareness to down your hips... your knees... your ankles... your feet... your toes

STEP 7

Now scan your body from your head to your toes.

STEP 8

As a total body overview... take your time to notice how you really feel...if you feel any tension, any pain, bring your awareness to that area of your body and breathe in positivity and energy to it and exhale out the discomfort and the pain you feel...

STEP 9

Feel yourself in total relaxation... feel your body free from all the tension and ready to rock the rest of your day with a relaxed and brand new perspective.

Mindful body scan activity adapted from EPHE 575 Assignment: Introductory mindfulness training plan for athletes (2019)

References:

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Burk, D. (2014). *Idiot's guides: Mindfulness*. New York, NY: Penguin Books (USA).

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Yalim, D. (2018, December 27). Don't worry, blissful body scan meditation will boost life quality. Retrieved from <https://bayart.org/body-scan-meditation/>

Body Scan adapted from:

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