



## Body Scan Exercise

*\* To listen to this exercise, visit <http://takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/explore-healing-practices/meditation> and click on Body Scan Exercise on the left.*

Welcome to the Body Scan exercise. This exercise will guide you to turn your attention to various parts of your body in order to notice where you are holding tension. This technique can be used for self-awareness and relaxation.

To start, find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Most people prefer to lie down for this exercise.

Uncross your arms and legs... let them be supported by the ground or the chair or the floor.

Close your eyes, if you wish.

Notice your breath coming in and out of your body.

Feel it enter through your nose or mouth, move past your airways, and fill your lungs.

Then feel it moving out of your body. Take a few moments to focus on your breath flowing in and out.

(pause)

Now bring your attention to your toes. Continue taking deep, slow breaths. Wiggle your toes slightly and focus your attention there.

Now bring your attention to the soles of your feet. Continue to breath deeply.

Now bring your attention to your calves. How do they feel?

Bring your attention to your knees and move them gently.

Bring your attention to your thighs. Tense your thigh muscles and then relax them as you continue to breath deeply.

Now bring your attention to your buttocks, squeeze them together and relax. Are you

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holding tension there?

Now bring your attention to your low back. Notice any pain or tightness there. Breathe deeply through this area and let the muscles relax.

Now bring your attention to your stomach. Pay attention to its movement as you breath in and out.

Bring your attention to your chest. Pay attention to its movement as you breath in and out.

Bring your attention to your shoulders. Feel for any tension there and release it with your breath.

Bring your attention to your neck. Roll your head gently from side to side and relax the muscles.

Now bring your attention to your face. Feel for any tension in your facial muscles and let it go as you continue to breathe.

Bring your attention to your head and hair. Feel the air moving around it.

Continue breathing and release all of your body's tension. Feel your feet connected to the earth. Notice your relaxed state and carry it with you for the rest of your day.