

Body scan

This exercise can be done sitting or lying down. Be sure to stay as awake throughout the exercise.

Close your eyes, unless you tend to fall asleep, in which case it is better to keep them open.

To learn the exercise, the support of a CD or audio file with the spoken exercises often proves helpful.

Throughout the exercise, it is not about changing or achieving anything. It's about simply observing what is and accepting it moment to moment as it is.

Watch your breath as the abdominal wall rises and falls, all by itself, without you having to do anything. In and out and pause. Just observe.

Take the time to notice the whole body as a whole enveloped by your skin.

Direct your attention to the toes of your left foot. Observe what you can sense in the toes: Temperature, touch (if they are covered), a tingling sensation, the position of the joints, something else, or maybe nothing at all. That's okay, too, just to consciously feel nothing. For some people, the idea of directing the breath there, breathing into the toes, as it were, and out of them again, the idea of the breath coming in through the nose, a fine breath, into the lungs, further into the abdomen, into the left leg to the toes, and back again, is helpful.

Go back to your breathing with your attention for a short time. Then turn to the soles of your feet, heel, ankle. And as you consciously breathe in and out of these parts of your body as well, notice all the sensations. Register them and then immediately release them. Then continue with the exercise.

As soon as you notice that thoughts arise, return your attention to the breath and the respective body region.

Inwardly feel your way up through the left leg in this manner, from the ankle to the calf and shin, the knee, the kneecap, through the entire thigh (to the surface and inside to the loin and) to the left hip.

From there you move over to the right foot, where you wander up the leg in the same sequence.

The focus of your attention then slowly moves through the entire lower abdomen, touching the hips once again, then the buttocks (and genitals), the small of the back, the abdomen. From there it continues through the torso, the back, the rib cage (and the ribs to the breasts, to the lungs and the large blood vessels located in the rib cage), on to the shoulder blades to the collar bone and the shoulders.

From the shoulders, move to the arms, often going through both arms at the same time, from the fingertips through the fingers, the heel of the hand, the palm and the back of the hand,

through the wrist, the forearm, the elbow the upper arm and the crook of the arm back to the shoulders.

Then move on to the neck and throat, and finally wander your attention through the face and skull.

Meanwhile, keep your attention on the breath and the various sensations in the different areas of the body. Breathe consciously there and out again. (Keep consciously releasing your sensations and thoughts as well).