

# Mindful Moment: Body Scan

## Introduction

Often we are caught up in the business of our lives, the stress, the anxiety, and the moving that we don't realize how our body is doing and feeling. Tension, headaches, back and shoulder pain, and tense muscles are all connected to our emotional and mental state.

Going through the body scan activity is a great way to recognize what your body is doing and release tension and anxiety. The goal is not to relieve the discomfort completely but to get to know it and learn from it so you can better manage it.

If you regularly practice body scanning, it can be used to break the physical and psychological tension you feel and can be helpful in maintaining a relaxed state.

## Activity

1. Get comfortable. You can have participants lie down or find a comfortable sitting position. Have them close their eyes.
2. Start with a few deep, slow breathes.
3. Start with either your head or your feet and highlight each body part as you scan to the top or bottom of your body.
4. If someone becomes uncomfortable, or there is a lot of tension or discomfort in a specific body part, slow down and take some time to breathe.
5. Scan your entire body and end with breathing again. When participants are ready, they may open their eyes.

## Tips & Tricks

- If you need a script, feel free to use the script on the second page.
- You may use calming, quiet music in the background, if you choose.
- If you are not comfortable leading through the activity, YouTube has many great walkthroughs. Use common mindfulness brands like: Calm, MyLife, or Calm Classroom.
- If you don't have a lot of time, you can do an abbreviated version by just sitting and noticing any place that gives you tension.

## Discussion Questions

- How was this exercise for you? Was it difficult or easy? Why?
- Did your mind wander? If so, what did you do to bring your attention back to your body?
- What did you notice about yourself and your body during this activity?

## Extending the Activity

- You can give participants a quick moment to journal or write down about how the activity went for them.
- Have youth think about the questions, find a partner, and then share with each other (Think, Pair, Share).
- Have them rate how tense they felt **before** the activity and have them rate how tense they feel **after** the activity on a scale from 1-10.

For more information and activity resources visit :<https://u.osu.edu/4hjournal/>

Created by Justin Bower, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Mindful Moment Series 04/09/2021



## Activity Script

Close your eyes.

Start by bringing attention to the general position of your body. Are you sitting up straight with your feet on the ground and your hand on your knees?

Notice the relationship of your body to the space around you. Notice where you are, the time of day.

Notice if you have any tension or tightness in your body.

Notice what you are thinking and feeling. Are you restless or grounded? Agitated or calm? Just notice what's going on without judging or trying to change anything.

Now bring your attention to your breathing. Where do you feel your breath the most? Your nose? Your chest? Your stomach? Breathe in deeply and notice the breath as it fills you body. Breathe out and notice where your breathe goes out.

Now bring your attention to the top of your head. Then to the back and sides of your head and down to your ears. Bring your attention to your face. Your forehead, your eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, nose, mouth and jaw. Whatever you experience don't try to change it. Let it be.

Now move your attention to your neck and shoulders. Notice how you neck and shoulders feel.

Move your attention to your arms, your elbows, your forearms, your wrists, your hands, all the way to your fingers and thumbs. Just focusing on traveling through your body trying to just see what's there.

Now move your attention to your chest. Your upper back. Notice your heartbeat and breathing. Go down to your stomach and lower back. Your stomach is quite active and can be a space we hold many emotions. Spend a moment here while you explore and then just let it be.

Now move your attention to your hips, your legs, thighs, shins, and calves. Now into your ankles, tops of your feet, the sides of your feet, and then the bottom of your feet.

Finally, feel how each part of your body is connected. Your foot connected to your ankle, ankle connected to your leg. Your leg connected to your torso and how it connects to your chest, arms and neck. Your neck connected to your head and face.

Be aware of your temperature, the texture of your clothes, how your body is connected, and the way it is right now.

Don't think about what is right or wrong. Don't try to change or think about future. Just focus on a sense of wholeness.

And now focus back on your breathe. Feeling each inhale and exhale.

And when you are ready focus back on the touch of your seat and then open your eyes.

