

## Body Scan Meditation

I invite to you find a comfortable position, close your eyes and focus your attention inward with kind curiosity and interest in discovering what is there. We're going to take a systematic journey with our awareness through our bodies, starting with the feet. Place your awareness on your feet, feeling them contained by the shoes and noticing the slight tingling of aliveness that is there and everywhere throughout your system. That is your life force energy. Move up to your ankles, just feeling what's there. Now go to your calves and your knees. As we go, if there are any sensations that are not agreeable to you, just give them kind attention, without judging and without trying to change anything. The simple fact of giving attention to any place of discord activates your body's natural healing capacities. Move your awareness to your thighs, your hip sockets, your buttocks and pelvic basin, breathing normally and noticing whatever is there. If thoughts come and you find your attention wandering, that's OK, just gently bring your attention back to wherever we are in the body. If you notice a persistent sensation, you might label it: itching, tingling, tightness...then return to your curious internal exploration. Now move to your lower back and lower abdominal region. If there is tightness in any of these areas, you may want to direct the breath there for a moment or two. Now go to your mid-spinal-column, stomach and diaphragm, again breathing into them if there is constriction. Let any thoughts that might arise just drift by like clouds in a clear blue sky. Now move up to your chest cavity, your rib cage, lungs and heart, particularly noticing the quality of your heart space. Is it dark or light, contracted or expanded, cold or warm or something else? There is no right or wrong way to be, just kind, loving awareness holding whatever is there. In this exploration you are to relate to yourself with as much love and compassion as you would your most dearly Beloved, even those aspects of yourself that you have defined as problematic or unacceptable. Now rest your awareness on your shoulder blades, upper spinal column,

upper chest; then down your upper arms, elbows, wrists, hands and fingers. Now bring your consciousness to your throat and neck. It's not unusual for most people to have a tightness in the throat. If you do, just rest your awareness there with kind compassion for the person who sometimes feels she/he can't speak their mind and sometimes has to swallow their words. Finally, go to the back of the head, mouth and jaw, particularly noticing if there is holding in the jaw. If so, you might want to move it back and forth a little. Then go to the facial muscles, ears, nose and eyes, especially the musculature that holds the eyes in place. Finally rest your attention of the crown of your head before taking a deep breath, doing a quick overall body scan and resting in beingness for a moment or two.