Mindfulness Exercise – Brief Body Scan

For the next few minutes, do a brief body scan. The body scan allows us to investigate the moment to moment experiences of the body. Increased awareness to feelings and sensations in the body can lead to increased ability to function with pain, stress, and tension.

During the body scan you may notice a range of sensations from warmth to tension to heaviness, lightness, to no sensation at all. The purpose isn’t to change anything, but to simply notice it. During the body scan your busy mind will frequently take you away on some sort of thought train. When you are aware that you have been lost in thoughts, gently bring your attention back to the body.

The body has its own wisdom. It is where we feel our emotions and where tension and relaxation is felt. It is our antenna to the world. By paying close attention to it, we realize better what we want to cultivate and what we want to let go of.

Let’s get started (exercise is about 5 minutes).
• Please close your eyes. Perhaps it has been a busy day so far and this is your first opportunity to slow down. Take a moment and just sink into the being quiet for a few seconds.
• Gently bring your awareness to your breathing. Noticing breathing in and breathing out. No need to change the breath. Just aware of this wonderful life force and ride each breath in and out.
• As your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to the breath. If your mind wanders 1000 times, that is okay. When you notice the wondering, bring your attention back to your breath.
• We will begin the body scan by noticing how your feet feel within your shoes and against the floor. Noticing all sensations that might be there – cold, warmth, tingling, heaviness, or neutrality – no sensation at all. Paying close attention to what is.
• Continue with the body scan by noticing each part of your body:
  • Legs
  • Lower torso
  • Stomach area
  • Chest and upper back
  • Shoulders and arms
  • Neck, head and face

Go back to awareness of the breath, noticing breathing in and out. Then open your eyes and you are finished with this exercise.