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The body scan activity is a way to become more aware of how your body may be holding or experiencing tension, discomfort, pain, trauma, anxiety, or stress. Focused attention on your body allows you to intentionally relax and release tight muscles and makes you aware of how your body is responding.

Body Scan Script

1. Find a quiet room and make yourself comfortable. You may choose to sit down, or you may lie on your back. Let your hands rest in your lap or at your side.
2. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes. Or if you prefer, look softly in one direction instead. Begin by taking several long, slow, deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Feel your stomach and ribcage expand as you inhale. Allow your body to relax as you exhale. (Reader pause.)
3. If you can hear noises or sounds around you, mentally set them aside. Shift your attention from what is happening outside your body to what is happening inside your body. (Reader pause.)
4. Anytime you get distracted by sounds or thoughts around you, simply notice this and bring your focus back to your body and your breathing.
5. Starting at your feet, notice what you feel. What physical sensations do you notice? If you don't feel anything, that is okay too. Just notice that. (Reader pause.) Wiggle your toes. Roll your ankles. Notice how they feel. Are you wearing shoes or socks? Notice how they feel on your feet. Are they tight? Soft? Warm? Sweaty? If you are barefoot, simply take note of how your feet feel. Take a deep breath in and think about sending that breath all the way to your toes. (Reader pause.)
6. Now move your attention from your feet up to your ankles (reader pause) and then to your calves. Take another deep breath and relax your muscles in your ankles and calves. Make whatever adjustments your body needs to be comfortable. (Reader pause.)
7. When you are ready, breathe into the rest of your legs and notice how your muscles feel. Pay attention to your hamstrings and thighs. Soften any tension that you feel. (Reader pause.) Has your mind started to wander? If so, bring your attention back to your body and take a deep breath. Stay focused on your legs a little longer, paying attention to what you feel.
8. On your next inhale, move your attention to your pelvis and lower back. Exhale and relax this area, paying attention to any discomfort as you breathe. If you need to take another breath to release the tension, do so slowly. (Reader pause.)
9. Moving on from your lower back, notice your abdomen and chest. Is any tension or anxiety present as you focus on this area? (Reader pause.) Take a deep breath and send the oxygen to your gut, filling it completely. Exhale slowly and observe any release of negative sensations. Notice how your clothes feel on this part of your body. Where can you feel them on your belly and chest? How do they feel against your skin? Notice it and breathe. (Reader pause.)
10. Gently wiggle your arms. As you do, soften the muscles in your upper and lower arms. As you breathe, let them rest softly in one place. Now pay attention to your fingers. Can you mentally soften each one of your fingers from your pinkies to your thumbs? (Reader pause.)
11. Now notice your upper back and shoulders. Is there any pain, tightness, stiffness, or aches? Without any judgment, pay attention to areas of discomfort and make any needed adjustments to help release the tension. Take a deep breath in, and as you slowly exhale, soften your shoulders. Let go of any tension. Notice any changes or shifts. (Reader pause.)
12. Move from your shoulders to your neck and scalp. With the same focus, notice any tense muscles. Breathe deeply, relaxing any tension you feel. The muscles in your scalp should relax from the top of your head to the base of your neck. (Reader pause.)
13. Next move to your face. Soften your face and imagine your facial muscles are soft, warm clay. Breathe in slowly, and as you exhale, let those muscles simply rest on the bones in your face, dissolving any tension. (Reader pause.)
14. Take a few slow deep breaths, noticing your entire body. Feel your whole body relax into the chair or floor.
15. As you finish, shift your focus back to where you are in the present moment. Open your eyes. Recognize how much care and time you gave to your body.