Body Scan For People Living With Parkinson’s And Their Care Partners Transcript

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Introduction to Body Scan Mindfulness

Hello and welcome to this Body Scan Mindfulness practice. My name is Dr. Barbara, and I'm truly honored to guide you through this Body Scan practice today.

In my work since 1992, in the clinic with people living with Parkinson's, I deeply recognize that Parkinson's is overwhelming. And it might seem counterintuitive to ask people with Parkinson's to focus their attention on their body.

This body that gives so many problems. However, in my experience, the Body Scan has become one of the favorite practices among our Parkinson's students.

They report numerous benefits including deep relaxation, reduced stress, reduced anxiety, improved sleep, and one reported even to use the Body Scan to reduce tremors.

And he was preferring this over rescue medication at crucial times, as the Body Scan itself is a foundational mindfulness based practice. Alongside meditation and mindful yoga that we explore together in our eight week people.

Mindfulness. For people living with Parkinson's and their care partners. After taking our eight week course, numerous people in our group have reported that engaging in mindfulness practices within a supportive group setting has led to enhanced self acceptance.

This experience has reduced their concern about exhibiting symptoms in both social and professional environments. Ultimately, many have gained new confidence and resilience in the face of Parkinson's.

By consistently practicing with the mindfulness tools, mindfulness as a practice kind of like learning to play a musical instrument. So whether you're living with someone with Parkinson's or caring for someone else, who is the body scan session invite you to pause, breathe, and simply be present with your body.

Moment by moment. It's a time for you to release accumulated stress and embrace nurturing self-awareness. To summarize, a Body Scan can be incredibly beneficial as a tool for individuals living with Parkinson's and their care partners.

Settling In and Breath Awareness

This mindfulness mindfulness practice of the Body Scan helps enhance present moment awareness, reduce stress, and improve emotional resiliency by bringing our attention to each part of our body.

The body scan aids in recognizing signs of stress as they happen, whether that stress stems from thoughts, rumination, or physical circumstances. It also helps with relaxation of the body, and this reconnection or rehabilitation through the body scan can be profoundly powerful as a tool.

Practicing the body scan together with your care partner, if you're so inclined, can also foster empathy and strengthen the bond, helping to support one another with greater patience and compassion.

As we embark on this practice together, remember that there's no right way or wrong way to feel. Each experience is unique and every sensation is a part of your journey.

Let go, please of any expectations and allow yourself to be fully here in this moment that we'll share together. Let's begin this path to mindfulness together and find the peace within that we carry with us throughout the day.

With resilience and grace. So let's begin by finding a comfortable and quiet place to sit or lie down. You can pause the recording now to do so. And then let's just settle in to wherever we are sitting or lying down, and gently let your eyes float closed.

If you'd like, and or prefer not to close your eyes, you can leave the eyes open and just stared gently at the, out in front of you, about six feet, two meters out in front of you.

Let the eyes rest. Not necessarily focusing. And notice your breathing. Your natural breath as it is right now. Breathing in and breathing out.

Scanning the Lower Body

And if you'd like, you could take a slightly deeper breath just to relax somewhat more into the place that you're in. Settling in. Noticing any stress or strain that may or may not be there.

Recognizing it without judgment. Noticing again the natural rhythm of your breath. The rise and fall of your chest and abdomen. There's no need to change your breathing.

Simply observe it for a few moments and recognizing it as it is, as the breath. This is me just breathing. You may notice that thoughts begin to arise, and as they do, simply nurture your attention.

Invite your attention. Bring your attention back to the breath. And then gently let that go. And shift your focus all the way down to your feet. You may feel the weight of the contact of your heels against the floor, or the bed or the couch.

You may feel a sense of temperature or not. You may have a sense of the material that your feet find themselves on or not. And then gradually move your attention to your toes and just see what's there.

Noticing any sensations or even the absence of them. Or they may be tingling. Whatever is there, just notice it. Notice any urge to judge the feelings, to label them.

In this exercise, we simply notice what's there.

Upper Body and Facial Awareness

And then, gently letting that go and bring your attention to your lower legs. Noticing perhaps the angle that's formed by the feet and the lower legs.

Noticing, perhaps. The bone. The shinbone and the muscles. And the calf. And then bringing your attention to the whole lower leg. And gently let that go.

And slowly move your awareness up to your thighs. Scanning from the knee joint to the hips. Notice if there's any areas of tension or discomfort without any need to change them.

Configuration of the thighs is different than the calves. Of course, with the bone very deep, surrounded by muscles. Be aware of the thighs as a whole.

And then gently let that go and the invitation is to bring your attention to your hips and lower back. Feeling the support of the surface beneath you.

If you sense any tension, simply acknowledge its presence and consider whether the tension is necessary or simply a habitual pattern. Noticing any stress or strain that may or may not be there.

Recognizing it without judgment. And then gently let that go and bring your attention to your abdomen and chest. Observing the gentle rise and fall with each breath.

Whole-Body Awareness and Closing

Acknowledging all sensations of warmth or coolness in these areas. And if tension is present, simply bring a gentle curiosity to it. You may like to bring your attention to the heart area.

Simply bringing a gentle curiosity here. And then gently let that go and shift your focus to your shoulders, recognizing any weight that you may be carrying, both physically and mentally.

There. Notice this if there is any. Inviting a sense again of curiosity about this. Gradually moving your attention along your arms to your hands. Bringing each individual finger into your thoughts.

Into your feelings. Your perception of your feelings. A sensation. And then gently letting that go. And focus your attention on your neck, your jaw, your face.

Also noticing here if you're holding any tension in your jaw or your forehead or your temples, the circular muscles around the mouth or the circular muscles around the eyes.

Bringing your attention to the space in between the eyebrows. And between the eyebrows and the ears. Noticing any feeling or perceptions of sensation from the ears.

Bringing attention to your scalp. The back of the head. Breathing. Literally breathing. Up toward this area with an in-breath. And then gently letting that go and bringing the entire body to attention.

Into attention. From the tips of your toes to the crown of your head. Experiencing a sense of connectedness and wholeness. Observing any tension or ease throughout the body.

Cultivating a mindful awareness of the body in this way. And gently letting that go and gradually bringing your awareness back to your breath. Noticing your natural rhythm.

And when you're ready. If your eyes were closed. You can open your eyes slowly. Bringing a sense of awareness and presence with you as you return to your surroundings.

Thank you very much for your attention and I hope to see you back soon.