

Week of April 13 - April 17

-Complete Chp 17 "Body Scan" return via Turn-It-In see my website for instructions

body scan 17

As you read earlier, much of our anxiety begins in the body, overflows to the mind, and then just hijacks the whole mind-body system. But when we really start paying attention to the body, we can sense anxiety at the moment it begins and head it off before it snowballs, reaches our minds, and leaves us totally overwhelmed. The more we know our bodies, the more likely we are to be able to stop that snowball before it becomes an avalanche.

So how do we get to know our bodies? By now you've probably caught on and are thinking *through mindfulness*. And that's right! Follow the script below, and you'll pretty quickly get a sense of what to do. You can also record yourself reading the script, or do this with a friend, family member, or therapist reading along. With practice, your mind will get in the habit of automatically checking in with your body, even just for a moment, without needing a reminder. It's the same way that practice helps you automatically do a multiplication table or perform on the soccer field.

For some people, getting in touch with the body might be harder than for others. Maybe you feel as though your body has betrayed you in the past through sickness, or through weight gain or loss; maybe you don't like your body; or maybe thinking about certain parts of your body can bring up some bad memories or emotions. If any of these is the case for you, I'd encourage you to be extra cautious with this practice, and consider doing it with someone you trust.

Mindfulness Practice: Body Scan Script

- Find a comfortable place, preferably one where you can lie down on your back undisturbed for about five or ten minutes. Close your eyes. Allow whatever surface you are on to just hold you, and trust your body to breathe for you.
- Start by simply bringing your awareness to your breath. As you breathe in, allow your awareness to flow into and throughout your body, and notice the body's various points of contact with the surface beneath you.
- Once again, bring your awareness to your breath, following it down your throat and past your belly and imagining it reaching all the way down into your legs and feet. As you bring

activity 17 * body scan

your awareness into your toes, just notice any sensations there. Notice temperature, moisture, the sensation of socks if you're wearing them, your skin...and then deeper under the surface, feeling the muscles and bones deep under the skin.

- Follow your breath once more into your feet, aware of any other sensations in this part of your body. Take a moment just to be with them and notice how they feel. Your feet have been carrying you around all day. You may want to send them some gratitude for their hard work. As you breathe in again, follow your awareness into your ankles and calves. Breathe again now into your knees and thighs, exploring any sensations there.
- Now follow the breath into your lower back, aware that the lower back can be a place where we store tension and anxiety.
- On the next breath, follow your awareness around to your abdomen. Feel the movement as your belly rises and falls.
- Next, breathe into the upper back and shoulders, another place where stress can hide.
- Let go now of your back and shoulders, and bring your awareness into your chest, exploring this area and what it might be telling you.
- Next, gently follow the breath into your fingertips and your hands. Breathing in once more, follow your awareness into your wrists, into your forearms, and upward into your upper arms and shoulders, aware of the sensations and your body and mind responding to these sensations.
- Now breathe awareness into the back of your head, being aware of how your head feels, and on the next breath into the crown of your head, into your forehead, and down into your face. Just notice sensations as they arise, and notice thoughts or emotions or urges that go with them, watching them change with each breath.
- Take a moment now to thank the parts of your body for their hard work in keeping you alive and healthy. Then quickly scan through the body once more for any tension or discomfort, and just breathe into that part of the body for a few breaths.
- And now, begin to shift your attention from deep inside your body toward the outside, bringing your awareness into the room around you. Feel the soft surface underneath you, and allow your eyes to gently open, knowing that you can take this new awareness and comfort with your body into the rest of your day and life.

activity 17 * body scan

How did you feel in your mind during and after this practice?

In your body?

What feelings and urges came up?

Did sensations stay constant or did they change?

What emotions did you notice in your body?

How did you respond to discomfort, physically and emotionally?

Click and follow the instructions to this youtube video [Body Scan to the Jon Kabat-Zinn Body Scan](#)
Practice yoga - your favorite asanas for 20 minutes 2x this week (or more!)
Submit signed work by a parent or guardian via turn-it-in on chp 17
Namaste