



So now, with that in mind,
let's do a mindfulness practice called
the compassionate body scan.

You may want to sit
on a chair
with your back upright
and yet relaxed,
or else on a
meditation cushion,
or you may even want to
lie on the floor
in what's known as
the corpse pose
in yoga.

Once you get yourself situated,
we'll begin.

Start by first
getting in touch with
your body,
how it feels right here
in the present moment.
See if you can feel
the weight of your seat
on the cushion,
or of your back
on the floor.
Just notice the entire field
of the body sensation,
any prickling,
tingling,
heaviness,
pressure,
lightness
you may feel.
Just feel your body
just as it is right now.



What we're going to be doing
is moving our attention
and awareness
to different parts
of the body,
sweeping from the crown
of the head
down to the toes
and back again.

As we go
through different parts,
giving ourselves compassion
for any pain
or tension we may feel there,
or perhaps for any
shame or feelings
of inadequacy we have
about certain body parts.

Starting with the
crown of your head,
just notice what sensations
are there.

See if you can
tune into that point
just between the
air above your head
and where your skull starts.

Again,
is there any tingling
or sensation there?

If so,
just notice it.
If not,
that's fine, too.



Then become aware
of your facial muscles.
We have hundreds
of muscles
in our face.
They work very hard
for us,
expressing our emotions,
some of which are
quite painful,
these emotions.
If you feel
any tension
or stress
in any of your
facial muscles,
try relaxing,
soothing them,
maybe imagining
caressing your face
with your awareness,
being grateful
for how hard our
face muscles
work for us.

Then become aware
of the back of your head.
Any sensations there?
If you have any sort of
headache or pain,
just being kind,
tender,
compassionate
to the fact that
you aren't feeling,
perhaps,
as well as you'd like,
or if no sensation is there,



just feel whatever's
happening right now.

Now become aware
of how your neck feels,
again,
any tension,
burning,
tightness.
Our neck often holds our –
well, first of all
holds up our heavy head,
and it holds
a lot of tension,
especially if we
sit at a computer all day,
so just relaxing
the neck muscles,
and soothing and comforting
any points of pain
you may be experiencing,
dropping down
into your shoulders.

A lot of emotional tension,
fear,
stress,
is held in our shoulders.
We almost always
feel some sort of pain
and tension there.
First,
just notice what
you feel.
What is the sensation like?
Hot?
Cold?
Tight?
Stabbing?



Dull?
Take a moment
to have compassion
for the stress
of being
shoulders in your body.
They take on
a lot for us,
and just soothing,
comforting
any feelings of pain
or discomfort you may have.

Then dropping down
so that you're aware
of your upper back,
your shoulder blades,
again,
feeling any tension that's there,
any discomfort,
allowing it be
as it is,
hot,
cold,
sharp,
soft,
but using our awareness
to acknowledge any pain,
and to sooth
that area of our body.
I want you to
mentally imagine
getting a little bit of a
massage there
in your shoulder blades.

Then become aware
of your chest area,
the seat of our heart,



where emotions are often felt
very intensely,
including difficult ones
like grief,
disappointment.

Try to notice how
the physical sensations
of your chest
are manifesting.

Is the sensation moving?

Is it buzzing?

Is it tight?

Just simply notice
what's there.

Relax around it,
and comfort yourself
for any pain

you might be feeling
in your chest,

just as a mother
might caress a child
who's feeling discomfort.

Take the same attitude
with your awareness.

Then focus your attention
on your stomach area,
your gut.

A lot of difficult emotions
get stored here,
including fear.

We may have
some judgments
about our stomach.

Maybe it's not
quite as thin
as we'd like it to be.

First,
just focus on the



actual sensations
of your stomach.
Is there any movement?
Maybe you're digesting food.
Any tension?
Any physical discomfort?
Then also,
are any feelings coming up
of inadequacy,
or non-acceptance
of being exactly
who you are
in this moment?
Whatever arises,
you're going to take a very
calm,
comforting,
loving stance towards
this part of our body
we often have such
difficulty with,
maybe even sending
some appreciation
for the very hard task
of digesting our food,
allowing us to be alive,
just relaxing and softening.

Then turn your awareness
towards your lower back,
very big muscles there
needed to keep us upright.
If you feel any tension,
try to relax
that part of your body,
and consciously sooth
and comfort any pains or aches
you might feel.
It's hard to be



in this human body
with its limitations.
We can be kind to ourselves
in this moment,
then dropping down
to our pelvic area.

Again,
a lot of tension often here
we don't even pay attention to.
We often avoid
paying attention
to this part of our body.
Just notice what
feelings are there.
If there's any discomfort
or tension,
try to relax.
If there are any emotions
that come up for you
that are difficult,
again,
take a very soothing,
comforting
approach towards
this part of your body,
just allowing it to be
as it is.

Then dropping down
to your seat itself.
If you're sitting,
this will be easy
because you'll feel the
tension of your buttocks
on the chair or cushion,
and also,
if you're laying down,
you'll feel tension there.



You're just noticing what
feelings are there.
If there's any tightness
or tension,
soothing and relaxing
this part of your body,
and if there are any
emotional feelings
associated with,
perhaps,
not accepting this part
of your body,
it not being exactly
as you'd like it to be,
which,
I think,
is probably all of us,
just having compassion for
the fact that we're
imperfect human beings,
just accepting that
with an open heart.

Let's move back up
to our arms,
and we'll do them each individually.
Start with your right arm,
the top,
the shoulder blade,
the top of your arm,
the upper bicep.
What does your upper arm
on the right side
feel like right now?
We have big muscles there
that often get strained
lifting and holding things,
so soothing any tension
or discomfort,



relaxing,
caressing with our awareness
kindly.

Now your lower right arm,
just gently noticing
what you feel there.
Now your right wrist and fingers,
your hand.
We have an amazing
number of bones
in this part of our body.
Especially with the increasing
use of computers,
these get worked over,
and over,
and over again.
Just notice,
do you have any tension there,
any feelings of discomfort?
If so,
again,
just sooth,
comfort yourself.
Have compassion for
any pain you might be feeling.
If there is no discomfort,
just rest in the
peacefulness of being
free of pain.

Then shifting your attention
to focus on your left
upper arm and shoulder,
noticing how your
muscles feel,
any tension that's there,
kindly stroking your arm
with your awareness,



comforting yourself,
and dropping down into
your lower left arm,
allowing the sensations
to be just as they are,
and your left hand and wrist,
relaxing your muscles,
appreciating how hard
your fingers work for you,
the freedom it gives you.

Now shift your focus
to your right upper leg,
very big muscle here,
our thigh muscle.
What do you feel right now
in this area of your body?
See if you can relax
the muscle.
If you notice any discomfort
or tension,
kindly soothing and comforting
this part of your body.
Then moving down to
your right calf and shin,
the lower part
of your leg,
feeling the muscles
softening around any tension,
and then finally focusing
on your right foot.
A surprising amount of tension and stress
gets stored in our feet.
A lot of pressure
gets put on them.
Take a moment to
appreciate your right foot.
It allows you to walk,
run,



dance,
so relaxing and soothing
any feelings of pain
that arise,
giving yourself
a mental foot massage.

Now move your awareness
to your left leg,
the upper half,
the thigh muscle,
softening around any tension.
As always,
if any emotional reactions come up
of non-acceptance for
a certain part of your body,
giving yourself compassion
for that,
recognizing how hard it is
to be in our
competitive culture,
and dropping down
to your left lower leg,
your calf muscles,
your shin,
relaxing,
soothing,
and then focusing
on your left foot,
ankle,
the sole of your foot,
your toes.
Just be aware
of any sensations that are there,
tingling,
burning,
pressure,
and soothing and comforting
any feelings of



discomfort or pain
that might be there.

Now,
widen your focus
so that you are
aware of both feet,
moving up to both calves,
both upper legs,
up to your stomach,
your chest,
your neck,
your head.
Just imagine the energy
flowing out the top
of your head,
feeling the energy of life
flowing through you,
resting in awareness
of this magnificent
body we have,
of compassion for its pains
and appreciation
for its wonder