

SESSION 2—HANDOUT 2

Tips for the Body Scan

1. Regardless of what happens (e.g., if you fall asleep, lose concentration, keep thinking of other things or focusing on the wrong bit of body, or not feeling anything), persist with it! These are your experiences in the moment. See if it is possible to be aware of them all, just as they are.
2. If your mind is wandering a lot, simply note the thoughts (as passing events), then bring the mind gently back to the body scan.
3. Let go of ideas of “success,” “failure,” “doing it really well,” or “trying to purify the body.” This is not a competition. It is not a skill for which you need to strive. The only discipline involved is regular and frequent practice. Just do it with an attitude of openness and curiosity, then allow the rest to take care of itself.
4. Let go of any expectations about what the body scan will do for you: Imagine it as a seed you have planted. The more you poke around and interfere, the less it will be able to develop. So with the body scan, just give it the right conditions—peace and quiet, regular and frequent practice. That is all. The more you try to influence what it will do for you, the less it will do.
5. Try approaching your experience in each moment with the attitude: “OK, that’s just the way things are right now.” If you try to fight off unpleasant thoughts, feelings, or body sensations, the upsetting feelings will only distract you from doing anything else. Be aware, be nonstriving, be in the moment, accept things as they are.