

Body Exposure Imagery

Objective: By imagining yourself in front of a mirror and scanning through the body, one can use imagery exposure as a stepping stone to body acceptance.

Instructions: You might want to simply read through the following, or you might want to print off this page and have someone read it to you, or you can make a tape of yourself reading the words. You can do a relaxation first, or not. You might want to have a journal ready to write down what you feel as you finish the meditation. If you feel like you need to stop at any time, please do so. You may experience powerful feelings from doing meditation, or no feelings, or anything in between. If you have painful emotions emerge, please treat yourself gently. Doing an exercise that puts you in touch with your body may put you in touch with emotions you have "lived above the chin" to avoid. Treat yourself with compassion. You might like some comforting - a hug or a soothing bath or a talk with a trusted friend. Consider writing down what you are feeling.

In your mind's eye, imagine yourself standing in front of a mirror where you can see most of your body. Let your eyes come to a rest upon your own eyes. Take three deep, slow breaths. As you pull the air gently into your body, and as you gently push the air out, notice the black of your pupils, and the colors that's around them, the curve of those colors. And breathe.

Take a moment to broaden your awareness to the whole of your face. Notice the frame of your face. Your hairline around to your jaw. Let yourself notice the details of your face feelings. Notice the curves of your forehead, your cheeks, your chin, your nose, and your eyebrows. Notice the hollows that's around them. And finally let your attention come to rest on the peaks of your lips and nestle there between your nose and your chin. And breathe.

And on your next breath, guide your attention down your neck and out into your shoulders. Notice the slopes that connect your arms to the rest of your body. And breathe.

Now gently let your attention flow down your arms, noticing the lines and curves that make up your arms, flesh around bone. Let your fingers spread wide as you notice each individual finger before guiding your attention back to your arms and back around your shoulders. And breathe.

Take a moment to notice the movement in your chest and belly as you breathe. Watch them rise and fall as your breath rises and falls. Bring your attention back to your hands and notice each individual finger before guiding your attention back up your arms and around your shoulders. And breathe.

Take a moment to notice the movement in your chest and belly as you breathe. Watch them rise and fall as your breath flows in and out. Let your attention trace the sides of your body, noting your edges, the places where you stop. And breathe.

And on your next breath, wrap your awareness gently along your hips, around your bottom, under and back around. And breathe and gently, gently guide your attention along your thighs from the inside around the front and the sides of your thighs. And breathe --and as you breathe, gently let your attention come to rest on your knees. Notice the way they interrupt your legs, transitioning from thighs to shin. And breathe.

Take a moment now to let your awareness flow down your leg along the shinbone. Let yourself notice your calf muscle spreading behind the bone, the curve it brings to your leg. And breathe. Now gently shift your attention into your ankles. See if you can't trace the bands that protrude to allow your ankles to bend and twist. And breathe.

Let your attention drift along the tops of your feet and take a moment now to shift your attention into your toes, one by one, from the smallest to the largest, out. And breathe.

With your final three breaths, let your eyes come to rest again on your eyes, but this time, see if you can't expand your awareness out to take in the whole of your visual experience of yourself right now. From the very tips of your toes to the very top of your head, take a moment to be still and see yourself. Let your eyes come to rest again on your eyes, but this time, see if you can't expand your awareness out to take in the whole of your visual experience of yourself right now. From the very tips of your toes to the very top of your head, take a moment to be still and see yourself.