

Mindful Body Acceptance

Guided Meditation

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



MEDITATION

Many of us are so used to criticizing our bodies, we don't even notice ourselves doing it.

We see ourselves naked and scoff at our belly. Our thighs. Our skin.

We think,

"If only that weren't so big."

"I have to lose weight."

"I wish I looked different."

We look at our face in the mirror and focus on our imperfections, our wrinkles, the features we think shouldn't be like they are.

It can become so ingrained in our habits and our self-talk that it comes as naturally to us as breathing.

Critiquing our body can become part of our daily, sometimes hourly dialogue with ourself.

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Guided Meditation

And from the outside, we are reminded of our supposed imperfections all the time – on movie screens; on social media; in clothing ads featuring airbrushed models.

We often forget that bodies are not made to be perfect... and that even the idea of perfection is a construct.

Most of all, we forget that our body is a living, breathing system that supports us in being alive.

We can consciously change this habit. And when we do, we begin to see—and feel—that these thought patterns are not necessary, and certainly not helpful to our happiness.

Even if we want to be healthier or slim down, it's been scientifically proven that being a jerk to ourselves does not effect lasting change.

(pause a while...)

If possible, do this meditation wearing very little or no clothing at all. If that's not comfortable for you, wear something that makes you feel at ease.

Lie down somewhere where you can stretch and feel held by the ground, or by something soft. If you're in bed, try to do this at a time where you won't fall asleep—but if you do, that's fine, too!

Close your eyes. Take in the sounds around you. Notice how it feels to be resting comfortably; to be doing something loving and kind for yourself.

Feel the sensation of the fabric or the ground beneath you, and of any clothing you are wearing. Notice the feeling of the air against your skin.

Notice what it feels like just to pause. Rest in this noticing for a few minutes.

(pause)

When you're ready, open your eyes. Look at your feet. What comes to mind?

Is there a judgment, or a dismissal? Nothing to fix here – right now, you're just noticing how you speak to yourself.

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Guided Meditation

Bring your gaze slowly up your calves, your knees, your thighs. Notice the thoughts. Do they zone in on imperfections? Do they write off any of your physical traits as being too much, or not enough? Notice these thoughts, and then put them aside for now.

Move throughout the rest of your body. You'll notice some areas bring up stronger thoughts and feelings than others. Let your gaze rest on your stomach... your genital area... your chest area.

Your arms. Your hands.

What comes to mind? How do you tend to speak to these parts of you?

As you look at your body, do you notice any memories arising? Or any regrets about your health, ways you've lived your life, desserts you've eaten, diets you didn't follow? It might help to say a few of these out loud.

Notice how you feel as you speak or note these thoughts. Where does your body hold these emotions? How do they feel? Is there fluttering? Tightening?

Often, this kind of noticing will bring up feelings of discomfort, or unpleasant sensations. Allow these to be there with you for a few moments, without fighting them, as a normal, natural part of this process.

(pause...)

Now, imagine a loving presence. It can be a human, or an animal, or a spiritual presence. For some people, a trusted family member or friend evokes this kind of love. For others, it can be a pet.

It can be someone who's living or someone who has passed on. You might choose a spiritual guide. Or you can simply imagine warm, kind sunlight, shining on you with no boundaries or limitations. Or, imagine a cooling blue light, healing and soothing. Go with whatever feels like the most love and kindness to you.

If you have a hard time conjuring up a loving presence, imagine what it might feel like to be loved unconditionally in a way that you'd want to be. Feel this within your body as well.

(pause for a few seconds)

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Guided Meditation

Now, place your hands gently on the part of your body you had the most criticism for.

Imagine that loving presence moving through you... through your arms, into your hands, and into that body part. Allow it to be filled with acceptance. Warmth. Kindness. Experience this for a few moments.

Allow any other emotions that may be present – anxiety, fear, anger, resistance – to be there as well.

Think about some of the good things that this part of your body has done for you. How has it supported you? Has it digested your food? Helped you exercise? Held you up at your job? Held a child? Kept you healthy?

What might this body part most need to hear from you, right now?

It might be,

“Thank you.”

Or,

“I appreciate you.”

It might be,

“I love you.”

“I’m here for you.”

“I’m sorry.”

“I accept you just as you are.”

If you are able to, repeat some of these phrases a few times to that part of your body, while allowing the love to flow into it.

If you can, feel this love flow into any other body part that might need it, and even throughout your whole being.

Mindful Body Acceptance

Guided Meditation

Imagine what it would feel like to give love to your body.

What it would feel like to think of yourself as beautiful.

To know that you are doing your best, and your body is doing its best.

To give yourself gratitude.

To love yourself as perfectly imperfect.

Notice the sensations arising within you. Notice what it feels like to allow yourself to take up space. To accept your body just as it is in this moment. To offer yourself love.

Rest for a while in this spaciousness.

