

Audio Exercise 13: Mindfulness of Physical Discomfort

Bring your awareness and attention to your breath. Just notice your breathing with a gentle curiosity about the physical sensation of taking air into your body and breathing it out again.

After a couple of minutes, bring your awareness to your physical sensations. Notice what is happening in your body. What feels comfortable and what feels a little bit uncomfortable?

Bring your awareness specifically to some part of your body where you are aware that you have an itch, or a slight discomfort. It might be a sense that you want to shift weight, to scratch or rub, to wriggle into a more comfortable position. Just allow your awareness to sit with that sensation – don't act on it.

Notice the thoughts that occur in your mind – notice them simply as thoughts. You can choose to act or not act on these thoughts. The thought might be: "I have to scratch this itch," or "I need to shift my weight." Just let the thought occur without acting upon it.

Notice the thoughts and notice the feelings and sensations in your body. Notice how the sensations shift and change; they might become more intense or they may diminish.

After focusing on one part of your body that has some discomfort just allow your attention to drift around your body until it discovers another place of mild discomfort. Repeat the exercise with your awareness of this new discomfort. Allow your awareness to sit with this discomfort, without needing to do anything about it.

You can continue with other areas of your physical sensations.

Finally, bring your awareness and attention back to your breath. Notice your breathing, notice each breath as you inhale and each breath as you exhale. Simply sit with the awareness of your body breathing.