



Somatic Exploration: Let's find a quiet space where we will not be disturbed for ten minutes and can feel safe and comfortable enough to lie on the floor. We need to make sure we are warm enough; perhaps placing a rug over us as we lie down because as the body cools down as it relaxes during this practice.

Now, let's simply lie down, get comfortable and relax. Feel the weight of our body on the floor as we lie here, feel our breathing in and out of our lungs as we undertake a couple of rounds of conscious breathing.

We are now going to do a quick 'body scan' which we do by scanning our awareness over our bodies, moving our attention from our toes up our legs, hips, up the back and chest, each arm and then neck and head. Then, while breathing deeply, we sense into any tensions, pains or sensations in our body and allow our awareness to go into those places in our body. We are not trying to force or control or manage anything, we simply allow our awareness to notice a tension or sensation and see what emerges. Perhaps the sensation may change slightly or memories may be invoked in our mind or the sensation may remind us of something. We can play with this practice for a while, bringing our awareness back to the sensation each time it drifts off.

When we feel ready, we can scan our body from toes to head again and sense into another area of our body, perhaps our back or neck or a place that is feeling tight or tense; once again, simply let our awareness go into that feeling for a few moments. We inquiry gently into the sensation and see what comes. This is a relaxing and easy way to start relating with our body sensations. At this point, we can either get up slowly and gently to end the practice, or, if we have the time and space available, we can stay lying down and start to engage in some contemplative questions with ourselves and sense the body sensations that may arise upon us asking these questions while attending to our body. Here are a couple of questions we might wish to ask ourselves while sensing into how our bodies feel as we ponder the question in our mind in an open, non-judgemental way for a few moments. A first question might be, 'How do I experience the feeling of loving myself?' We gently ask that question over and over a couple of times in our mind and then scan our body and sense what it feels like for the body to respond to the question. We might sense subtle shifts, tensions or sensations in certain areas, if so, let's go into those areas and just explore while gently holding the question in mind. After a few moments, we might ask the question, 'How do I experience love for others?' And again we feel into the body, asking our body the question, sensing any subtle sensations. Then we could ask, 'How do I experience freedom?' And again we feel into the body, asking the question and sense. We are mindful of when our attention wanders off into discursive thoughts, memories or stories, gently bringing our attention back into our body sensations.

Next we can ask, 'How do I experience happiness?' And again we feel into the body while asking our body the question. And finally, 'What is my sense of purpose, my soul-calling?' And again we feel the sensations, going into the sensations for a few moments, just being with the sensations in our body in a relaxed receptive way. There are no right or wrong sensations or feelings, whatever we experience is right for that moment. When we are ready, we can finish off with a couple of rounds of deep belly breathing before sitting up slowly and gently.