

Scanning Meditation Script

There are 20 areas of the body that we will be working with. Five in the area of the head, five in the upper body and arms, five in the torso, and five in the area of the legs. The final or 21st area is a full body sweep.

After becoming familiar with the five specific areas in each of the four portions of the body, it is best to just simply close the eyes and spend a few breaths on each one and know that ultimately you can do this as a twenty-one breath exercise, that is, you can use one breath for each area of the body.



1. Beginning at the top of the body, at the head, bring your attention to the area of the forehead and around the side of this top portion of the head. Consciously relax this area by imagining the skin becoming smooth and soft and relax deeply with an exhalation of the breath...
2. Bring this relaxed awareness down to the area of the eyebrows and the eyes as well as around the area of the ears. Relax with an exhalation of the breath.... Allow the eyes to soften and relax with an exhalation of the breath...
3. Moving down slightly, bring your awareness to the area of the nose and around to the cheeks, relax this area deeply with an exhalation of the breath...
4. Slowly moving down the body, bring this relaxed awareness into the jaw, and notice any changes that take place as you relax this often times clenched part of the body...
5. Now, bring your attention a little deeper into the body by relaxing all of the many intricate muscles of the tongue. Feel the waves of relaxation...
6. Now, feel the relaxation move down the neck and throat. Relax...
7. Bring this relaxation into the shoulders and feel the shoulders soften, breathe relaxation into the shoulders with each exhalation of the breath...
8. Bring this aware relaxation into the biceps of the arms and soften the muscles ...
9. Now with an exhalation, relax the forearms. Allow them to rest on the thighs if this is comfortable...
10. Relax the hands, including the palms and fingers and allow any tension that may be found in the upper body to leave through the fingertips...
11. Now we are getting into the torso or the trunk of our body. Relax the upper back, keeping the shoulders relaxed and square...
12. With an exhalation, relax the upper chest, the area of the lungs. Take a moment to see if you can connect with the beating of the heart...

13. Bring this relaxation into the middle of the back and the solar plexus. Check your spine for a relaxed, but fairly straight back...

14. And now bring this relaxed awareness down into the lower back. Relax and breathe...

15. The abdomen, located immediately in front of the lower back can now relax, gently breathe out and soften the abdomen ...

16. Bring this relaxed awareness into the hips, feeling the hips and tailbone sit squarely on the chair or cushion...

17. Breathe relaxation into the thighs and soften the hamstrings...

18. Now down into the knees. Soften and relax...

19. Relax the shins and calves. Feel the relaxation passing down through the legs...

20. Relax the tops and bottoms of the feet and toes. Allow any stress or tension to dissipate and leave the body through the toes...

21. And for the last step, do a complete full body sweep with a sigh of the breath or deep exhalation... Repeat as desired. Practicing the scanning meditation as just described will take you approximately two minutes if one breath is used at each area of the body, although this meditation is frequently used for longer durations in time. The objective is to relax each area of the body with a relaxed exhalation of the breath. One can spend more time in any particular area of the body. In addition, the entire process can be done many times in a row.

There is one exhalation for each area of the body, twenty-one areas of the body, twenty-one breaths, including the twenty-first step and the full body sweep.

The key to get the most out of this practice is to have the areas of the body memorized in order. Once memorized, it becomes easy to visualize or sense each area of the body as it relaxes with each breath.