**Body Scan Practice Guidelines**

*‘If your mind is not clouded by unnecessary things, this is the best season of your life.’ by Wu-Men*

1. Regardless of what happens (falling asleep, losing concentration, being distracted by thoughts, emotions or other physical sensations, not feeling anything), just do it! These are your experiences in the moment. All you have to do is be aware of them, even if your mind is wandering a great deal. If you are distracted by wandering thoughts, emotions or other physical sensations, simply notice them as passing events, and then gently return to the instruction.

2. Notice if you have any ideas about ‘successes’, ‘failure’, ‘doing it really well’ or ‘trying to purify the body’. Meditation is not a competition. It is not a skill that you have to strive to perfect. The body scan provides an opportunity to practice bringing an interested and gentle awareness to the way things are without any expectation of change. There is no goal other than to bring awareness to bear. The only discipline involved is regular and frequent practise. See if it is possible to cultivate an attitude of openness and curiosity about whatever you happen to experience during the body scan.

3. Try approaching your experience in each moment with the attitude. ‘Okay, that is just the way my experience is right now.’ If you try to fight off unpleasant thoughts, feelings and body sensations, this may only distract you from experiencing anything else.

4. Notice if you have any expectations about what the body scan will do for you; instead you might imagine that you are planting a seed. The more you poke around and interfere, the less it will be able to develop. When you leave it to grow, this seed will eventually expand to become a life lived with more mindfulness, and the freedom to choose skilful behaviours.

5. In order to get the most out of the body scan you will need to give yourself the most helpful conditions; time that you set aside to devote to yourself and the body scan, privacy and quiet, and regular and frequent practise. The more you try to control the effects of the body scan the less effective it will be.

6. Most importantly, just do it!