Welcome to the Butterfly Practice, a gentle exploration of embodied awareness and authentic movement. This practice draws from somatic psychology, mindfulness traditions, and movement practices to help you connect with your natural capacity for expression and presence.

Before we begin, please find a spot in the room where you feel comfortable and have enough space to move if you choose to. You might want to have a blanket or cushion nearby for comfort. While this is a guided practice, you're always free to slow down, modify, or step away if you need to. Trust your body's wisdom about what feels right for you. At the end of the movement exploration, we'll be pairing up to share our experiences, so you might want to be mindful of where others are in the space.

This practice will guide us through four stages, beginning with gentle awareness, following natural movement impulses, creating a stable container of stillness, and finally sharing our experience with a partner. There's no right or wrong way to experience this - each person's journey will be unique.

<break time="3s"/>

Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Take a moment to settle into this space, adjusting your posture in whatever way feels right for your body today. You might want to be fully supported lying down, or it might feel better to sit. Trust what feels appropriate in this moment. There's no need to force anything. We're creating space for whatever might naturally emerge.

<break time="2s"/>

Taking time to let your body settle in its own way.

<break time="2s"/>

Allowing yourself to arrive fully in this space.

<break time="2s"/>

Let your attention rest gently in your body, like sunlight spreading across a landscape. There's no need to focus strongly. Just a soft, spacious awareness.

<break time="5s"/>

You might notice sensations in your belly.

<break time="2s"/>

A sense of tightness or openness in your chest.

<break time="2s"/>

Perhaps awareness of your throat.

<break time="2s"/>

Or feelings around your heart space.

<break time="2s"/>

Maybe you notice areas of warmth or coolness in your core.

<break time="2s"/>

Or subtle movements with your breath.

<break time="2s"/>

Take your time here. Something may emerge quickly, or it might take a while. There's no rush.

<break time="2s"/>

Like waiting for your eyes to adjust to a dimly lit room, allow your internal awareness to gradually become clearer.

<break time="30s"/>

Taking time to notice what's present.

<break time="30s"/>

Creating space for whatever might emerge.

<break time="30s"/>

Simply being with whatever is here.

<break time="30s"/>

Now we'll open to movement, but there's no need to make anything happen. Simply notice if there are any natural impulses to move.

<break time="2s"/>

Perhaps your fingers or toes want to stretch.

<break time="2s"/>

Or your shoulders want to shift.

<break time="2s"/>

Maybe your spine wants to flex or extend.

<break time="2s"/>

Your neck might want to turn.

<break time="2s"/>

Your jaw might want to soften.

<break time="2s"/>

You might feel drawn to roll across the floor.

<break time="2s"/>

To press your hands or feet into the ground.

<break time="2s"/>

To crawl.

<break time="2s"/>

To rise up into a squat or to standing.

<break time="2s"/>

To walk or dance.

<break time="2s"/>

To explore different levels of space.

<break time="30s"/>

These are just possibilities. Trust whatever emerges for you.

<break time="2s"/>

The movement might be very subtle or quite expansive.

<break time="2s"/>

It might flow continuously or come in waves with periods of stillness.

<break time="2s"/>

You might stay in one place or travel through the space.

<break time="2s"/>

Your body might want to explore the ground or find its way to standing.

<break time="30s"/>

Take your time. You might remain in stillness for quite a while as you open your awareness to any impulses that might arise. There's no need to force movement. We're simply creating space for movement to emerge through you when and if it feels natural.

<break time="30s"/>

Resting in stillness or movement, whatever feels true right now.

<break time="30s"/>

Allowing any impulses to emerge in their own time.

<break time="30s"/>

Following whatever wants to move through you.

<break time="30s"/>

Staying present with subtle shifts or fuller movements.

<break time="30s"/>

Trusting whatever emerges as right for you.

<break time="30s"/>

Now we'll begin to transition back to stillness. Take your time to find a position that feels right for your body in this moment. You might want to sit, or lie down, or find another way of being that allows both comfort and alert presence. Your body might want something different than when we started. Trust what feels appropriate now.

<break time="2s"/>

When you notice an impulse to move, become curious about what it's like to experience that impulse fully. Rather than either acting on it or pushing it away, explore what it feels like to let the impulse exist within you. Notice its quality, its intensity, how it moves or changes.

<break time="2s"/>

You might find certain movements remind you of particular experiences.

<break time="2s"/>

Or discover that staying with an impulse brings up unexpected feelings or associations.

<break time="2s"/>

You might notice images, metaphors, or meanings beginning to form in the space between impulse and action.

<break time="30s"/>

Being present with the full experience of each impulse.

<break time="30s"/>

Noticing what emerges in this space of experiencing.

<break time="30s"/>

Allowing impulses to arise and transform.

<break time="30s"/>

Staying curious about whatever appears.

<break time="30s"/>

Letting each experience be fully felt.

<break time="30s"/>

Now find a partner and decide who will speak first. Arrange yourselves so you're sitting comfortably facing each other.

<break time="10s"/>

In this exercise, we will practice listening deeply and patiently. As much as possible, allow silence to exist in this space. Split your attention evenly between the words being spoken, and your own internal felt sense. Do not try to speak - allow the words to come to you. Let them emerge naturally from the depth of your internal experience.

<break time="2s"/>

For the speaker: You'll be creating space to allow your experience of the practice to find expression in words. What you noticed in your body, how sensations or impulses changed over time, any images or memories that arose, what meanings these experiences might hold for you. Take your time. There's no need to immediately fill the silence or to create a logical narrative. Rest quietly until words naturally emerge about your experience.

<break time="2s"/>

For the listener: Your role is to hold space with your presence. There's no need to nod, make encouraging sounds, look at the speaker, or respond in any way unless something genuinely emerges from within you in resonance to what you're hearing. When something does resonate, take your time to feel it fully before speaking. Let there be silence between speaking and response.

<break time="2s"/>

I'll let you know when it's time to switch roles. Whenever you are ready, please begin.

<break time="300s"/>

Now we'll transition to the second speaker. Take a moment of silence to make this transition.

<break time="2s"/>

Second speaker, whenever you're ready, begin sharing your experience.

<break time="300s"/>

As we come to the end of this practice, take a moment to notice how your body feels now. What has changed in your way of being? Perhaps there's a different quality to your presence, or to how you're holding yourself.

<break time="2s"/>

Begin to make any movements that feel right to transition back to your usual way of being. Perhaps stretching, shifting position, or taking a deeper breath. Let this transition happen in whatever way feels natural for you.

<break time="2s"/>

Take time to acknowledge your experience and your partner's presence. When you feel ready, you can slowly open your eyes if they've been closed, and gradually return to engaging with the space around you.

<break time="2s"/>

I want to express my deep gratitude for your presence here today. Thank you for your willingness to explore and experiment, for trusting your body's wisdom, and for sharing this space with others. Each of you has brought something unique and valuable to this practice through your authentic engagement and your courage to connect.

<break time="2s"/>

Remember that whatever arose for you today is perfectly valid - there is no right or wrong way to experience this exploration. Each sensation, each movement, each feeling that surfaced is part of your unique journey. You're welcome to take notes about your experience if you'd like, and to give yourself time to integrate before moving into the rest of your day.

<break time="2s"/>

Thank you for being part of this shared journey of discovery.