

***Session 2***

***Mind, Body and Feelings***

*Sitting quietly,*

*doing nothing,*

*spring comes,*

*and the grass grows by itself.*

Matsuo Bashō (1644 – 1694)

# Body Scan

## Why use the Body as a Focus

Becoming aware of the bodily sensations helps us to become mindfully aware of what we are experiencing in the present moment. What happens in the body both reflects and affects what happens in our thoughts and emotions. Very often we try to ‘think’ our way through troubling experiences, or indeed any experience.

Focusing on what the body is experiencing is a way to practice becoming more fully present for our experiences and not just having them ‘in our heads’. Instead of trying to rationalise thoughts and emotions, we can learn a new perspective…’how does this feel in my body?’

It’s the difference between filming an event to watch later and actually paying attention in the present moment.

In the Body Scan meditation you are invited to move your attention around your body and focus on what is happening in your body right now. There is no right or wrong outcome. The aim is simply to be aware of your experience.

# Why the Events Calendars

From the Thoughts and Feelings exercise we can see that there are a variety of different reactions to the same situation. How we feel is very often a consequence of a situation plus our interpretation, the add-ons. We go straight to a feeling or a thought from a situation, without really seeing how we got there.

With the pleasant events calendar we had a chance to reflect on what it is that we call a pleasant moment – how it feels in the body, mind and emotions. Also it reveals to what extent we are able to recognise what is going on in our mind, body and feelings, and the distinction between these three, especially in the moment.

From this we not only get more of our moment’s worth, we also get to know ourselves better and we can start to respond with more awareness of our add-ons and more understanding of ourselves.

We can bring the same sense of awareness and learning to unpleasant events. We can learn just as much from seeing how we respond to events that we think of as unpleasant, as from looking at how we felt when we viewed events as pleasant. Whether it lasts for a moment, or a period of time, it’s useful to answer the same questions. Both of these exercises help us to become aware of what it is that we are labelling good or bad, the event itself or the add-ons, and that awareness leads to greater acceptance.

For example, our normal reaction to the Thoughts and Feelings situation may be something like *I’m waving and no-one is waving back* straight to *people think I’m stupid*.

With practice we can learn to become aware of the missing steps, for example, *I’m waving etc….I feel embarrassed….my friend laughed at me last week when that happened….that person is looking at me…..people think I’m stupid.*

With mindfulness we learn to become curious about our thoughts and feelings and reactions, with practice our response may become *I’m waving etc…I feel embarrassed/snubbed/silly/polite/observant…that’s interesting*.

# Home Practice

* Do the Body Scan Meditation (track 1) as often as you are able, ideally once per day. As best as you can, let go of any expectations from this activity. Don’t expect to feel any way in particular from doing it, simply let your experience be you experience without judgement. Just keep at it and we’ll talk about it next week.
* Unpleasant Events Diary
* Pay attention to a routine task, such as eating or something else that you do daily, without normally noticing it.