

Beginning a Solo Focusing session – Body Scan

When you want to Focus alone, it's important to take time to sense into your body, just as you would with a Listening partner. There are several ways of doing this, and here is one that you might find helpful – it's called a Body Scan.

First of all I suggest that you find a space where you won't be disturbed – you might like to stick a note on your door, reminding family members that you would like to be alone for half-an-hour or so. Switch off your mobile, and either unplug your landline, or ensure that you can't hear it where you are Focusing.

When we settle into Focusing, it isn't the same as the relaxation that you experience at a relaxation or yoga class. In Focusing we want to stay alert to how the body feels, and how it changes. In a relaxation, when we feel tightness or tension, we aim to release that tension. In Focusing we want to be aware of it, explore it, and be curious about it.

You don't have to sit in any special position for Focusing, and you can move around as much as you wish. What's important is that you are comfortable, whether you choose to sit, lie down, stand or walk.

When you're comfortable, bring your awareness to anything that your body is touching – the floor, a chair, and you may be leaning on something. Let your body take that support, and move around until you can easily do this.

It's good to take time over this stage so that you become in tune with your body.

You might like to notice the touch of your clothes against your skin. Be aware of the breath moving in and out of your body, through your nose and down into the lungs. Notice that the inhaled air is cooler, the exhaled air is warmer, moister.

Become aware of your feet and ankles. Then your legs, pelvis, back and shoulders. Again take your time.

Next move your awareness to your hands, arms, then shoulders, neck, head and face.

Finally bring awareness to the central area of your body: your throat, chest, solar plexus and abdomen.

As you are moving through your body in an unhurried way, be alert to any sensations that you notice – warmth and cold, tension, tiredness, lightness, heaviness. Be alert too, to anything else that might arise, such as images and feelings.

And when you have travelled through your body, let your awareness rest in the central area of your body and ask yourself "How am I feeling here right now?"