

Ep #255: Breathing Exercise and Body Scan - Foot Awareness



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Susi Hatley

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

Welcome and welcome back. I'm so glad that you're here because with this episode, we continue the foot miniseries. And I'm being very deliberate in including these episodes that have to do with body scans specifically around the foot because bringing ourselves into a listening space to sensations, an interoceptive space, like utilizing that idea in yoga, pratyahara, drawing our senses inward, like tuning into ourselves and settling into sensation becomes really important in the healing process.

It's so common and so easy really, especially when there's persistence in symptoms to really get into a doing, doing, doing, fix it, fix it, fix it mode or fear, fear, fear, fear, fear. This is never going to go away. Oh my God, oh my God. Like it's really easy to kind of play between those two realms or two spectrums and that's really left-sided brain work.

And these body scans, what's so great about them is they help us utilize the right side of our brain to help us drop in and it actually calms and settles and slows down brain waves and settles out that left side. And then we get into these spaces that are just more open. And I find with my clientele, and even with myself for that matter, when we can be in those spaces, answers come to us more readily, connections come to us more readily.

And as I say all the time on this podcast and to my clients, where the pain is is not the problem. Yes, it's obviously screaming at us and we need to address it. And why it's screaming, particularly with persistent symptoms, it's screaming because there's something else going on and it's letting us know there's dysfunction present, there's limitation present. And yes, we get to address it first and then we get to actually ponder what's contributing to it.

And when we're in these spaces that are a little more open, that have drawn us into the land of sensation, we tend to see it more clearly. Right? I

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liken it to those times where my kids have lost something, like a Lego or a toy. Or I mean, goodness me, I model it when I've lost my glasses or my keys and I'm looking around and I can't find them or they can't find their toy. And our message in our household is we're working too hard at finding it. Let's just take a moment and let the universe help us. That's kind of our line. Let the universe help us.

And then we let it go. We let it go and we just carry on with the rest of our day. And like not 30 seconds later, a minute later, maybe five minutes later, lo and behold, they show the keys, they show the eyeglasses, they show the toy, right? There's this opportunity just to step back, let go of some tension that's being built in and around this thing that we're trying to solve for. And this is meant to help open our space just a little bit. Open our senses a little bit.

So this is the idea of the scan. So I'm going to take you through a short scan around your feet. And I'm not going to ask you to relax any part of your feet. I'm simply going to bring your attention to different parts of your feet and you get to notice what happens as your attention lands on your feet. And we'll work up your legs a little bit and into your belly and into your breath and let's just see what arises out of that experience.

So to begin, simply find a comfortable space. Now the beauty of a scan like this is you can be cooking dinner right now, I wouldn't close your eyes though, of course. You can be washing the dishes up, you could be vacuuming, you could be out for a walk. You really could be doing a lot of things. I would not recommend it if you were driving, obviously. But this is an opportunity for you just to drop into your body.

And so initially wherever you are, whether you are standing or sitting or laying down, bring your attention to your feet and simply notice what you notice with your feet.

Now, myself, what I find sometimes even though intellectually I know a lot about the body, sometimes I can't perceive a part of my body, right? So I might say, all right, where are my feet right now? And I notice that I can feel

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a part of the feet, but maybe not another part. Like maybe I don't feel the inner heel or the back of the heel. I mean, I can think about it and I can feel it, but can I actually feel it?

So that's the first step here, is can you just feel your feet and what do you feel? And let me guide you to the outer edges of your feet. And can you feel them? Are they in your embodied awareness? And it's really just a yes or no answer. We don't have to actually make them arise in our field of awareness. We just simply need to notice that they're there.

And then bring your attention to the back of your heel and the inner side of your foot. And then notice the outer side, the back of the heel and the inner side of your foot. And then notice your big toes, your second toe, your third toes, your fourth toes, your pinky toes.

And so now feeling the outer edge of your feet, the back of your heel, the inner side of your feet and each of your toes. And then notice the spaces between your toes. Noticing the top of your feet and the bottom of your feet. Noticing the ball of your foot, the base of your pinky toe and the center of your heel. Feeling both of your feet now, noticing what it is that you feel.

And for a moment, tune into your breathing now. Your inhale and your exhale, and notice your breathing and your feet at once. Notice that you can't think your way into feeling your breathing and your feet at once. This is a feeling experience.

And then begin to move up the sides of your legs from your outer ankle up the outer edges of your legs to the outer knees, up the outer thighs to your outer hips. And then notice your inner ankle from the inner ankles up the inner shins to the inner knees. And from the inner knees up the inner thighs connecting into the hips.

Feeling the outer leg line from the ankles to the hips. Feeling the inner leg line from the inner ankles to the hips. Feeling the front of your legs, feeling the top of your feet, feeling the back of your legs and feeling the bottom of your feet.

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Now feeling your legs, feet and hips all at once. And feeling your breathing. From this space of feeling your feet and your legs all at once, allow your legs to become heavy and warm. Allowing your legs to become heavy and warm. Be with the heaviness of your legs, feeling heaviness. And be with your warmth, feeling the warmth.

Legs are heavy and warm. Feet are heavy and warm. Tuning into your breath again. Feeling the sensation of your feet and your legs and the movement of your breath and connecting to your heart and your head.

You can stay as long as you want in this reflection of this feeling state. In a moment my words will trail off. And if it makes sense for you, take this idea into a practice or into a walk or climbing the stairs or any other activity that seems to be more suited and just notice what happens as you continue to move from this state.

Have a great time exploring. And if you find this really resonating with you and you want to take it deeper, you might consider Power of Pure Movement: Strong and Supple Feet and what an integrative practice could do for your feet and for all of your movement. You can explore it over at functionalsynergy.com/feet.