

## **Handout #1.1**

### **Simple Mindfulness of Body through Touch**

#### **Introduction**

In this simple exercise of mindfulness of body, we invoke the power of our physical touch to help us become aware of the physical sensations at the different parts of our body. We gently place our hands on a part of the body, say the shoulder, and immediately we will become aware of the sense of touch between hand and body as well as any other sensations here. This is a very easy way to introduce mindfulness and allow ourselves to get an experience of being mindfully aware and in touch directly with bodily sensations.

It is better to take off our spectacles, for those who wear them, so that they will not be in the way during the exercise. The following can be used as a script to guide ourselves and others into this mindfulness exercise.

#### **The main body of the exercise**

We make use of the power of physical touch in this exercise to help us return mindfulness to our own body. We gently rest our hands on the different parts of our body, one part at a time, and allow the sense of touch to draw our attention there. We do not try to massage or manipulate the body in anyway with our hands. We pause at each part for 3-5 breaths (or longer if there is time) and simply use the sense of touch to awaken our awareness of the subtle sensations in our body.

Starting at the crown, we gently rest one hand on the topmost part of our body. We allow the sense of touch to draw our attention there, noticing any sensations while we pause here for a few breaths...

Moving down to our face, we place both hands gently on the face and notice the sensations here. Can we feel the warmth of our hands?

Are we tensing up any of the facial muscles? Can we gently relax these muscles and let in a different feeling, one of softness, ease and comfort into our face?

Moving our hands down to the neck, we gently rest them here. Can we sense the touch of our hands and any other sensations here?

Moving on to the shoulders, we place our left hand on our right shoulder while we rest the right hand and arm on a physical support, like the right thigh. How is the shoulder feeling today?

Sliding our hand down to the right elbow, we lightly hold on to it with our left hand while we notice the sensations here. Moving down to the right wrist, we hold and sense here... Placing one hand on top of the other, we sense the warmth and touch between the hands...

Switching sides, we place the right hand on the left shoulder... sliding down to the left elbow... left wrist... and placing one hand on top of the other, we notice the sensations here.

Coming back to our chest, we place both hands over our heart center. What can we sense here? Can we feel the beating of our heart or the rhythm of our breath along with other sensations?

Sliding both hands down to the abdomen, we rest them here so that we can really feel the sensations both at the surface and deep within our abdominal cavity...

Shifting our hands over both hips, we allow the sense of touch to guide our attention to the pelvis. Feel the weight of our pelvis on its physical support and see if we can release that weight, so that our pelvis can rest comfortably here.

Finally, we slide our hands onto the knees and resting them here, we attend to the sensations at the knees...

Sending just our attention downward to the feet [leaving our hands on the knees], we sense the sensations at the soles of the feet, the top of the feet, and in our toes... Having activated all these sensations into awareness, can we rest both legs on the ground and release their weight to gravity?

Rest our body in this posture. Allow it to settle down and be comfortable here... [long pause till the end of exercise]

### **Dedication**

Finally, dedicate our positive energy and insights to the well-being and happiness of all living beings.