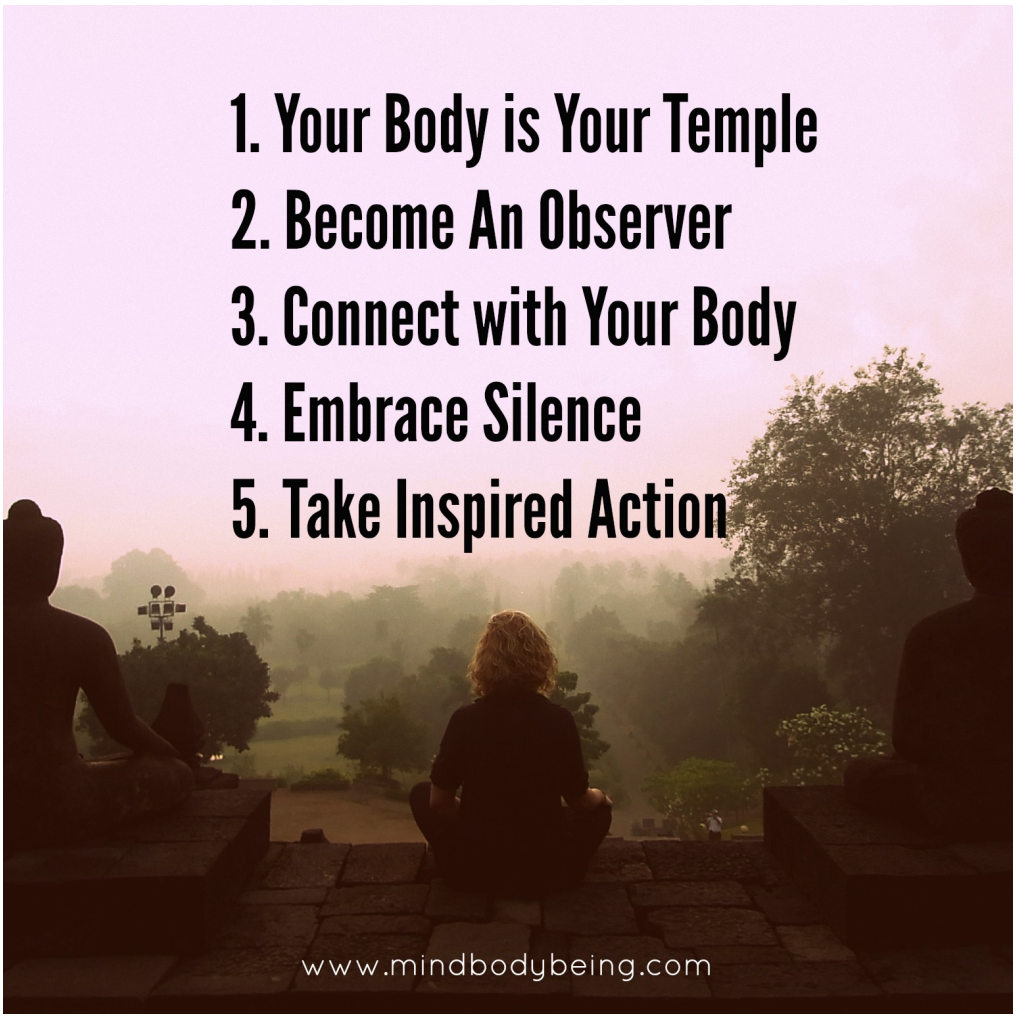
The 5-Sacred Principals to Greater Body Awareness



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Do you know what it feels like to be so out of touch with your body you don't slow down until it shuts down? Do you feel exhausted more than energized? Irritated more than relaxed? Do you find yourself looking back and saying to yourself, "I knew something wasn't right" but you didn't listen? If you stop and think about it, do you feel generally disconnected from your body? How well do you give your body what it needs to function optimally and listen to its subtle signals telling you which way to go?

Imagine for a moment that your body and its symptoms are a compass telling you which way to go and what choices to make, whether that be which foods to eat, thoughts to think, relationships to continue or new ventures to embark upon. The body tells us when to go and when to stay. It reveals deeper wounds calling for our attention and desperately seeking healing. Your soul is constantly seeking to return you to Wholeness and the body a barometer telling you what you need to do to make that happen.

Imagine what your life and health would be like if you had the self-awareness to stop and listen to what your body was trying to communicate. Imagine what your life would be like if you were able to consciously connect with your body and give it what it needs to feel healthy, vibrant, well rested and energized.

The 5-Sacred Principals to Greater Body Awareness provide you with practical tools and in-depth understanding of how to be in touch with your physical body so that you can make better choices that add to your life force energy and course correct when you are off track. They will allow you to be in a more intimate, loving relationship with your body and its wisdom.

Here are the 5-Principals:

1. Your Body is Your Temple
2. Become An Observer
3. Connect with Your Body
4. Embrace Silence
5. Take Inspired Action

You can integrate many of these principals right away; all it takes is your desire to become more aware and a commitment to implement the practices into your life. They will act as **a guide on your path to greater insight into what your body needs and how to honor it.** Integrating this awareness will help free you from the guilt of taking time for you, setting healthy boundaries and actually responding to what your body is telling you.

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If you have been striving to listen and respond to a higher calling but haven't known quite where to start, these steps will enable you to tune into your inner wisdom and learn to follow the signs along the way.

Enjoy the journey as you dive deep into the magic of your 100 Trillion Cells and gain insight into the powerful, highly intelligent being that is your body! I hope you enjoy the tools and have fun implementing them in your life. Stay connected and let me know how the journey goes… The rewards at the end of implementing these 5 Principals are greater self-awareness, self-compassion and self-love; healthy relationships, vibrant health, joy, laughter, energy and healthy aging.

It is time to say YES to YOU!

The Art of Reverence

The word reverence is derived from the Latin, *revereri,* which means, "to stand in awe of". In modern times we use the word *reverence* to show regard and deep respect for someone or something. I would to invite you to revere the creation that is YOU.

"Our cells are formed in the intimate embrace of molecules receiving from God the holy spark of life. They are sacred vessels for divine love seeking connection in the present moment." - Sondra Barrett, PhD

In each and every one of your 100 Trillion cells you hold the divine spark of creation, the miracle of life itself and that alone is something to be in awe of!

Vibrant health and healing are enhanced through body awareness. Being in tune with what your body needs at any given time, you are able to set healthy boundaries and learn when to say no; you learn its ok to disappoint people and that you can't please everybody all the time, and you learn to take the time you need to recharge and replenish so that your own life force energy doesn't burn out.

Stop for a moment and really think about just how blessed you are to have been given this sacred gift called life… Take a moment to really breathe that in. Be in awe of the 100 Trillion Cells that make up your body and the innate healing intelligence that lives within them and within you.

Imagine…

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- What you might do differently if you tuned into what your body needs to stay in balance through your choices, thoughts, actions, behaviors and habits?

- How your life might be different if you had an intimate and beautiful relationship with your body?

- Imagine responding to your body with love and honoring by making choices that add to your life force energy and feel good long-term.

- Imagine attract the people, relationships, experiences and opportunities that reflect that love, strength, honor and integrity you carry within you…

Magic and miracles begin to unfold when you cultivate a more intimate and loving relationship with your body. By learning to stop long enough to listen to its whispers **and take action accordingly,** you will learn to trust your own inner guidance in all areas of your life. I invite you to keep an open mind and practice only what feels right for you.

STEP #1: Your Body Is Your Temple

"There are only two ways to live your life: One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as if everything is." - Albert Einstein

Take another moment to think about the incredibly complex and highly intelligent organism that is your body. **Your physical body enables you to experience the richness of this life in every color of the rainbow.** It is a sacred container within which the divine spark of creation resides. Down to the smallest of cells, each and every aspect of you is an expression of that divine spark. **Your body is a masterpiece of creation, a highly intelligent expression of an ever-evolving species here on earth.**

Your body is your temple. Your body is sacred and holy.

It is a miracle of life itself. It is your vehicle to experience life. A gift that was given to you just this once and on loan for a very short time…

How often do you stop in total awe of and humbled by this masterpiece of creation and then nourish, love, honor and revere it? Without this miraculous

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organism you cannot experience the glory of this life and although you are not your body, it is your vehicle to feel, express, create life through.

You are an expression of Creation.

In fact, **you are a divine creator of life itself, creating life each and every moment through your thoughts, emotions and actions,** and through the constant birth, death and rebirth of your 100 Trillion cells. Your cells are constantly renewing themselves and take approximately seven years for each and every cell to renew. In essence every seven years you have a chance at an entirely new physiology.

Think about it like this: your body is constantly creating new life.

You are constantly evolving, creating and expressing the sacredness that is you. Your thoughts, emotions and actions positively or negative impact how your new cells are formed and even how your DNA expresses itself.

Pause for a just moment and wrap your mind around that. *Think about the wondrous creation that YOU are…*

All of the systems in your body are designed to work harmoniously and support your life here on earth. And this masterpiece that is your body was designed to be able to heal and repair. Sometimes our bodies need our support to activate those healing and repair mechanisms through changes in nutrition, lifestyle, emotions and even our beliefs.

When you stop to think about it, you can only be in awe of it.

Each and every moment you are alive is a sacred gift that only comes once. Think about everything your body does for you. Think about how highly intelligent it is and responsive to your every need.

Your body is intricately connected to your mind and was designed to respond automatically to your thoughts, emotions, actions and environment. If you feel fear, worry, anxiety, sadness, shame or any other negative or heavy emotion, your body automatically responds by stimulating a stress response, flooding your system with stress hormones and preparing you for a potential threat. If instead you choose to feel joy, love, happiness, hope and connection, your body equally responds with soothing, healing elixirs designed to keep you healthy and to heal and repair any system that might be out of balance or feeding disease.

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"Our very cells respond to the thoughts we think. With every word, silent or spoken, we participate in the body's functioning. We participate in the functioning of the universe itself. If our consciousness grows lighter, then so does everything within and around us. This means, of course, that with every thought, we can start to re-create our lives." - Marianne Williamson

All of your thoughts and emotions either facilitate a stress or relaxation response in the body. Most of us live our lives in a constant state of stress response and don't feel we have the time, money or (insert) _____excuse here to cope with stress, rebalance with relaxation responses or to gain the tools and discipline we need to execute them. When you cultivate greater body awareness and bring stress responses back into balance by both stimulating the relaxation response as well as eliminating or reducing stressors, your body begins to heal and repair as it regains the vitality it might have lost along the way.

Honoring Your Body As A Temple

Take a moment to imagine what your life would be like if you shifted your perspective from how you currently view your body to a place of really **claiming your divinity**…embracing the miracle that you are, revering, honoring and **radically loving every inch of your body.** Thinking of your body like a precious newborn baby, holding it, nurturing it and loving it for the miracle that it is…

Take a moment to shift your awareness to the miracle that you are… If you have children think about what you would like them to think about their own bodies, would like them to be loving and kind to themselves?

Answer the following questions and write down what your action steps:

- How would my life and relationships be different if I truly honored my body? *And what action steps can I take right away to start honoring my body?*

- What choices/habits can I give up to honor my body more? *What action steps can I take right away to make choices that honor my body and start cultivating healthier habits instead?*

- If I was tuning into what my body really needs, what time would I be going to bed at night? *What action steps can I take right away to start supporting my bodies desire to go to bed at a certain time?*

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- If I listened to my body when making food choices, what would I predominately eat? *What action steps can I take right away to start eating foods that honor my body?*

- How would I express myself differently and communicate my needs if I honored my body? *What action steps can I take right away to express my emotional needs in a healthy way?*

- If I began to honor my body, how would my relationship to myself change? *What action steps can I take towards a healthier, more loving relationship with myself?*

Finding Your Sanctuary

From a spiritual perspective a sanctuary is a sacred place, a sanctified area, or a place containing an altar – a place permeated with spirit and imbued with the spark of life. **Sanctuaries are used to find healing and remember our wholeness,** to release our worries and surrender our fears, and most of all to reconnect back to Spirit and our own inner divinity. **When we tune in to our sacred nature, we are able to recognize that we carry such a refuge within,** and we can create an outer manifestation of this wherever we happen to be.

Creating a sacred space is an external manifestation of an internal state of being. It reinforces your relationship to your divinity and connection to spirit. It is a reminder of who you are and symbol to help you stay connected to your Core essence.

If you don't already have an altar or sacred space, you can choose a place in your home that feels good to you. There is no right or wrong way to do this, allow yourself to be guided by your intuition and do whatever feels right for you.

I personally have an altar in my bedroom where I place candles, crystals, feathers, rocks, roses and statues. All of the items on my altar are symbolic and have the meaning I have given them. I rotate and change out things on my altar periodically depending on what I feel I need greater support with or healing around. Altars can be made anywhere and can be very simple. It can be as simple as placing a flower in a vase and lighting a candle to represent your desire to fully love and embrace every aspect of yourself, both your humanity and your divinity. You can create an altar out in nature, placing items together from nature or from your home. Nature provides us with natural sanctuaries we can go to find peace and reconnect back to ourselves.

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When creating an altar you **give it the symbolic meaning you would like to work on,** for instance if you are seeking greater forgiveness for yourself or others, greater self-love or body awareness, healing of the body-mind or spirit, or even calling in your soul mate, all you do is think about what you would like to transform as you consciously and loving place the items together. Relighting a candle everyday on your altar is one way to stay connected to its magic and invoke the spirit of your desires.

Your innermost sanctuary is in the heart of your cells…

When you are on the go and aren't able to create an altar or sacred space, simply tune into the innermost sanctuary of your cells and revere the magic that lies within you.

This first step is about shifting your awareness to honor the sacred container you were given to experience life.

Big Ideas:

- Your body is like a sacred temple
- Your body is highly intelligent, responsive and knows how to heal
- There is a divine spark of creation that resides within each of your 100-Trillion Cells
- Your body responds to your thoughts, feelings and emotions
- Shift your awareness to revere the miracle that you are
- Observing what would be different if you began honoring your self
- Creating a sacred altar to represent your intentions and transformation

STEP #2: Become An Observer

Imagine you are a researcher on a mission to tune into and listen to the messages of your body. Become super curious and excited to research your body! This step takes your commitment to notice and observe how you feel throughout the day, at various times and in various situations. The more you tune in and simply observe, the greater understanding you will have about how your choices, thoughts, behaviors and environment affect you.

By learning to step back and observe you are able to **momentarily detach from the waves of emotions and sensations** you may be feeling at any given moment. This allows you to objectively evaluate how your thoughts, choices and environment are directly affecting your health and wellbeing. It

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also helps you to stop reacting and projecting or blaming external sources and instead gives you the chance to **self-reflect and tune in** to what is really going on. With time you may start to recognize patterns indicating when, who and what depletes you and can then strategically make changes accordingly.

The more you consciously observe and take note of how your body is feeling or responding to life, the easier it will become to listen to and follow your inner compass.

You can also use this approach in your relationships. Becoming the observer in your relationships means you become radically present and simply tune in to/observe what they are saying both verbally and non-verbally. How do you think your relationships would transform if you started being more present and listened without judgment, blame or even drawing conclusions? To listen with an open heart and mind, simply being present with whoever is with you?

The next time you engage in conversation with a friend, colleague or loved one, try this out and set an intention to simply be present. Ask your inner critic to jump in the back seat and allow your higher self to take the lead. If you feel yourself beginning to judge, criticize or react to what the person you are speaking to is saying, remind yourself that it is ok to be present and listen without judgment. Open your heart and allow them to share with you whatever it is they want to say. And then practice this with yourself by observing how you feel without judgment, blame or criticism. Simply take note of how you feel and what factors influenced it.

As you learn to observe more you simultaneously begin to learn the language of your body. Remember, your body is always listening to what you think and responds accordingly… It also speaks to you in direct response to your thoughts, feelings and emotions. So the next time you are feeling out of balance stop and ask yourself what messages you are sending to your body. Are they loving and kind? Accepting and non-judgmental?

Becoming The Observer

Set an intention to check in with your self throughout the day and begin to observe your self in various situations and at various times of the day. You are simply observing in this step, not evaluating or judging, simply tuning in and becoming more aware of how your choices, interactions and environment are affecting your health and wellbeing.

Getting in the habit of tuning in will increase your ability to listen and deepen body awareness through observation. A great way to start is to set an alarm on your phone once an hour to check in with your body and observe how it's

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feeling. When your alarm goes off, simply take a deep breath, shut your eyes and tune into your inner world. Check in and see how your body is feeling, if it needs anything to feel more vital and alive, awake and refreshed, balanced or at a peace. Tune in and simply observe.

Commit to keeping a journal for 7-days and writing down what you observe. In your journey reflect on the following questions:

- How do I feel when I get up in the morning? Do I feel tired and uninspired, or refreshed and motivated?

- After my morning routine do I feel centered and calm, grounded and inspired to start my day?

- After I eat how does my body feel? Did the food I ate make me feel heavy and tired, or light, energetic and satisfied?

- Tune into my body on the inside and observe how my digestion reacts to certain foods and drinks or even people and exchanges?

- Paying close attention to my energy levels before and after interacting with people, do I feel uplifted and happy or depleted and yucky?

- How do I feel in the afternoon? What do I do to cope with the afternoon dip in energy? Did I have a dip or remain vital and alert?

- What happens when I practice self-care? How do I feel after each activity and which activities work best for what?

- How are my energy levels after I take a walk, exercise or meditate?

- Who and what drain me? Who and what uplift me?

Use this exercise to identify patterns, habits, people and environments that you need to shift in order to function at your most optimal state. Take note of how everything you do or don't do makes you feel…

Writing down your observations for an entire week will help to establish a routine of observation and reflection. After your week is complete, take some time to evaluate what you discovered. Are there things, situations, people or environments that feel better than others? Are there ways in which you can control or change the things that don't feel good, or simply change the way you view or handle it? Just keep tuning in, you can do it!

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This second step begins the process of tuning into and observing your body.

Big Ideas:

- With curiosity and excitement begin the process of observing
- Detach and simply observe objectively
- Practice radical presence and non-judgment in your relationships
- Checking in every hour for one-week and taking note of how you feel
- Reflecting on your observations to gain clues about what revitalizes and depletes you

STEP #3: Connect With Your Body

"When we drum, laugh, move our bodies, make love, or experience any other form of pleasure, our bodies surge with chemicals called endorphins. Molecules ebb and flow, brain waves change, cell tensions ease, and we re-create our emotional condition from the inside out. Our cells have the ability to use physical rhythm and the vibrating energy of our senses to create these pleasurable states. Energy shifts. Our muscles soften. We may even reach another level of being or knowing. Within our cellular scaffolding is where humming, drumming, light, movement, "vibes," and thoughts shift mind, body and spirit." - Sondra Bennett PhD, Secrets of Your Cells

Connecting with your body is about falling in love and getting to know every inch of its landscape, how it moves, what it feels like and where it is in space. The more you know the landscape of your body, the easier it will be to stay tuned in and connected to it. And the more you fall in love with your body, the easier it will be to connect with others and experience deep healing and soul nurturing.

Most of us are raised without a lot of healthy touching. We are even made to believe it is bad or somehow shameful to touch and yet we can literally die if we don't have enough touch as infants. Most of us are totally disconnected from our bodies and so many of us have had negative experiences around touch and inappropriate behavior. We act as if mind – body – emotions – energy and spirit are all separate from each other instead of one intricately interwoven and integrated Whole.

Getting to know your body is a gift you give yourself and there are many ways to deepen that connection. As you get to know and connect more intimately to your own body, you will begin to feel more comfortable to reach out and connect with someone else… We have all heard how important it is to

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"love yourself first" before expecting you can truly and deeply love another. I believe that as we deepen our appreciation, love and honor for ourselves, we simultaneously are more capable of experiencing a deeper love for someone else.

When we don't love our bodies, it can be really challenging to enjoy and embrace physical contact from another human being. And when we block that connection with others we are starving ourselves of a very basic instinctual need. **We are creatures of connection.** We bond and heal through our ability to connect to each other. We see God in one another. We see our love reflected back to us in the eyes of our loved ones. We are intimately and intricately inter-dependent of one another.

Even giving someone a hug releases oxytocin, a molecule that bonds and calms the system. Oxytocin is a molecular messenger, a mood changer that can calm us down and promote closeness with others. It fosters deep bonding and sense of intimate belonging to a tribe. The latest research shows that no amount of green juice and daily personal training can beat the positive health impact of having a sense of belonging and the ability to connect with others deeply in life…

As you heal, connect to your body and discover and embrace the totality of who you are and as you then open yourself to deeper connections you will begin to experience a richer, more meaningful existence.

Here are a few ways you can connect to your body through exploration and movement, and identify your body's aches and pains, pleasures and passions. There are many things you can do, from joining a Nia or Yoga class, taking Tai Chi or simply rolling around on the floor at home; the more you connect with and move your body consciously the easier it will be to tune into and listen to its messages. **Key is to do these activities holding the intention of deeply connecting to your body.** Not just mindlessly going through the motions in order to check-off "exercise" on your list of to-do's, but fully connecting within and feeling the movement and rhythm of your body.

11-Ways to Connect with Your Body

1. **Feel your body** - Literally caress and explore your own body… Have you ever done that? I dare you to give it a try, a real 100% all in try! Do you know the landscape of your body and how it feels? Do you know where you are holding pain or tension? - - - Whether you do this while soaking in the bathtub or lounging on your bed, the most important piece to remember is to be consciously connecting to each and every inch of your body. Love and thank your body and honor it

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for giving you this opportunity to experience life. The deeper and more purposeful you take this, the greater the gift will be.

2. **Book a massage or spa day** – Give yourself the gift of being pampered, not only because it feels good, but also because we don't often know how our body really feels until it's touched (and sometimes it takes another's touch to reconnect us). Not to mention the incredible health benefits of healing touch and deep relaxation.
3. **Roll around on the floor** (or in the dirt or on the grass!) – Yes, you read that correctly, literally roll around on the floor! Discover and feel how your body, bones, muscles and tissues connect to the ground. Feel your body, connect to and discover your body. Have you ever tried to feel/sense your elbow from the inside of your body and not by touching it? Move your elbow around in space and tune into your elbow! Whoa!
4. **Take a brisk walk** – moving your body outdoors is an excellent way to slow down and tune in. You have the added healing benefit of being outside in nature (unless of course you are walking amongst a concrete jungle, but even then you are still getting "fresh" air (unless you live in New Delhi or Beijing!! In which case, go to an oxygen bar and get out of the city on weekends!). As you walk pay attention to your breath and your body consciously and choose to walk mindfully. This is meant to get your heart rate pumping and flood your system with fresh oxygen, blood and lymph. Even if all the time you have is an extra 10 minutes a day, your body will thank you!
5. **Float in a sensory deprivation tank** – Floating is relatively new on the US stage but has been around since the dawn of time. People have traveled to places like the Dead Sea to float in its healing waters for thousands of years. When you are in a pod or float tub you are weightless and can really let go of the stress you carry. The soothing warm waters hold you and envelop you in deep healing and tranquility. Check out local Groupon deals to try it out and allow your self to simply be. When you float set the intention to release all stress in your body and deeply connect.
6. **Try out Nia** – "Nia is more than fitness. It's a lifestyle that is shared one dance at a time. It changes people's lives forever." Nia is like attending a living workshop where you get to move your body and express your emotions with song and dance. It can really help to release stuck emotion in the body and get things flowing again. To find a class near you visit the Nia headquarters website at: http://www.nianow.com - or check out my dear friend Sommer's site and watch a few videos of her inspiring videos and workshops: http://www.islandjoywellness.com/events/nia/
7. **Breathwalking** – this practice combines walking with conscious breath and mindfulness. Walking takes on a whole new level. You tune into

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the rhythm of your breath as you consciously take each step. For some it might like torture, but I promise it helps calm the mind and send you into a meditative state while stimulating a relaxation response in the body. This is excellent way to slow you down and connect. http://www.kundaliniresearchinstitute.org/breathwalk/whatisbw/index.html

8. **Spice it up and take a Zumba class** – I love Zumba! It is so much fun and really gets me in my body. It is a great way to feel and connect to the joyful rhythm and movement of my soul. Just remember to set your intention before class starts and keep tuning back into your body and observe it coming alive with each and every song. Check it out at: www.zumba.com
9. **Try out belly dancing or 5 rhythms** – both of these activities drop you in your body real fast! They are fun and different, you never know if you are going to like it unless you give it a try ☺ Google 5 Rhythms to find an instructor near you! (5 Rhythms takes you on an even deeper ride than Nia, so if you would like to go deep and get in touch with your essence give it a try!)
10. **Turn up your favorite song and DANCE** – this is super easy and I bet you don't have any excuse not to try it! So have fun, let go, look ridiculous and love yourself for it. Dance like no one is watching (and by the way, they probably aren't unless you have peeping Toms for neighbors! So dance your booty off and get in that sacred body of yours!)
11. **Earthing** – seriously, this practice even has scientific research to back it up! In 30 minutes or less you can easily "ground" your energy and get into your body. All you have to do is take your shoes and socks off and walk around, sit, stand or lay down, on a conductive surface of the earth (grass, sand, dirt, or even concrete - yay for concrete jungle dwellers!). Contact with the Earth appears to uphold the electrical stability of our bodies and serve as a foundation for vitality and health. So what do you have to loose? Give it a try and see what happens! Learn more at: http://earthinginstitute.net/clint-ober-talks-about-earthing/

Connecting to your body through these various suggestions helps you to be more "in your body". When you are more in your body you are more likely to identify negative thoughts and let go of patterns that no longer serve you. You are more able to tune in to your own "inner wisdom". Not only that but when you move your body you actually shift the state of your mind, energy field and consciousness. Not too mention the incredible benefits and release of happy hormones and neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine.

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When you move your body you begin creating new patterns, rewiring and anchoring in a new joyful experience.

When you find yourself reacting in an unwanted way, break the attachment to that behavior through sound or movement. Just start moving and reconnect to your body, it will help break you out of the old pattern so that can create a new and healthier response.

When practicing body awareness exercises you may ask yourself the following questions to stimulate deeper reflection and awareness:

- Is there anything I need to let go of? (If so, shake it out with movement)
- Are there any areas of tension I need to let go?
- Am I attached to ideas, people, or habits that hinder my growth?
- What will expand me?
- What contracts me?
- Where am I being too repetitive?

This third step brings us in our bodies and connects us with the landscape of our physicality so that we come to know its language even better.

Big Ideas:

- Connect with and fall in love with every inch of your body
- Get to know your body intimately through loving touch and movement
- Use the physical body to connect deeply with others and to heal
- Practice the body awareness exercises to get to know your body better

STEP #4: Embracing Silence

"To accomplish anything excellent or commanding, we must listen to the whisper that we alone can hear." - Ralph Waldo Emmerson

Shhhhh…. your body is trying to tell you something…

When an area of your life is out of balance or you are making choices that are not in your highest and best good, stress responses are triggered and the body starts to speak to you in subtle whispers. If you learn to listen to the whispers and take action accordingly, you can prevent the whispers from escalating into disease, accidents or trauma screaming to get your attention that something needs to change.

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Most of us are so disconnected that we don't recognize or hear the whispers until it turns into a yell forcing us to slow down and make a change. The cost of not taking the time to slow down and listen can result in life-threatening illness, pain, discomfort, prolonged suffering and even premature death. The prize of listening on the other hand can result in greater vitality, increased energy, optimal health, life satisfaction, healthy boundaries, greater happiness, joyous relationships and increased longevity.

Our present culture doesn't teach meditation and mindfulness in schools and does not like slowing down. We are moving full speed ahead and constantly connected to the buzz of the modern world around us. Even though we are more "connected" than ever, we are also lonelier than ever and the buzz of our devices keeps our minds spinning and unable to hear the wisdom of the body.

In today's modern world we are constantly running on empty and with an average of 50,000+ thoughts a day, its no wonder that with this amount of inner traffic we lose touch with our self. With all that thinking going on, what chance does your heart have to breathe, feel, expand and connect? What chance to do you have to really take in the sacredness of each moment and to be in awe of the miracle of life? A crowded mind makes for a crowded heart with little room for your self and less room to hear your body wisdom. When we live in such a congested mind, how open, available and receptive can we be?

To reclaim the sacredness of your life and hear the wisdom of your inner guide, you have to slow down long enough to calm the busyness of your active mind. Falling in love with those sacred moments of deep connection and silence is when magic happens…

Imagine how your life would transform if you took the time every single day to slow down and simply be in sacred silence? (Even if for just 3 minutes?) Imagine throughout the day sporadically taking a few minutes to simply connect with your breath and tune in to your inner world. How would those moments of brief connection and tuning in deepen your awareness of what your body really needs?

You don't have to carve out an hour of your day and sit on the perfect meditation cushion in a peaceful Zen den to make this effective (although that would be really pretty amazing!). This is about all of the little moments throughout your day where you connect back to your essence, to Source energy and are simply present to BE in that moment in time. This is about

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the power of now, the power of your presence and the power of tuning into your inner wisdom.

Having a meditation or mindfulness practice can be life-changing and is something I totally support and encourage for its vast array of scientific health benefits, as well as the inner peace, serenity and clarity it brings to your life. **Your life and your relationships literally transform as you deepen your practice and make meditation an integral part of your life experience.**

While you practice you release stress, pain, tension and exhaustion from the body as you de-excite the mind and reconnect to your self. And when you come back out of that juicy sweet spot of meditation the world seems a little less chaotic and your body and mind are more at peace. The more often you practice, the longer that state stays with you throughout your day, becoming your new normal. Consistency is key so dig deep and find a big enough why to step into a future where this practice becomes like brushing your teeth!

If you truly desire greater body awareness then integrating this step is a master key unlocking the door to your success!

"Ever wonder why someone doesn't try softer?" – Lily Tomlin

And don't worry; sitting in meditation isn't about "trying harder." It is about surrendering to what is, tuning into the present moment and simply allowing. The more you practice meditation and mindfulness the more ease and flow you invite into your life. Practicing meditation doesn't have to become yet another thing on your to-do list of healing activities creating even more overwhelm.

You can simply begin by bringing greater gentleness and ease into your everyday activities, and slowing down long enough to take a deep breath, tune in and check in with your self (slowing down can literally be just a quick check in for about 3 seconds, so what do you say, do have an extra 3 seconds every few hours?). **Imagine what your life would be like if you released a little self-inflicted pressure to "try harder" and instead infused your life with greater ease, flow and surrender?**

Here are a few suggestions on how to practice meditative and mindful states throughout your day enhancing your ability to hear your inner guide:

1. **Setting Your Intention** – Before you get out of bed, take a moment to place a hand over your heart, close your eyes and connect with your breath. As you inhale, imagine your body filling with light and envision your day filling with joy. Lovingly set an intention for the day,

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proclaiming what you need and how you would like to feel today, take another deep breath, and tap into the feeling of gratitude in your heart. Allow the feeling of gratitude to expand in your awareness, take another deep breath and step into your vision for a beautiful new day.

2. **RPM (= rise, pee, meditate!)** In this practice you simply get up, go potty, brush your teeth and sit back down. Sages from many mindfulness traditions say that in those early hours of the morning when the world is still asleep meditative states are heightened. Meditating first thing also ensures you actually do it ☺. If you are too hungry when you wake, try drinking hot water and lemon and then meditating, eating afterwards. If you are still too hungry, eat a handful of nuts or get something else in your body to be able to sit for about twenty minutes in meditation before starting your day. And if your tummy is shouting at you to feed it, eat first for goodness sakes and then sit back down!
3. **Grounding** – If you feel like you don't have the time to meditate for twenty minutes in the am, you can also extend the heart centering exercise while still in bed by simply feeling your self grounded and connected to the earth from where you are sitting or lying. Imagine your body as tree trunk and your legs and feet extending down as roots deep into the earth. Imagine the earth grounding, nourish, nurturing energy coming back up through your roots. Grounding helps to keep you connected and centered throughout your day. You can also use this quick visualization whenever you are feeling scattered or out of balance.
4. **Morning Mindfulness** – Practicing mindfulness while starting your day is powerful practice to have. Simply stay in that grounded, heart-centered and present state you connected to before you got out of bed and allow a few moments to gaze out the window, listen to the sounds of nature or even go for a slow, mindful short walk. You can continue to deepen your connection to the present moment by consciously feeling and tuning into what you are doing. Whether that be brushing your teeth, taking a shower or making yourself breakfast, by really being present we strengthen our body-mind connection and our ability to hear the body speak to us.
5. **Beginning Work** – When you get to work, take a deep breath and remember your intention for the day. Imagine your self being surrounded by light and guided throughout your day. Whenever things get stressful or you get triggered by someone or something, take a deep breath and remember your intention, remember how you most want to feel that day and remember that you alone have the power to choose your emotions so if you want to feel differently, simply tune into a different channel of emotions within you.

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6. **Mini "Reconnect Breaks"** – Throughout the day use short mini breaks to relax by getting up from your desk to take a short walk, stretch your legs, make yourself an herbal tea or give someone a hug. The idea here to slow down, calm the monkey mind and reconnect with your body.
7. **Mindful Lunch Break** – At your lunch break mindfully take a walk, breathe in the fresh air, and connect to nature and within.
8. **Connect With Nature** – Any time you can throughout the day or on weekends, take a walk in the forest, a stroll through a park or simply watch the sunrise or sunset.
9. **Afternoon Power Rejuvenation** – A really great time to practice meditation is around 4pm in the afternoon. It helps to de-stress body and mind and enhances greater peace, focus and clarity for the second half of your day. (I know people who even meditate in the bathroom stall at work or go and sit in their cars to make this happen – it is possible, you just have to be willing to be creative and know that you (and your health and wellbeing) are worth it!)
10. **Afternoon Power Nap** – If you work from home or on the weekends, allow yourself to lay down when you feel that afternoon dip in energy. Practicing meditation actually increases the depth of rest you receive and rejuvenation you feel as compared to naps, however, sometimes you just feel like taking a nap is all you have in you. Honor it, allow it, embrace it and thank yourself for it! (Power naps are best done up to 20 minutes only, otherwise you fall too deep into sleep and waking/resting again later becomes more difficult).
11. **Work Day Closure** – When you are done with work walk mindfully to your car, feel each step, and connect with your breath.
12. **Car Connection** – While your car is heating up (or cooling down) take a few deep breaths to connect within, check in with your body and ask what it needs for the rest of the day. For instance what foods will feel nourishing, what type of movement it may need, or connection with community, a hot bath, activity or silence. Utilize these moments to tune in to what your body is telling you.
13. **Back at Home** – When you get home do something that indicates you are leaving work behind and transitioning to be present with whatever you are doing, for instance changing into "at home" clothes, burning a candle or incense, brewing hot tea or listening to a relaxing song.
14. **Electronic Detoxing** – Using evening electronic detoxes can be incredibly powerful as well. Shutting off your devices and practicing being present will increase your ability to listen to your body wisdom and insight. I typically recommend shutting down all devices by 8 pm. This gives us two hours before our ideal lights-out for optimal health and a chance to wind down naturally, take a bath, read a book,

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journal, listen to soothing music, light a candle or do something creative.

15. **Bedtime Ritual** – When preparing for bed do something that indicates to your body and mind that it is now time to rest. For instance by always inhaling lavender essential oil to stimulate relaxation and rest, or by journaling every night and writing down what you are grateful for about your day, how you positively contributed and what you are calling into your life.

Spending time in silence and reconnecting back to your self is a deeply healing and transformative experience. As mentioned earlier, most of us are in a constant state of external stimulation and stress responses and rarely take the time to "go inside". Allow your body the time and space it needs to catch up and rejuvenate from all that is going on in your life. Not only will your body love you for it, but also your mind… And the mind is where transformation happens!

And just to be clear, **taking down time and spending moments in deep connection with yourself is not lazy or selfish; it is the greatest gift you can give yourself and those around you.** Think about it as being self-ful instead of selfish. It is in this time of self-care that you receive inspiration, insight and guidance and creative juices begin to flow… *It is in the silence that we find our voice…*

Step four is all about tuning in, quieting the monkey mind and finding our inner voice through the silence.

Big Ideas:

- Spend quiet time alone
- Do less, learn to say no, simply be
- Take moments throughout your day to connect within
- Learn a meditation practice
- Reconnect with a spiritual source
- Balance out external and internal time

STEP #5: Take Action

"Signals felt like a pebble dropping on the surface of a pond, waves send responses inside the cell, so that the message can be heard. Then silence, waiting for action or further listening." - Christopher Vaughan, How Life Begins

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If you want to cultivate an intimate relationship with your body you have to be prepared to take action and follow through with what it needs. Just like with any other relationship you build trust over time by keeping your word, following through and showing up when you say you are going to.

We have to build trust in ourselves by showing up for our needs and taking action in response to the wisdom of the body. The first step was acknowledging your body as a sacred temple, a gift you were given to experience life with. The second step was to observe and take note of how your thoughts, behaviors, actions, interactions and environment affect your wellbeing. The third step was then to connect deeply with the landscape of your body, getting to know and loving every inch. The fourth step was an invitation to go inside and simply be, surrendering to what is and listening for the voice of wisdom within…

Now it is time to take action in response to all the wisdom and insight you have gained along the way. It is time to show up for yourself, to say YES to YOU and to commit to making choices that support, uplift and nurture your body, mind and soul.

It's super important not to over-commit and take on too much at once… If you do you set yourself up for failure and end up frustrated, disappointed and demotivated, and we don't want that!! When you are forming healthy new habits and trying out new things you want to **test the waters, see what feels good and then integrate one healthy new habit or behavior at a time.**

If one of your reflections was that your body really wants to go to bed earlier to feel optimally rested you can set an intention to integrate and support that body wisdom by drinking less caffeine after noon, eating dinner earlier and creating a night-time ritual that begins to signal to the body that it is time to go to bed by dimming the lights, lighting a candle, playing relaxing music and practicing some form of gratitude or blessing for your day. Setting an intention followed up with specific action steps that support you achieving this new habit are essential to your success. And remember, a habit is simply something we do a lot and once formed it is so much easier to keep going! When we **commit to a practice for 21-days we support new neural pathways in the brain that enable us to develop a new "habit".**

Taking Action Requires:

- Identifying a goal / vision / intention
- Setting clear and specific intentions of what you want
- Identifying a path and action steps to get you there
- Committing to a specific amount of time

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- Writing it down!
- Being held accountable
- Tracking your progress and celebrating your successes

When we take action we stimulate and enliven greater flow and begin attracting more of what we want in our lives. Action generates action. Flow generates flow. When we are stagnant in our lives and not taking inspired action our bodies respond by becoming more stagnant and opportunities slow down… Now this does not mean to over do it and never slow down. Quite the contrary, when we are in alignment and in flow we can be in a state of total peace and ease and be taking inspired action at the same time. **Inspired action is simply listening to and honoring the wisdom of your body as your compass and guide to navigate the waters of your life.**

This process requires an on-going commitment to loving *you*. Over time you will deepen your understanding of what your body is trying to tell you and learn to listen before it has to yell…and because we are perfectly imperfect and beautifully flawed even if you do learn to listen and implement these practices you may find yourself years down the road getting a Universal kick in the ass because you weren't listening once again! The only difference is you will laugh at the humor of it and appreciate whatever wisdom the experience is bringing, even when it's painful. You will be much better equipped to know when and where to seek guidance to help move through whatever transition you are going through.

Key with all of this to start loving you, all of you… Honor what is in your highest and best good at any given moment and allow for moments of falling back into your old ways as you shift and move, evolve and pause. It's like Paula Abdul sang back in the late 80's, we take two steps forward and two steps back. It is a dance we dance and as we recommit everyday the dance will keep moving us forward in the direction of our dreams.

This entire process begins simply with a desire to cultivate greater body awareness by loving and honoring the body's needs and tuning into its wisdom. Seeking healing, wholeness and integration by paying attention to whatever comes up along the way…

Begin with a burning desire to heal and transform through the wisdom of your body. And then, be willing to take action and get the support you need to be held accountable and keep moving forward in the direction of your dreams.

Step five is about taking inspired action. By tuning in and taking action you manifest the body, relationships, life and business you truly desire!

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The essence of this step is:

- Tune in & take action!
- Write it down and be held accountable
- Get the support you need
- Celebrate your successes!

Conclusion:

As you keep tuning in and taking action you will begin to deepen the love you hold for yourself and others. You will show others how to treat you by the way you treat yourself. You will know when to say yes and when to say no. You will tune into the wisdom that is within you and yourself to be guided to the life of your dreams.

So dive deep, believe its possible, visualize your success and begin taking action everyday towards loving and honoring your self a little more!

I believe in you and want nothing more than to see you succeed in this endeavor! I believe that these steps have the power to transform the way we live our lives, the way we age and the way we treat the planet. Change begins within. Enjoy your journey to inner-discovery as you become more **awake, aware and aligned.**

Be sure to check out my other tools and free gifts on my website at: www.mindbodybeing.com/join-the-tribe. You can also apply for a free coaching session at: www.mindbodybeing.com/jumpstart

Love, Light & Miracles,

Heather Blankinship
Integrative Wellness &
Personal Transformation Coach

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Heather Blankinship, founder of MindBodyBeing.com, is an Integrative Wellness and Personal Transformation Coach, passionate about guiding people to their most empowered existence. She is a catalyst for radical transformation and deep healing and is your personal guide to help navigate the waters of change. Working with Heather supports you with a rock-solid foundation of practical self-care strategies, stress prevention tools and a step-by-step plan to get you where you want to go. She blends modern modalities with ancient philosophies backed by science.

Sign-up for her newsletter to receive a **free monthly Self-Care calendar** to help you focus on what's most important to take of your body-mind and spirit and get **instant access to guided Healing meditation downloads!** Sign-up here: www.mindbodybeing.com/join-the-tribe

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