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### **Sensing Exercise: Returning to the Present Moment**

This short exercise is designed to help you reconnect with your inner experience—your emotions, your physical sensations, and your sense of presence in the here and now.

When practiced regularly, it can build awareness of your body's subtle cues and help you return to a grounded, centered state amidst the distractions of daily life.

While you can do this anywhere and anytime, I recommend trying daily, perhaps first thing in the morning.

#### **Instructions**

Set aside 5–10 minutes for this exercise.

During your first few tries, read through the instructions slowly as you go. As you become more familiar with the process, you may find it natural to close your eyes and guide yourself from memory.

- Begin in a relaxed, upright seated position with your feet on the floor. Let your hands rest comfortably—on your thighs, in your lap, or on your desk.
- Start by bringing your attention to the sensations in your feet. Gently rest your awareness there. Notice everything you can—perhaps the feel of your socks or shoes, the contact with the floor, or the internal energy within the feet. Stay here for 15-20 seconds, simply sensing the feet.
- Shift your awareness to your butt in the seat. Feel the weight of your body and the contact between you and the chair. Notice any textures of clothing or fabric, and allow yourself to be curious about the internal sensations here. Rest your attention in this area for another 15-20 seconds.
- If your mind wanders—which it likely will—that's completely normal. When you notice it, gently bring your attention back to your body, back to sensing.
- Now, bring your attention to your hands. Sense what's touching your skin—the air, fabric, your lap—and tune into the internal sensation of your fingers, palms, and the tops of your hands. Notice the weight of your hands resting where they are.

- There is no right or wrong in what you sense and notice. Just become aware of what is happening in the body, here and now.
- Next, bring your awareness to your face. What do you notice around your eyes, your cheeks, your forehead, your mouth? If you detect tension, simply allow it to be. Expand your attention to include your entire head—the ears, the back of the head, the crown, the sides. Just observe whatever is present.
- You might also begin to notice your breath. There's no need to change it. Just let your breath be as it is, and for a moment, be aware of it—just one breath, just this moment.
- Finally, return your attention to the different areas you've touched into: your head, hands, seat, and feet. See if you can be aware of all these places at once, even imperfectly. Then, allow that awareness to fill your whole body. Notice what it feels like to be here, present, sensing your whole self from the inside. Rest here for several moments.

## **Closing**

As you finish, see what part of your awareness can stay connected to your inner experience. Perhaps you can carry a small thread of this presence with you into the rest of your day. The more often you return to sensing yourself in this way, the more accessible this state of presence and ease will become—right here, within you.