

## Body Scan Sketch

Lola Broomberg offers this practice to help students understand the relationship between physical sensation, emotion, and action. Practicing this along with students is a way for adults to model healthy responses to challenging circumstances and emotions, such as uncertainty and vulnerability. This routine gives voice to personal physical experience and invites others to wonder, “What am I feeling?”

10 - 25 minutes

1. **Notice/recognize sensation.** Simply tune into your body’s sensations. Observe. Feel. Give this step a full 3 minutes before moving on.
2. **Draw a simple outline of a body.** Depending on the age of the student, this can be a pre-drawn form or each individual can create their own body outline shape. Keep it simple.
3. **Within the body shape outline, make marks to represent the sensations you’re feeling.** These can be lines, colors, or shapes in the areas where you feel something. Continue to bring awareness to the feelings while drawing. Do the sensations change or move?
4. **Name the feelings and intentionally place those words on the page.** It is important to choose words carefully. A list of physical sensation and emotion vocabulary may be useful to expand beyond sometimes over-simplified emotions and offer choice when naming complex emotions.

For example, words like “Agitated, confused, uncertain, vulnerable” are powerful because they allow space for the possibility that “Even though I don’t know what is going on right now, I’m trying to figure it out and when I do I’ll make a plan...” Words like “terrified” or “freaked-out” carry a more passive disempowered feeling.

5. **Pause.** Breaths with long exhales activate the parasympathetic nervous system, interrupting heightened activity. This is a way to practice self-soothing. We can encourage each other to take a pause. This is a chance to ground, notice, and become intentional choice-makers for how to move forward from this moment.

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## Tips & Extensions

- De-emphasize 'drawing skills' by offering a variety of ways to 'make marks'. Encourage representation through color, scribbles, symbols, etc.
- To de-emphasize 'body shape' consider offering a pre-made basic body form that is androgenous and somewhat generic in terms of size. If students are creating their own, model that part of the process with an example and give a short amount of time to make a shape.
- Have students track sensations and feelings in their body over the course of a week/month and then reflect on the impermanence and fluidity of sensation...similar to the weather.
- If uncomfortable sensations/feelings persist for long periods, invite them to brainstorm solutions for altering these sensations and feelings. What actions can I take to change the way I feel?

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