

BODY SCAN

Where are you feeling depression in your body today?

Pause. Notice. Check in.

Depression can be experienced physically as well as emotionally. You may notice heaviness, exhaustion, numbness, aches, slowed movement, tension or a feeling of being disconnected from your body. This check-in is about noticing - not forcing yourself to feel differently.

Before you begin

Choose a position that asks as little of you as possible. You can sit, lie down, stand or move around. There is no need to close your eyes. If focusing on your body feels uncomfortable, keep looking around the room and return to the exercise only if it feels manageable.

My energy right now:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
empty			in-between					energised		

What feels hardest in my body today?

A slow head-to-toe check-in

Move through these areas gently. You may notice strong sensations, very little, or nothing at all. Numbness and disconnection are also things you can notice.

Head & mind

Does your head feel heavy, foggy, pressured or tired? Is concentrating difficult? Are thoughts slowed, repetitive or self-critical?

Eyes & face

Notice tired eyes, a heavy expression, tension around the forehead or a sense that showing emotion takes effort.

Jaw, neck & shoulders

Are you clenching, bracing or carrying tension? Or do these areas feel heavy and dropped, as though holding yourself upright takes effort?

Chest & breathing

Notice whether your chest feels heavy, hollow, tight or numb. Is breathing shallow, slow, sighing or simply happening in the background?

Stomach & appetite

Notice emptiness, nausea, tightness, lack of appetite, increased appetite or little awareness of hunger and fullness.

Arms & hands

Do they feel heavy, restless, weak, cold, numb or difficult to motivate into action?

Back, hips & legs

Notice aching, heaviness, tension, restlessness or the feeling that moving requires more effort than usual.

Whole body

Does your body feel tired, slowed, disconnected, painful, restless, flat, numb or overloaded? What word fits best today?

The sensation that stands out most is:

I notice it mainly in: _____

What might be sitting underneath the heaviness?

Depression does not always feel like sadness. It can show up as emptiness, irritability, disconnection, exhaustion, loss of interest or feeling unable to begin. There may also be several feelings present at once.

Sadness or grief

Something may feel lost, changed or painfully absent.

Exhaustion

Your body may be signalling that it has been carrying too much for too long.

Overwhelm

When everything feels too much, shutting down or withdrawing can become protective.

Anger or frustration

Depression can coexist with irritability, resentment or feeling trapped.

Numbness

Sometimes feeling less can be the nervous system's way of coping with too much.

Loneliness or disconnection

You may be around people and still feel separate, unseen or unreachable.

I do not know

You do not need to find a reason today. 'I don't know' is a valid answer.

What emotion, sensation or word feels closest to my experience today?

What does my body need from me?

The aim is not to create a long self-care list. When energy is low, one small, realistic response can be enough.

Less demand

What can be postponed, shortened, simplified or left unfinished today?

Basic physical care

Would water, food, warmth, medication you normally take, washing, fresh clothes or rest help?

Light or fresh air

Opening a curtain, standing at the door or spending a few minutes outside may be more realistic than a long walk.

Small movement

Stretch your fingers, roll your shoulders, change position or walk to another room. Movement does not have to be exercise.

Connection without pressure

Could somebody sit with you, send a message, make a drink or simply know that today is difficult?

Something familiar

A familiar programme, blanket, music, routine, pet or safe activity may reduce the amount your nervous system has to process.

Professional support

If depression is persistent, worsening or affecting daily life, speaking with a GP or mental-health professional can be an important next step.

One thing that feels possible rather than perfect:

What would make the next hour slightly easier?

My body map

You can write words, shade areas or simply place a mark beside the parts of your body that feel different today. There is no correct way to complete this.

HEAD / MIND	_____
FACE / JAW	_____
NECK / SHOULDERS	_____
CHEST	_____
STOMACH	_____
BACK / HIPS	_____
ARMS / HANDS	_____
LEGS / FEET	_____
WHOLE BODY	_____

If my body could say one thing to me today, it might be:

A safety note: If you are in immediate danger or feel unable to keep yourself safe, seek urgent help through emergency services or an appropriate crisis service. This worksheet is a reflective support tool and is not a substitute for medical or mental-health assessment.

A message from me

Depression can make even ordinary things feel physically difficult. Getting up, showering, answering a message, eating or deciding what to do next can require far more energy than other people can see.

A body scan is not another task you have to complete perfectly. It is a way of meeting yourself where you actually are. You might discover that your body feels heavy. You might notice that you have been holding tension all day. You might realise you are hungry, exhausted or simply need less demanded of you.

Try not to turn what you notice into another reason to criticise yourself. Notice first. Then ask what would make this moment a little more manageable.

Some days the answer may be movement or connection. Other days it may be rest, quiet or asking someone else to help carry something. Small responses still matter.

Pause. Notice. Check in.

What do I want to remember from today's body scan?

Space to Breathe Therapy

Support | Understanding | A brighter you