



This document is an extract from the full chapter which is available for download in the table via this [link](#) and is intended for use by participants of meetings.

Mindfulness of Posture – Awareness in stillness and motion

Recognising the shape of our experience

Knowing how we are

“Mindfulness doesn’t depend on the posture. It depends on how you are relating to your experience.” - Sayadaw U Tejaniya

Having established ‘Mindfulness of Breathing’ – the first lens of ‘Mindfulness of the Body’ – we continue exploring the ‘First Anchor of Mindfulness’, by turning our attention to **Mindfulness of Posture**. This practice is the second lens that connects us with our bodies and involves simply knowing, clearly and directly, the position of our bodies as we move through life.

Gotama (the Buddha), highlighted the significance of this embodied awareness with profound simplicity, he said:

‘... there is no making an end of suffering without reaching the end of the world. Yet it is just within this fathom-long body, with its perception and conceiving mind, that I declare that there is the world, the arising of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path of practice leading to the cessation of the world.’

Gotama is pointing to the reality that our entire experience of the world, including our pain, difficulties and disappointments, and the path to their end, happens *through* our body-mind process. Therefore, paying attention to the body – including its posture – is not a trivial matter; it's about engaging directly with the world as we actually experience it. It's about understanding the immediate *terrain* we inhabit.

Self-Reflections

Take a moment right now to bring awareness to your posture:

- ★ Are you sitting, standing, lying down, or walking? Can you simply note this?
 - ★ Without judgment, what do you notice about how your body is positioned? Are there areas of tension? Ease? Slouching? Uprightness?
 - ★ How aware are you, typically, of your posture as you go about your day (e.g., working, eating, watching TV, talking to others)?
 - ★ Can you recall times when you noticed a link between your posture and your mood or energy level?
 - ★ What habitual postures do you tend to adopt when feeling stressed, tired, sad, or anxious?
 - ★ Have you noticed that if you change your posture, this can change your mood?
 - ★ When you wake in the middle of the night, if an uncomfortable thought arises, do you physically turn over in an attempt to get away from it?
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Journaling Prompts

Explore your relationship with posture further in your journal:

- ★ **Posture check-ins:** For one day, set gentle reminders (e.g., every hour) to simply check in and note your body's posture without judgment. At the end of the day, write about any patterns or insights you noticed.
- ★ **Mindful adjustment:** When you notice yourself in a posture associated with discomfort or a negative mood (for example,, slumped shoulders), gently experiment with adjusting to a more upright, open, yet relaxed posture. Hold it for a minute or two. Journal about any shifts (or lack thereof) you perceive in your physical sensations or mental state. Remember this practice is non-judgemental self-inquiry, not self-criticism.
- ★ **Posture during activities:** Pay specific attention to your posture during a routine activity (for example, eating a meal, brushing your teeth, working at a computer). Describe your typical posture and any sensations associated with it.
- ★ **Body scan connection:** If you practice or learn the Body Scan meditation (a systematic sweeping of awareness through the body), reflect on how this practice increases your general awareness of posture and physical sensations throughout the day.

Remember to Remember

Mindfulness of Posture is a simple yet profound practice available in every moment. By cultivating awareness of how we hold and move our bodies, we anchor ourselves in the present, rebuild the vital mind-body connection, gain insight into our habits and emotional states, and develop a key skill for our emotional regulation and self-compassion.

This awareness is another crucial tool we gather for our raft in helping us to *Recognise* the immediate terrain of our embodied experience. As you move through your day, try weaving in moments of simply *knowing* how your body is positioned. This grounded awareness prepares us for the next layer of body

mindfulness: bringing clear comprehension to our actions – the third lens of Mindfulness of Body.

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