

THE RESIDUE FRAMEWORK

The Daily Body Scan

*A five-minute practice for listening to the body
before trying to change it.*

THE PROPOSITION THIS WEEK WORKS WITH

The body encodes experience before the mind makes meaning.

THIS PRACTICE'S INTENTION

I will notice my body without trying to change her.

The practice

Five minutes. Once a day. Same approximate time, if you can. No equipment, no setup, no preparation.

One. Sit or lie down somewhere you will not be interrupted.

Two. Close your eyes. Take three slower breaths than your usual breath.

Three. Start at the crown of the head. Move slowly down through the body: face, neck, shoulders, chest, stomach, hips, legs, feet. Pause for a beat at each.

Four. At each pause, ask one question. *What is here?*

Five. Whatever answer arrives: tightness, looseness, a sound, an image, nothing. Note it and move on.

Six. When you reach the feet, take one more slow breath. Open your eyes. Write one sentence about what you noticed.

You are not trying to relax. You are trying to listen. They are different things.

What to notice

Where the body holds tension when you are not directing it.

What your breath does when something uncomfortable enters the room.

Which parts of the body answer your question, and which stay quiet.

Whether the noticing itself changes what is being noticed.

How the body feels at the end of the five minutes, compared to the start.

What may come up

Boredom. Almost guaranteed. The mind does not like this pace. Stay with it anyway.

Restlessness, or a sudden urge to do something productive instead. Information. Note it, return to the scan.

Emotion arriving without warning. Common, and not a problem. Let it pass through. You do not have to know what it is.

The thought that this is too simple to work. The simplicity is the work.

Nothing at all. Also information. Some days the body is quiet. Trust that.

If you only do one thing

One body scan, on one day, with honesty. That is enough to begin.

The rest will come.

*Listening is the first form of change.
Stay there.*

From *Residue: Rewriting the stories that hold you back*
Hope Morrison

Hope Morrison is a writer and educator, not a licensed therapist or medical professional. This practice is educational, not clinical, and is not a substitute for therapy or clinical care.