

Pleasure In Yourself – Session Structure & Content

This is a mindfulness practice. This means we place part of our attention on our practice and part on our *intention* to practice.

Intention is a bridge from the present moment to the next moment.

Having an intention is different from having a goal. It allows for more flexibility, without requiring a specific outcome. If you have a goal and you don't reach it that can feel like you've 'failed'. An intention can shift with you as make new discoveries.

Schedule time for your practice - don't just leave it to chance. Scheduling is part of the intention, and in my experience it makes a huge difference to being able to stay engaged with the process.

Before you start

Be clear about what your intention is for each session before you start – this may be to practice a certain technique, or spend time with a certain body part, or simply to explore the unknown. Setting an intention as a guiding framework will give your session a sense of purpose without creating fixed outcome-based goals.

You're invited to speak or write your intention before you begin.

Decide how long your practice session will be. Each session may be different.

Your session should last at least half an hour and include 5 minutes at the end to rest quietly. Set a timer, or have a clock in sight, so you don't have to worry about timing once your practice is under way.

It can also be helpful to take time to attune or 'warm up' your connection with your body before beginning. This might be to do some stretching, shaking out, or some meditation. See the Tuning In document for some suggestions.

During your session

Some people find it helpful to think about an outline for the session before starting ('first I will do this, then I will do that'); this can be helpful if you're new to the practice so that you don't feel lost during it. Others prefer to be more organic with what they explore, especially once the practice feels more familiar.

Include conscious engagement with:

- Self-touch
- Different breathing patterns
- Movement, stretching, or dancing
- Sounds: moans, vocalisation, laughter, etc

You may focus more on some in one session than another, but try to include all of them in some way each time.

You may also choose to include some of the Meditations I've suggested for you.

You may experience emotional responses – laughter, sadness, and anger are common ones. Allow these to happen naturally, and for as long as they need to.

Experiment – none of this is meant to be prescriptive. All the suggestions given are starting points – play with them, expand them, take them somewhere of your own. Just be sure to do it all consciously and with awareness.

At the end of your session

Allow time for quiet and stillness for the last 5 minutes of each session.

Lie (or sit) relaxed, simply be and breathe, letting the body integrate whatever it has just experienced without any need to analyse or process consciously.

This is a very important part of the process – and one which we often skim over in real life – it takes time for the body to integrate what it's experienced. The learning tends to be much deeper when we allow space for this to happen.

After your session

Journal – it's a good idea to write a brief journal, recording descriptions, feeling states, emotional reactions, resistances, distractions etc immediately after each session. This will also help in discussing the sessions overall at the end.

Feedback - after each session please email me a few brief sentences about your experience. This is best done within 60 mins of the session, if you can, or within a few hours so that your experience is still fresh.

I will then respond with reflections, suggestions and encouragement.

If you had a session planned but don't manage to do it please still email me, perhaps outlining what it was which caused you not to do the session as this will help me to offer the right support, if needed.