

## Compassionate Movement – Video Transcript

**NADIA:** Hi. I'm Nadia and I'm a counsellor at George Brown College. I'd love to share with you a practice that I really enjoy: compassionate movement practice.

In compassionate movement there are no prescribed steps. Instead, we are invited to listen to ourselves, to listen to our bodies and to discover what movement feels good and nourishing to us in this moment and to follow that movement.

Compassionate movement can be a great opportunity any time you'd like to take a stretch break. In our culture we often sit at the computer for long periods of time, often in positions that are uncomfortable to our bodies and can be often ignoring signals that our bodies are sending to us. In this compassionate movement practice we can practice listening to our bodies, to what they need, and to be moving in ways that are really nourishing to us. This practice can also I find be a great way to be cultivating a kinder and a more loving relationship towards our bodies and towards ourselves.

### Self-Care

Everything I'll be offering here is a suggestion. I invite you to change things up so that you follow what feels really good to you moment to moment. And this includes going at your own pace, making changes that suit you, you can pause, you can just watch and you can also discontinue at any time.

Also, I invite you to clear the space around you so that you have a safe space to take a few steps and to move freely in the space. So see if there is anything that you want to remove from the floor or from the spot/from the space around you.

### Visualization to help with relaxation

Before we move, I invite you to bring to mind a landscape that feels nourishing and relaxing for you. This imagery can help us feel more relaxed and this can make it easier to be kinder and friendlier towards our bodies when we move.

If it interests you, bring to your awareness an image of a special landscape where you feel safe, comfortable and at ease. A place that makes your heart smile. This may be a place in nature such as a beach. Or maybe it's a special forest, a flower garden or another nourishing space that you enjoy. This can be a real place or an imagined one. And if many images come to you, just pick one.

What do you see in this special place? Maybe you notice waves, maybe you notice water, or maybe there are trees. Is there anything you notice under the feet? Maybe there's soft grass or sand. Or is there anything you hear in this place? Perhaps sounds of birds or waves. Maybe there is the warmth of the sun on your skin or a gentle breeze that you feel. Just seeing this special place the way you imagine it, the way you enjoy it. Making any changes to it.

And just taking a couple of breaths in this place. Breathing in what you enjoy in this place. Maybe breathing in calm, peace or anything else.

### Movement Warmup

And now I invite you to bring this special landscape to be around you where you are sitting or standing or lying down. See it all the way in front of you, in the back and to the sides of you. And if you'd like, you are welcome to keep this special landscape for this whole movement time and you can also let go of it at any time.

So now I invite us into a couple of minutes of a warmup. So there is no one right way to move, there are thousands of right ways. Here the idea is to listen to yourself and to follow what feels really good to you.

And now I invite you to bring attention to your feet if that is available to you and maybe extending a sense of gratitude to the feet that have been carrying us around. And finding a gentle sway forward and backwards. Just shifting your weight forward and backwards. And maybe shifting the weight from side to side. And as you do that, is there anything that you notice at the bottoms of the feet? Are there any sensations at the soles of the feet? Maybe there is pressing into the floor, maybe there is a sensation of contact with the ground. And with a sense of care, when you're ready, letting go of this area of the feet and bringing our attention to include the hands.

The hands do so much typing on the computer and on the phone, they wash and feed the body so invite us to bring a sense of kindness and care towards the hands. And ask yourself what movement feels really good to your hands, to your wrists right now. Maybe it's rotation, maybe it's shaking. What feels really nourishing to your hands? Maybe it's simply holding the hands.

Great. And when you are ready, I invite you to bring kind attention to the area of the shoulders. We often carry some tension here. So bringing extra kindness to this area. If you'd like, bringing some sunshine from your special landscape to shine right on the shoulders. And maybe inviting a special breeze right here if that was in your landscape, or water. Yeah. And listening for what feels nourishing to your shoulders right now. Maybe it's rotation, maybe it is movement sideways. What feels especially good to you?

And when you're ready, I invite you to extend this kind listening to include your back. And what movement, what stretch feels really good for you here in your back? For me, I want to move down to the ground, just gently. Allowing the jaw to be loose. And when I'm ready, stretching back up to the sky. And what feels really good to your back?

And when you are ready, finding a way to include your feet in your kind awareness again. Feeling your feet on the ground in your special landscape. And noticing if there is any stretch or movement that feels really good to your feet, to your legs right now. Yeah. And finding a way to pause.

### Move on Your Own - Compassionate Movement

This was our warmup and now I invite you to continue moving on your own for a few minutes: simply continuing to listen to your body and following your body's lead on what movement feels really good and nourishing to you. It could be a really small movement: so maybe it's just the hand that's moving. Or maybe you want to move in a big way and dance and have fun, then follow that. Or maybe you want to pause and lie down, then follow that.

Just listening here with kindness to what movement, what stretch feels good for you right now. What do you need? And offering that movement, that pause to yourself. Just listening with kindness to what you need.

And you can pause this recording so that you have more time to move and to listen. And when you are ready, you can resume.

And when you are ready, finding a way to pause. Noticing your feet on the ground. And maybe placing one hand around the heart area, another hand around the belly or somewhere else on your body that feels comfortable for you. And noticing how you are feeling at the end of this practice. Maybe there is a sense of being more relaxed, calm, open or anything else? Do you feel any different compared to the start of this movement practice?

And taking a moment to thank yourself, perhaps for taking time to be present in this kind way.

The end of the compassionate movement practice.

We can have a variety of experiences with this practice. I just want to mention that sometimes one can experience discomfort or even pain when tuning into their body. Sometimes we may feel unhappy with the way the body looks or feels or moves. Feeling self-conscious is very common and completely normal. And if any of this comes up for you, see if you can just extend kindness to yourself and to your experience as this meditation is all about extending kindness and care to ourselves just as we are. Remembering that your body is doing its best and simply asking yourself, what do I need right now? Listening for movement or for stillness that feels really good to you and that feels nourishing and caring.

So whenever you need a stretch break, you can find a favourite song and move in a way that feels nourishing to you.

## Resources

And if you have any questions or would like support around this, please reach out to our Counselling Services. And thank you so much for practicing with me.