



Mindfulness: Self Touch

This leaflet explains how to practice mindful masturbation or Self Touch. If there is anything you don't understand or if you have any questions please ask your psychosexual therapist.

Introduction

Mindful masturbation / Self Touch is a simple yet powerful practice. It requires dedication and becomes its own reward. Just pay full attention while you masturbate. Don't let yourself get distracted by imagination. Keep your primary focus on yourself, your own body, your genitals and your own sensations.

Create an intention each time you practice

The combination of placement of attention and the focus of an intention are fundamental pieces for creating mindfulness practice. Example intentions might be 'I am fully present to sensations in my body' or 'I welcome all parts of myself, including my sexual, generative energy' or 'My practice is about noticing my sensations, feelings and thoughts, while remaining goalless'.

Set a timer for an amount of time that is realistic for you

This may be five minutes. Ideally, your practice might be somewhere between 20 and 45 minutes, but start with five if that's all you've got.

Find a location and environment that is conducive to you feeling pleasure and relaxation

This may be difficult if you have a hard time finding 'alone time' in your home or schedule. Even five minutes in the shower can work. If you have a partner, ideally you could ask your partner for time alone in your bedroom. This practice will likely benefit your sex life and connection with your partner(s).

Commit to practising over a period of time to reap greater benefit

Like any mindfulness practice or meditation, the benefits are cumulative and have a greater impact the longer you practise.

You can start small, with three 20 minute practices a week for two weeks and build your commitment from there

Mix up your practice each time so that it does not become habitual or mundane

Part of what keeps our interest and awareness is variety and paying attention to that variety. When we form habits, we start to know what to expect, making it easier for us to go on auto-pilot and check out. Use your breath, sound, touch and movement to create a different practice each time. Sometimes you may be lying down, others standing and others dancing, or all of the above. Sometimes, breathe fast, other times slow and deep. Experiment with sound – moans, grunts, screams ‘dirty talk’ or affirmations.

If you always touch yourself the same way, try new types of touch in new places on your body. If you always masturbate using a sex toy or vibrator, try some practices without those or vice versa. Dress in sexy clothes and have fun taking them off, like you might with a lover. Engage your curiosity to help you practice remain mindful and fun.

Savour your practice

A key aspect of this practice is savouring. Take time to feel your body after the practice; to deeply feel the sensations you have created – pleasure, relaxation, arousal etc.

Use the last five to ten minutes of your practice (or one minute if you are doing a five minute practice) to lie, sit or stand in stillness and just breath deep and savour what you’ve created in your body.

Notice what’s different in your body or mind from when you started the practice. It is very common for this practice to start as a ‘doing’ and to end in ‘being’.

Recall your intention for your practice. Don’t beat yourself up if you didn’t follow your intention or if you got distracted a lot. Simply recalling it creates the opportunity for you to place your attention on your intention once again.

Be patient and compassionate with yourself

Like other mindfulness practices, this can be difficult. You may be flooded with thoughts, distractions and resistance. Just notice that and keep coming back to the practice and yourself.

This is why it is called ‘practice’ and not perfection.

And remember to create pleasure during your practice!

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