

EBOOK + VIDEO

CONSCIOUS BODY LISTENING

**A SELF-HELP GUIDE TO
IMPROVING YOUR HEALTH**



BY TRADITIONALBODYWORK.COM

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Preface

In my personal experience and through my work as a massage therapist and yoga practitioner/teacher, I noticed that insufficiently heeding our body's sensations, actions, and reactions leads to unnecessary physical health complaints. These complaints likewise tend to result in emotional and mental health concerns, which in turn aggravate the bodily issues.

I found that many potential health issues can be “nipped in the bud” by actively “listening” to our body and providing for its needs. In addition, conscious body listening can be the start of finding ways to alleviate existing health issues and — depending on the complaints — sometimes even become a means to heal them.

I also realized that unwholesome thought patterns, emotional distress, and past or ongoing trauma might cause or contribute to bodily issues. By listening to and understanding the body's signs and behavior with respect to those, we can also make a beginning with addressing our emotional/mental conflicts.

Over time, I identified six core questions and six body attunement domains to pay close and continuous attention to in order to restore an intimate connection with our bodies. Doing so will not only lead to a deeper understanding of ourselves, but also give us the tools to increase our overall health, functioning, and well-being.

By using clear, non-technical language, accompanied by simple and practical suggestions and tests, I guide you through the concepts, questions, and body attunement spheres to help you achieve conscious, continuous, and moreover — effortless body listening.

In addition to the book, I've also included a twelve-minute [body testing video](#) through which you can self-assess your current body abilities and limitations by performing some gentle stretches and joint mobilizations.

About the Author

Marce initially studied Information Technology and worked seventeen years in software and database development for a variety of international companies and organizations.

During a sabbatical year in Southeast Asia in 2009, he discovered the beauty and healing power of Traditional Thai Massage and Reusi Dat Ton (Thai Yoga), and subsequently changed his life's direction to become a Thai Massage and Thai Yoga practitioner and teacher.

After his return to Europe, he started offering treatments and training, and — for about a decade — regularly returned to Thailand to further his training, completing 800+ hours of studies in the Thai healing arts.

In 2018, he co-founded the TraditionalBodywork.com website as a platform to publish articles, eBooks, and Video Workshops about Thai Massage and Reusi Dat Ton.

Today, he likewise publishes works about other types of massage and bodywork, somatic practices, alternative and complementary therapies, nature, spirituality, and unconventional lifestyles. In addition, he also shares essays, poems, and reflections about his personal life and experiences.

You can learn more about Marce Ferreira and the website through <https://www.traditionalbodywork.com/website/>

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Disclaimer

The content of this book is intended for informational purposes and is not a substitute for medical treatments or a professional healthcare provider. Please keep in mind that the writer of this book is not a physician or medical doctor and, as such, is not qualified to supply medical care or diagnose, prescribe, or treat physical, emotional, or mental illness.

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Disclaimer – Please Read This First

Conscious body listening as described in this book is a holistic **complementary health practice**, one that may support you in preventing discomforts, pain, tensions, and illness.

Depending on the type of bodily affliction, it may sometimes also bring relief or healing of existing health complaints.

Nonetheless, conscious body listening **is not a substitute** for official medical treatments or a professional healthcare provider.

Therefore, if you feel pains, are wounded, have a high fever, are bleeding, notice worrying body anomalies, or in any other way feel seriously unwell, I advise you to first seek help from a licensed physician or other appropriate healthcare provider.

In addition, if you have artificial organs or joints, take medication, have recently been ill or had a surgery and are still recovering, or in any other way have a serious medical disorder or dysfunction, I advise you to first contact an appropriate, official healthcare provider to find out if there are no objections to [exploring your body](#), [testing your body](#), or [resolving issues](#) in the way I describe in this book.

Introduction

Conscious Body Listening

Your body “talks” in many ways. It’s good to heed its needs, sensations, signs, actions, and reactions, because your body is not something apart from you. You are your body. And your body wants you to listen to it, which means that you listen to yourself.

You are also your thinking and your emotions. Together with your body, that’s all you. It’s like a coin that consists of the heads, tails, and an edge.

You cannot think of a coin without one of its parts. It simply wouldn’t be a coin any longer. Likewise, you wouldn’t be you without either your thoughts, emotions, or your body.

Nonetheless, in our daily lives, we often pay excessive attention to our thoughts and emotions. We tend to neglect the existence and needs of our body, taking it for granted.

We want it to be healthy and function in the way we want; we use it as a tool to an end. It’s like a rider and horse. The rider guides his horse, making it do what the rider wants.

Nonetheless, the rider also understands that his horse needs water, food, caressing, rest, exercise, and maybe medical care. While riding, he listens and pays continuous conscious attention to the horse’s reactions: how it breathes, how it walks or gallops, how the ears and tail move, if it bucks, bolts, or rears, or if its muscles are overly tensed.

The rider listens because he needs to understand if his horse is happy, excited, calm, aggressive, agitated, tensed,

resisting, in pain, or tired. The rider heeds his horse because it's in his utmost interest that his horse is doing fine. A rider with a crippled horse is a crippled rider, and a rider without his horse, isn't a rider any longer.

Like a horse, your body talks not with the language of words, but through body language, sensations, signs, sounds, and behavior. By learning that language and paying continuous attention to what your body says, you can learn what it needs, when to provide it and how, and keep it in better health.

It means that you as a physical, emotional, and mental unity will also be in better health — making you a more balanced person, a rider and horse that ride longer, smoother, and healthier along the roads of life.

Core Concepts

Everybody Is Different

Everybody is different, and therefore — *every body* is different.

What is tension for one person is felt as pain by another. Some people have a tendency to quickly become overweight; others can eat what and how much they want but still never gain an ounce.

Others are born with one leg shorter than the other, or with just one arm. Some people have a strong heart and others strong lungs. Some have weak knees but strong backs. And sometimes an illness or accident creates lifelong vulnerabilities.

I can go on like this, but surely you get the gist of it: the variations of bodies are endless. We all have strong points and weak points. It's one of the things we learn throughout our lives and need to take into consideration.

You are not like any other person, and your body has its particular limitations. Moreover, when situations change, such as your living environment or your job occupation, or when you get older, you'll notice that your body will react differently. That's why continuous body listening is so important. Life is always in constant flux.

People also tend to react with certain body parts when they're under stress, angry, or sad. For instance, when I'm very angry, I feel shooting pains in my lower back. When I'm under high stress, my shoulders and neck become very tensed, often resulting in headaches.

I've noticed that people may react entirely differently when under emotional distress. For instance, some people get stomachaches and heartburn, diarrhea, or constipation, or they feel weak in the knees, or perhaps have difficulty breathing, and so on.

In addition, people also respond differently to the bodily tensions or pains they might suffer from. Some people don't bat an eye, while others may become severely depressed. Still others start eating healthy and dive into physical exercise, but there are also those who become frequent pharmacy visitors.

All in all, you shouldn't look too much at what other people do, and how they solve issues. That can surely give you pointers or ideas, but in the end it's about *you* needing to get to know *you* intimately.

Continuity and Effortlessness

Conscious body listening should become both *continuous* and *effortless* to be effective.

It's like driving a car. When you're on the streets you pay continuous and effortless attention to the traffic, traffic signs, and obstacles around you, while automatically and flawlessly operating your car.

In addition, you are effortlessly aware of your car's sounds and movements, and how it reacts to your actions. If your car makes "strange noises" or if it reacts in erratic ways to your commands, you will take it to the mechanic for a checkup and maintenance.

You do all that to anticipate potentially dangerous situations in order to keep you, your vehicle, and others from harm. When the traffic light is on red, you stop and wait, when you spot a large pothole, you go around it, and when you see a pedestrian on the sidewalk making a move into the direction of the street, you slow down.

You don't need to think if or when you should do this or that. Continuous and effortless awareness of what's going on around you and with your car, and seamlessly reacting to what needs your response has become ingrained in your system.

Of course, it did take some effort, practice, and time to make driving a car and "listening" to its behavior an automatic and effortless activity, just as it takes some effort, practice, and time to become a skilled, effortless body listener.

However, conscious, continuous, and effortless body listening is not something "exotic." It's actually already part

of how you function, except that you often forget or even deliberately suppress this ability.

To make body listening an integrated part of your life again, you just need to **remember** to do it. An easy way to go about this is to first start “listening” to just one daily activity, and to do that fully, completely.

For instance, focus on how you have your breakfast. What is your posture? Do you sit or stand, slouch, feel tension in your arms, legs, or back? Do you use both your hands or just one? Do you feel cold or hot? Are you hurried or calm? How’s your breathing? Do you read the newspaper or watch your smartphone at the same time? How do you chew? How does the food “descend” and how do your stomach and intestines react? What happens to your energy level?

It comes down to exploring the body by asking the [three core questions](#): *What am I doing? What do I sense? and Can I do it differently?* and applying those questions to the [six core attunement domains](#): your posture, movements, senses, breath, internal organs, and vitality.

It may seem a lot, just as it seemed a lot to know all the traffic rules, to master operating your car, and to pay attention to the traffic around you at the same time.

Yet, if you start with observing just one daily task and remember to do it consistently, bit by bit applying the core questions to the body attunement domains, it will soon become a daily and automatic habit to do so. Trust me.

And that will prompt you to observe more of your other activities, until “listening” to a whole range of recurring bodily actions will have become a continuous and effortless integrated part of your functioning.