

Body Functionality Reflection: “What My Body Does for Me”

Purpose:

To shift focus from appearance to the amazing ways your body supports you in daily life, movement, connection, and pleasure.

Body functionality comprises everything that the body can do or is capable of doing, including functions related to internal processes (e.g., healing from a cold, digestion), physical capacities (e.g., walking, stretching), bodily senses and sensations (e.g., sight, experiencing pleasure), creative endeavours (e.g., drawing, singing), communication with others (e.g., via body language, eye contact), and self-care (e.g., sleeping, showering) (Alleva & Tylka, 2021).

Alleva, J. M., & Tylka, T. L. (2021). Body functionality: A review of the literature. *Body Image*, 36, 149–171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2020.11.006>

Instructions:

Take a few quiet minutes—this can be done seated or lying down. You might close your eyes, place your hand on your heart or stomach, and breathe gently.

Then, complete the following prompts—mentally, in writing, or shared aloud if in a group.

1. Internal Processes

One way my body takes care of me is...

Examples:

- “My immune system protects me, even when I don’t notice.”
- “My lungs breathe for me, giving me energy to show up for people I care about.”
- “My digestive system nourishes me from the inside out, helping me stay strong and connected.”

2. Physical Capacities

One way my body helps me move through the world is...

Examples:

- “My legs carry me to the park with my dog.”
- “My arms help me hug people I love.”
- “I can stretch and feel release after sitting for a long time.”

3. Bodily Senses & Sensations

One way my body helps me experience the world is...

Examples:

- "I love the sensation of cool water or soft fabric."
- "Music makes me want to sway or dance."
- "The warmth of sunlight on my skin makes me feel calm and alive."

4. Creative Endeavours

One way my body helps me be creative is...

Examples:

- "My hands help me bring ideas to life—whether I'm drawing, writing, or building something new."
- "My body lets me move to music, turning emotions into dance."
- "My eyes help me notice beauty and detail, inspiring me to create."

5. Communication with Others

One way my body helps me communicate with others is...

Examples:

- "I feel warmth when I laugh with friends."
- "My smile helps me connect with people, even without saying a word."
- "My voice lets me share my story and stand up for myself."

6. Self-Care

One way my body helps me care for myself is...

Examples:

- "My hands prepare meals that nourish me."
- "My body rests when I'm overwhelmed—it knows when to pause."
- "My breath grounds me when I feel anxious—it brings me back to the present."

✦ Closing Prompt

Today, I am grateful that my body...

Optional Follow-Up

Write a short thank-you letter to your body. It might start like this:

"Dear body, I'm sorry for the times I ignored or criticised you. Thank you for..."