



BODY  
INTELLIGENCE  
MEDITATION

*Finding presence through embodiment*

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# The Amazing Connective Tissue Body

Your body is mostly collagen. Collagen is the most versatile of molecules with over 20 different forms. You could think of it as the basic material of the body. It's like a fabric that weaves itself into different shapes and structures which then support all other tissues in the body. Collagen is the basis of connective tissues and it is intrinsic to bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, fascia and membranes. It's woven into pockets in which organs, muscles, nerves and vessels lie. In collagen, the body has a perfect molecule for the function of creating boundaries, skins and support structures.

Like all substances in the body, collagen has its own unique signature of sensation, texture and quality. Its most common feeling in the body is one of continuity. Not only does collagen wrap everything, but it also merges into other collagen structures to produce a continuum of fibrous material. This produces the feeling of wholeness and oneness in our felt sense awareness. One of the most common features of this is the feeling of wellness. It seems to be simply part of the experience. Living in the whole of your body is, after all, occupying your full space and is much more profound

than living in part of your body or certain layers or aspects of it. The body has formed itself as a living entity and it works best when all parts and all systems come together in a coordinated response to the environment. Wholeness of mind comes along with this, too. Being partially embodied leads to fragmentation and finding mental clarity is not easy. When the body is supple and strong, and there is full body awareness, you are intelligent. Your mind simply reflects this, because it is supple, strong and aware; therefore, you can think straight and use the full force of the mind. This leads to emotional richness and stability. Above all, you become creative. This is our natural given right. Being creative means you live your life in an inspired and satisfying way. You actually know what interests you and what you want to do with your life. This is somebody who can cope with the rigours of life and who can be fulfilled.

All of this starts with the quality and texture of your connective tissues (Figure 5.1).

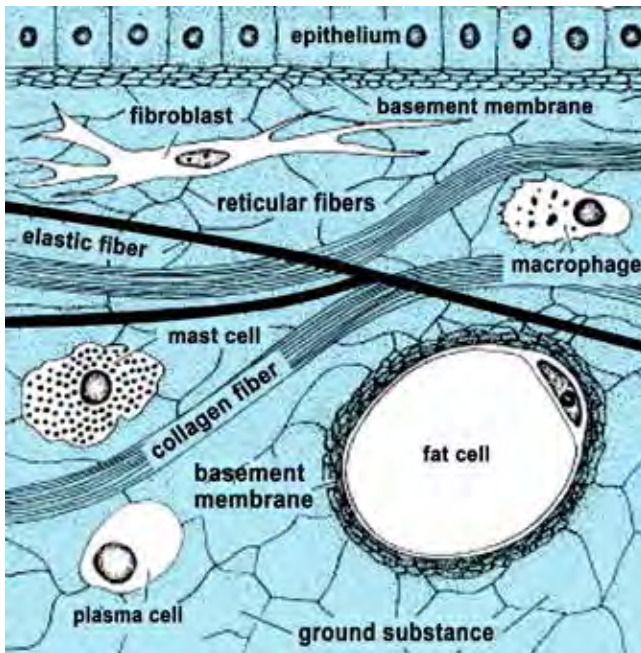


Figure 5.1 Connective tissues

These tissues surround everything in the body. They are the skins of all the body structure from the outer skin to the deep organ membranes to the covering of muscles and nerves. It's the ultimate support structure and is designed to be tough, elastic and fluid-like. The body is most intelligent when it can use its communication pathways of connective tissue. Blood vessels, nerves and lymphatics pass through the connective tissues to create a highway for circulation and transmission. If your connective tissues are in balance, the major systems of your body can be in homeostasis.

## SKIN

The skin is the easiest layer of connective tissue to relate to in the body. It's what we see and touch, so it is the tissue with which we are most familiar. To track it with felt sense is easy.

### Meditation: skin

Lie down on your back to do this exercise. Make sure that you are in a position you can hold for 15 minutes without moving the body. It's useful to place the back of your hands on the floor to your sides. Close your eyes and bring your awareness to your face. There's a strong sense of skin in your face. Notice the tone of your skin through the length and breadth of your face. Then follow this feeling into your forehead and down to your throat. There's a natural flow here that has to do with being particularly aware of this part of your skin, as it's the part we see most. From the forehead let your awareness track back over your scalp and into the back of the neck, and keep following the skin sensations out across the shoulders to your arms and hands. That's a natural flow of connectivity. Stay with that for a short while and notice differences in sensations for each arm and shoulder and both sides of the arms. Some sections may be more discernible and clearer in sensation, others may be much less clear and even some parts not really evident at all. The brain is more interested in certain parts of the skin than others, so

it could have to do with that or maybe there has been an injury to the area.

Now follow the skin down the back of your torso and then down the front from the chest to the pubic arch. Simply notice the difference front and back. There should be a difference, but within that there may be areas that you can feel more obviously and areas less so. Again, some sections of the skin might feel not so present or clear. Sometimes the skin feels like it is either not there or blending into the space around you such that there is no clear definition or sense of boundary to it. This happens when the skin has been shocked or distressed.

Finally, let your awareness explore the legs and pelvis right down to the feet. The feet are often quite strong in presence, just like the hands, but parts of the legs might be less clear.

Now you can open up to the whole wrap of your skin. Be with the fullness of it.

## Deep skins

The skin that is visible is the outermost skin of our body, but there are many more skins that wrap all the body structures. There are wrappings for muscles, bones, organs, nerves, blood vessels and joints. Everything has a skin. These deep skins have a variety of names – for example, fascia, periosteum, peritoneum, neurilemma, dura mater and synovial membrane, but they are essentially similar in that they are a collagen-based fabric that has strength and elasticity. It's an internal world of sliding surfaces so that everything can move freely around each other – muscles gliding over other muscles, internal organs sliding against each other. The important thing to understand is that all of these skins form an interconnecting network. There is both a layered system and a system where these tissues flow one into the next. There's a stream of connective tissues running mostly along the length of the body and the limbs, with some powerful exceptions in some key horizontal structures (see Chapter 6).



Figure 5.2 Fascia of the torso