Hello and welcome to the 15-minute, mindful walking practice, guided mind-body practice. This is Dr. Kathi Kemper at The Ohio State University’s Center for Integrative Health and Wellness. This guided meditation is adapted from those found at the University of Massachusetts Center for Mindfulness and Society. Additional information about mindfulness meditation can be found at [www.umassmed.edu/cfm](http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm). To begin, find a safe space where you know you will not be disturbed. Try to avoid practicing right after a meal. Don’t listen to this recording while you are driving. Instead, use it while you are walking. We will keep time for you and ring a gentle chime when 15 minutes have elapsed. Pick a spot on which to stand on which you feel stable, safe, and secure. Notice the feeling of the weight and the subtle movements as weight shifts from the heel to the sole to the ball of the foot on one foot and then the other foot. We often take for granted this constant subtle shifting that helps us keep our balance, but right now, in this moment we can be aware, we can be here now. Notice the feelings in your ankles, shins, each calf, each knee, the thighs, and the hips. Notice how all the different parts of the legs contribute to a sense of stability and balance. If there is any part of the legs that feel tight or sore, just notice that feeling, breathing into it. Noticing if it is constant or whether it might change a little from breath to breath. Not running away from a sensation, not hiding from it or distracting ourselves, but drawing closer to the sensation that is present now. Feel the rising and falling of your belly with each in breath and out breath. Become aware of the sensations in the pelvis, the lower belly, is one hip higher or lower tipped farther forward or back than the other? Gently move the hips from side to side to notice the balance. Where things are, how they relate to one another and how they move in the body just with standing. Now notice the lower back, middle, and upper back, the shoulder blades, is there tightness, looseness, comfort, soreness, relaxation – what sensations are in the back as you shift your weight from foot to foot, just standing in place? Now notice the shoulders, arms, and hands. Are the hands loose or clenched? Do they hang easily at the sides or do you need to hold on to something to keep your balance? No judging, just noticing what is in this moment. Now notice the upper chest, the neck, and the head. As your head moves forward you can see your lower body. Are you gazing around? Notice what happens as you imagine a string attached to the top of your head gently pulling upward. How does that affect your chin, neck, your back? Your sense of balance throughout your body. Is your head tilted to one side or the other, turn to the left or the right. Try rolling your neck a little bit to get a better sense of how the head, shoulders, and neck all work together with the upper back, arms, and chest. Now that we have attended to each part of the body while simply standing, begin to walk at your normal pace with arms moving or still by your sides, not taking extra large steps or small steps, trying to hold your body stiffly, or move extra large, just walking normally. Notice the coordination between the arms and legs as you walk. If you find your mind drifting to thoughts, judgements, impatience of criticism, just note that and return to an awareness of your body as it moves. If you start to wonder “how long have I done this?” or “how long do I have to go?” just notice thinking about time and return to the present. Try to notice the moment the left heel touches the ground. How it feels as the left foot rolls forward until the ball of the foot and the toes touch, then pushing off, lifting, swinging the left foot forward through the air. Now notice the moment the right heel touches the ground, how it feels as the foot rolls forward until the ball of the foot and toes touch and then pushing off, lifting the right food, swinging forward through the air. As you pay attention to these sensations try not to change the way you walk. Just be aware of it. Sometimes the body does a funny wobble and feels off balance as we pay attention to what we’ve been doing naturally for so long. We may feel like infants or toddlers again, just learning to walk, as we pay attention as if for the first time. If you notice your mind wandering, just note wandering mind, and return to an awareness of walking. Notice again the left foot, heel touching, rolling forward, ball of the foot, toes. When does the knee bend and straighten? How does the movement of the left foot affect the weight and the tilt of the pelvis? Now notice the right foot. And again when the heel touches the ground, when the foot rolls forward, when it pushes off. How does this affect the bending of the knee, the straightening of the knee, the bending of the hip. How does the movement of the right foot affect the weight and the tilt of the pelvis, the back, and the shoulders? If you’re wearing shoes, feel the sensations inside your shoes. Notice the sensations of the socks. The sensations between the touching toes. If you’re wearing pants, or a skirt, notice the feeling of the fabric against your legs. Be aware of the contact of your clothing, the air temperature, whether there’s a breeze on your skin. Notice if there are other people around, how you adjust your pace and movements to avoid collisions. Notice whether your thoughts wander to wondering what other people think about you. Just notice without judgement, the movements around you and within you, movements of your thoughts, emotions. Shifting sensations with each step. Notice what your calf muscles are doing as you take each step. Putting one foot down, rolling it forward, lifting and swinging it forward. Notice the sensations of movement and all the muscles involved in movement and maintaining balance as you walk normally. Now try walking deliberately and quickly toward a particular point with great determination and speed. Notice the feeling in your shoulders and arms, whether your hands are clenched, is your jaw clenched? What is the muscle tone like in your upper chest, jaw, head, neck, and shoulders? Observe now what happens if you change now to walking quickly but without a sense of urgency or need. Just interest to see how fast you can walk. How does this affect the muscle tension in your face and jaw? Try turning or walking sideways. Noticing how each turn, each intention is accompanied by changes in muscle, bone, differences in how the foot touches the ground. Now try slowing down, way down, so slowly you can feel each time one heel touches the ground, rolls, lifts, swings, and then the other heel touches, rolls, lifts, and swings. Attention shifting back and forth from foot to foot very slowly. Can you walk so slowly that each step is one breath in and one breath out? Another step, another breath in and out. Continue for a moment to walk slowly, matching your breath to your step, with awareness of the sensation in your foot, your calf, knees, thighs, hips, lower back, upper back, belly, chest, shoulders, arms, hands, neck, head, and jaw. When you’re ready, come to a stop and naturally and simply experience yourself standing. Notice what it’s like to be still. Notice again the very parts of the body involved in standing and balancing. Feeling the skin in touch with air, clothing. The alignment of muscles, bones, and tendons gently shifting and arranging. The weight sinking down from the body, to the hips, to the legs, to the feet, the connection of the feet to the earth which holds you up stable and secure. No judgements, just noticing. As you finish (bell rings), take a deep breath and reflect on what if might be like to be this aware of just walking and standing while walking and standing. Mindful awareness can be incorporated into simple acts of daily living like this. Not just the time set aside for sitting meditation. Thank you for participating in this guided mindful awareness of walking practice.