



SENSORY CHANNEL · INTEROCEPTION

Interoception: Sensory Awareness Examples

A vocabulary guide for noticing your body's inner signals

Interoception is your body's ability to sense its own internal state: heartbeat, breathing, temperature, gut feelings, hunger, muscle tension, and the physical sensations that come with emotion. Sometimes called the eighth sense, it runs constantly whether or not you are paying attention. Bringing awareness to these signals gives you real-time information about what your body needs. Your body's responses (speeding up, slowing down, tightening, releasing) are not problems to fix. They are information to notice. Awareness of a sensation is different from having to stay with it. If something feels like too much at any point, pausing or looking around the room is always an option.

Before you begin: notice your feet on the floor and take one easy breath. You can return to this at any point.

The examples below are illustrations only. What shows up for you may be completely different, and that is fine. Feel free to skip any word or group that does not feel right. Some words may bring memories or feelings with them. You do not have to follow them anywhere.

CARDIAC & CIRCULATORY

Pounding	Heart beats strongly after climbing stairs
Fluttering	Light, quick beats before something exciting
Racing	Heart speeds up with surprising news
Pulsing	Steady throb felt at the temples after a run
Steady	Calm, even rhythm when sitting quietly
Faint	Barely perceptible pulse when deeply relaxed

RESPIRATORY

Full	A deep breath that expands the whole chest
Shallow	Short breaths during focused concentration
Tight	A feeling of limited breath when tense
Expansive	Breath opening up after stepping outside
Held	A pause in breath when focusing on something delicate
Flowing	Smooth, uninterrupted breath at rest

DIGESTIVE & GUT

Hollow	The empty feeling before lunch
Rumbling	Stomach sounds when it is time to eat
Warm	Spreading warmth in the belly after hot soup
Fluttery	"Butterflies" before something fun
Settled	A calm, comfortable gut feeling
Heavy	A weighted belly after a large meal

THERMAL

Flushed	Warmth spreading across the face
Burning	Heat in leg muscles during a long walk
Cool	Refreshing internal coolness on a hot day
Chilled	A shiver moving through the body
Sweaty	Warmth and moisture during physical effort

TENSION & EASE

Tight	Shoulders after hours at a desk
Soft	Muscles that release easily when lying down
Heavy	Limbs that feel weighted when tired
Releasing	The moment a held breath finally lets go
Melting	Gradual release of tension during a massage
Braced	Muscles holding still before lifting something

EMOTIONAL BODY SIGNALS

Expansive	An open, wide feeling in the chest when happy
Sinking	A dropping sensation in the belly when disappointed
Contracted	A closed-in feeling when uncertain
Lifting	An upward feeling in the chest when hopeful
Stirred	A sense of something waking up inside
Calm	A smooth, undisturbed feeling throughout the body