

## Centering and Grounding

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### Centering

Centering is the practice of harnessing and channelling your energy to improve your wellbeing, especially in situations of stress, such as when you are about to face a difficult situation, or recover from being upset. Centering increases concentration and helps you to feel safe. Practice Centering when you are not being challenged, so that you know what to do when you are.

1. Focus on your breathing at the point of the abdomen. Be aware of the feel of the breath at that point. Breathe in and out slowly, being aware of the rise and fall of the abdomen as you breathe in and out.
2. As you breathe, take your focus to a spot about 5 centimetres below your navel. This is your centre. Concentrate on that spot as you breathe. Do several times (at least 5). Be aware of yourself becoming stable and centred, feeling safe and connected.
3. Once you feel stable, safe and connected, imagine positive life-affirming energy flowing into your centre as you breathe in, and negative energy being released as you breathe out.

### Grounding<sup>1</sup>

Grounding is a practice that brings you in touch with your immediate environment and into the present. You are aware of what you feel, such as your feet on the ground and the feel of your clothes. Grounding is self-soothing and reduces stress.

If you want to check the effect, use this Scale of anxiety 0 - 10 before and after to see if there are any observable changes:

1. What am I noticing in my body?
2. What am I noticing with my breath?
3. What is happening with my feelings?
4. What is happening in my heart?
5. What is happening with my thoughts?

Start by practising in a calm environment. Practice daily until it comes easily when in a stressful situation.

#### 1 Feet

Use when stressed to get a sense of yourself, reconnect you to your body and bring excess energy down.

Find a comfortable seated position where you can touch the floor with your feet. Remove shoes. Place hands in a comfortable position. Can hold thumb gently and place on lap. Place feet on ground. Bring awareness to sensations felt in the feet. Wiggle toes. Push feet into ground. Feel the pressure, notice how it feels in each foot. Bring awareness into the feet. Wiggle around till it's comfortable. Try to bring even pressure into each part of each foot. Notice all the sensations. Breathe normally.

Notice the support you have in the chair, the support, feel the back of the chair. Push more into the chair and into the back of the chair. Take a few deep breaths and feel the grounded-ness.

Notice the breath. Inhale through the nose to count of 4, exhale to count of 4-5. Once comfortable with this, continue to inhale through the nose to 4, but exhale through the mouth to 5. Notice feelings in the body while breathing. Feel the support of your feet on the ground, the support of the chair at your back and underneath you. To finish, deeply exhale - breathe in deeply to 3, sigh out to count of 3 while dropping shoulders. Stay grounded. Notice how you are feeling.

#### 2 Head

Turn head slowly to the right and then to the left. Notice the feeling of the movement. Notice where your eyes are going. Let your eyes follow the movement. Then turn head up and down and around taking eyes with you, slow comfortable pace. Signals to nervous system that it is safe to look around is soft nurturing movement that connects us to our bodies.

#### 3 Nature

Close eyes. Or lower eyes if not comfortable. Take a couple of breaths. Connect into breathing, become aware of sitting in the chair, feet on the ground, the support of chair against your back. Imagine tree roots coming out of your feet, anchoring you to the ground. Notice what it feels like to have that connection to the earth. Bring to mind a place that you love where you feel supported. It could be in nature or a place where you feel safe. Let your mind take you there and then notice what your body feels like. Notice what you can see here, maybe water, trees, sand, or whatever is there. Notice what sounds are there in this space; notice what sounds are not there; notice feelings and sensations in the body.

Keep breathing, notice what you can feel - warm, cool, breeze, any body sensations. Breathe into this space, feel any nurturing; notice sounds, textures, feelings, that come up. Breathe into your feelings and stay with them. Notice what your face is doing, is it relaxed, calm, smiling? let it be what it is, but notice. Keep noticing all your sensations. Know you can stay here as long as you like, and that you can come back to it. Keep breathing steadily... When you are ready, be aware of your toes, wiggle them, reconnect with your feet, feel the pressure in the soles of your feet. Wiggle your fingers, be aware of the room you are in, and when ready, open your eyes. Look around, notice where you are, and what you are feeling.

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<sup>1</sup> Partially from Blue Knot.