



***Awakening
What's Next***

Centering and Grounding

The intention of this practice is to deepen your capacity to center yourself in your whole body and grounding into the earth. Many of us spend a great deal of our time in mental activity as we go through each day. Unless we have a regular physical practice, it's easy to forget the rest of us until we notice hunger pangs, sore eyes or tense shoulders to name but a few signals of mental fatigue. In addition, our breathing pattern is often quite shallow. If shallow breathing is our baseline we don't have much air to assist us when we're stressed, as breathing gets even shallower then. This practice will teach you to deepen your regular breathing pattern as well as giving you a quick break from your mental activity, which will wake you up and enhance whatever you're doing.

Practice Part 1: Three times each day take 5 minutes and stand on the ground. If possible, stand outside. With your feet shoulder width apart, relax your knees so they are slightly bent. Let your spine be straight yet not rigid. Begin to breathe easily through your nose, letting the air cascade into your chest and belly. You know you're getting a full breath when your stomach expands as the air enters. Then exhale, feeling your belly and chest contract as the air leaves your body through the nose. Continue to breathe in this slow, regular rhythm. As you breathe, feel your feet on the ground.

Practice Part 2: When you are breathing easily and deeply begin to imagine sending your breath into the earth. As you inhale, feel your breath drop all the way down your legs and out the bottom of your feet as you send it deeply into the ground. As you exhale, imagine pulling the energy from that deep place in the earth through your body and out on each breath. Continue this pattern for the remaining minutes of the practice enjoying the support of the earth under your feet.

Contemplate these questions at the end of your day using a journal if you like:

- What was the experience like for you?
- How did the practice affect the rest of your day?
- If you were unable to stop and do the practice, what got in your way?
Gently consider what would help you stop if you had trouble.