



EMBER™

Embodied, Mindfulness-Based, Emotional Resilience

Sometimes we experience life in such a way that we might feel outside of our body. When and if this happens, bringing your attention back into your body and/or bringing attention to what's happening in our environment can be helpful. The sense of resting solidly in our body is considered *grounding*.

Making your body relax when it's in an anxious state can be difficult to do on command, try just saying "calm down body!" when you feel agitated. It typically doesn't work. However, in yoga, we have practices to aid us with this. Rather than telling the body to calm down using words, we speak in the language of the body, using sensation.

Anxiety and nervousness often 'live', or are felt, in the upper half of the body. When we experience activation like this, it can feel useful to 'bring the energy down'. One of the foundational poses in yoga – Tadasana or mountain pose – can help you embody this. Bringing the energy down can be experienced here in a very literal sense, simply by shifting your attention to feel your lower body – most especially the places where your body makes contact with the surface beneath it – in tadasana this is your feet!

The feet are great for grounding, partially because they're often in contact with floor/earth/shoes and also because they have a large number of sensory receptors in them so that feeling them, over time, can become accessible to a wide range of people. You can try this right now – feel what your feet are touching – notice the temperature, texture, size, shape of whatever you are in contact with.

How did that feel? It is often (but not always) the case that with practice, grounding invites a calming of your energy. Here are some additional ways to bring a sense of ground into your system.

EXPERIENCE GROUNDING:

- Press the balls of the feet into the surface of your shoes or the floor while lifting the toes up.
- Hold a foot in your hand(s) while seated in chair or on the floor. Notice the sensations of your foot being held and supported.
- Bring your attention to and feel the surface your body is making contact with (floor, wall, chair, etc.) If it's okay, feel where your body makes contact and recognize that your body is supported by whatever is beneath it.
 - If your legs aren't available to be felt, that's okay. Instead, you might feel your upper body – your back. Feel where your back is making contact with the surface behind or below it. If possible and helpful, you might speak out loud the words that describe what this feels like (gentle pressure, flat contact, squishiness, solid, etc.)
- Tap your collarbones with your fingertips or press down on your thighs.
- Rub a grounding essential oil into the soles of your feet.
- Breathe in a grounding essential oil (earthy/dense tones.)
- Look around the space you're in. You can turn to notice what's behind you. Looking around the room we're in can help us have a felt sense of our location in space. When we acknowledge what's behind us, it can help our

nervous system settle b/c it doesn't have to wonder what's there. If looking around the room makes you feel dizzy or like things got too big, notice something small, or a few small things instead – can you find 3 round things? Three blue things? Something that's black?

- Hold a rock or bean bag or token, or really any object with weight and texture in your hand or hands and either just hold it, or press fingers into it or run your fingers across the surface...whatever you want. There's no wrong way to do this! :) You might even name what your fingers are feeling – cool, warm, rough, smooth, bump, etc.
- Activate your senses, notice:
 - 5 things you see
 - 4 things you feel
 - 3 things you hear
 - 2 things you smell
 - 1 thing you taste
- Be with trees. Touch them, sit with them, talk to them. They can share their slow, grounded energy.
- Walk outside barefoot.
- Have something to eat that is a bit dense – like a root vegetable.

Everyone's system is a bit different. Some of these will immediately give you the sense of landing in your body, right now, and others will take some repeated practice to help you arrive. If you try one and it is activating to your nervous system, skip it, no big deal! Find the grounding technique(s) that work for you and feel free to leave the rest.