

Coming Home to the Body

The body is our first home. It houses our breath, shelters our thoughts and emotions, offers space for discernment, and carries out the will of the true Self. When we get too stressed, we often lose our connection to the body. The following sequence may give you a greater sense of safety, ease, and grounding.

Please practice respectfully: listen to your body, trust the message of pain (“Stop”), breathe deeply, and modify the movements to suit your needs. If you do not have a Yoga Teacher/Yoga Therapist, it is best to find one before attempting the following practice, to ensure you understand your body in relation to yoga postures.

1. Stand. You may wish to point the toes straight ahead, lifting the spine and breathing deeply. Feel the head perched upon the neck and look softly forwards. Become aware of the feeling of the ground beneath you. Just as much as you are pressing into the ground, the earth is pressing back – holding you in constant support. Allow all that is outside of you to pass through unattended.
2. Plant one foot and lift the other. If there are people around, you may do this in a small, unnoticeable way. If you are on your own, use your arms to hug your leg toward your torso, keeping your back tall. Repeat on the other side. Balancing the body requires mental balance and is soothing.
3. When you return to even standing, press your heart a little higher. Push the chin forward and lift it slightly. Raise the arms overhead in a wide “V” and turn up the corners of the mouth.
4. Slide one hand up the rib basket while the other arm slides down the side of your leg. This gentle side bend fills the spaces between the ribs with nurturing breath. Be sure you are purely sideward, not twisting forward or back. You need not bend far to receive the benefits of this posture.
5. Widen the space between the feet bring the hands to the sides, in line with the shoulders. Make a “thumbs-up” and gaze at your thumbnail, then revolve your body in the direction you are looking. (For an extra challenge, look one way and twist the other.) Hold here as long as you wish, return to center, and repeat on the other side. Breathe deeply throughout this movement.
6. Stand as in Step 1 and notice the effects of this homecoming practice. Are you light or cool? Heavy or warm? Do you feel loose, grounded, present? How is your breath? The speed of your thoughts? Your sense of confidence, optimism, or wellbeing? Appreciate the time you made for yourself and carry on!