



## *Grounding*

The term grounding in an esoteric context reflects the principle of its usage within the scientific and psychological disciplines.

In physics grounding is the process whereby an object with an excess of charge – either positive or negative – has this charge removed by the transfer of electrons between it and another object of substantial size known as *the ground*. The ground is an object capable of transferring or receiving an almost infinite supply of electrons from the charged object, thereby neutralising its charge.

In psychology grounding techniques are used to neutralise excessive emotional states or dissociation caused either by the contemporary environment or *triggering* to past traumatic events. Typically grounding techniques involve bodily sensorial input or increasing the focus on the current environment and one's place within it. Anything from methodically indexing a CD collection to rubbing ice over the body may be used. Here the body or the more stable levels of consciousness act as the ground.

Whilst there is considerable cross-over between the psychological and the esoteric understanding and use of grounding techniques, in our traditions we recognize the existence of other aspects of the human being besides the physical and the psychological as well as the all important, ever present reality of the earth as a living, nurturing, infinite entity. In esoteric grounding the earth Herself is always the ground, not our own bodies or more stable consciousness – as is the case in psychological grounding. In correct esoteric grounding there is an objective, not subjective, transference of excess 'energy' from the person to the earth.

Being grounded means therefore that we are connected to the earth and our energy and consciousness is solid, cohesive and integrated rather than flight, spacey or dissociated. When we are grounded during spiritual practice any energies or spiritual blessings we receive move directly through us and are grounded into the earth herself. From an esoteric perspective the rapport and link between our own etheric body and that of the earth's is strengthened, clarified and opened. This allows the blessing we receive to move through all our subtle bodies which leads to us receiving the full transformational effects of our practice and will help avoid energetic imbalances. Within the Western esoteric traditions grounding is an essential skill and is generally, in one form or another, taught right at the start of the training sequence.

If you have never consciously done any grounding exercise before you may find a big shift in your consciousness and awareness as a result of these exercises. Some people however are more drawn to a grounded state of being than others and will find these exercises less of a shake up. There are many variety of exercises and practices that ground or earth our energy bodies and it may be worth your while searching for more on the Net or within published material. Please be aware that increasing your ability to ground and promoting an overall more grounded state will inevitably involve becoming more conscious of and influenced by your body. Past traumas, tension, sexual difficulties and feelings may all become highlighted during your grounding practices. Please address these honestly and seek appropriate therapy when required.

### **1. Tree of Life**

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(This can be done alone, in which case you can learn the general form of the words and repeat them to your self, or simply imagine the actions. Another alternative is to record them and play them back when you need to. When working in a group, the group normally stands in circle, stretches a bit, join hands and closes eyes. Then one person will speak some form of the words below and the rest will follow. There are many versions of the tree of life. Some connect only with the earth energy, some with both earth and sky. Some use only imagined coloured light and not an actual vision of the tree. In most groups, once the basic form is learnt, the actual words tend to be inspired on the night.)

“Stand comfortably, with your feet on the ground. Do not cross your legs or ankles.

Take a deep breath, down into your belly. Feel your chest expand as you inhale and contract as you exhale. Imagine yourself as a tree standing with your roots in the earth. Let your breath flow down through your legs and feet into your roots, and feel them push down through anything that lies between you and the living earth. Imagine that your roots reach the soil and continue down, through layers of mud and rock and gravel, through pools of water, through bedrock, into the living fire at the heart of the earth. Feel that fire as the earth’s life-blood, her womb-blood that flows in great currents below the continents, her creative fire that pushes up to build new land. Take a deep breath and draw up some of that fire through your roots, through all the layers of rock and water and soil into your feet and legs. Feel your body come alive as the fire moves up, through your thighs and hips, up into the base of your spine and your sexual places. Draw it into any part of you that needs healing.

Imagine that your spine is a flexible tree trunk, growing and expanding as the fire moves up. Draw it into your heart; let it open and heal your heart. Breathe it down through your hands, and let your hands radiate healing. Breathe it up through your neck and throat, to ease your voice. Breathe it into your face, into your eyes, into your third eye in the centre of your forehead to awaken intuition. Breathe it up and out the crown of your head, forming branches that reach up into the sky and sweep back down to touch the earth again, making a circle.

Let those branches connect with the energy of the sky, with the sun if it is shining, or with the moon or the stars of the night sky. Feel their energy and breathe it in; let it feed your leaves and branches, just as light feeds the trees. Draw the sky energy down and in, down through your leaves and branches, down through the top of your head, into your heart and hands and your belly, down your spine and down through your legs and feet into your roots, down through the soil and water and rock until it reaches the fire at the heart of the earth. Feel how the sky’s fire meets the earth’s fire in you, how they flow together; up and down, in and out with each breath. Soak up as much energy as you need, and when you are ready, return the rest to the earth by reaching down and touching the ground with your hands.”

- edited from “Grounding”, p. 27, The Pagan Book of Living and Dying by Starhawk et al., Harper, San Francisco, 1997 ce.

2. **Go outside.** Take off your shoes and dig your feet into the earth. Pause feeling the earth and your feet within it. Now kneel down and place both palms flat on the ground. Ask the Earth to take any excess or negative energy you have. Now will all this energy into the Earth through your palms and soles of your feet. Pause. Now ask the earth to send you any energy

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you need. Open yourself to the influx of earth energy through the palms and soles of your feet. Thank the earth.

3. **Go outside.** Stand or sit with spine straight next to a tree. Ask the tree to ground you. Feel your energy merge with the tree so that you become more solid and rooted in earth. Thank the tree.

4. **Divine Names.** Concentrate intensely on your feet centre. Intone the Divine name **Aretz**, (/אֶרֶץ) which is Hebrew for Earth. Imagine the sound comes from under the soles of your feet. Do this four times. Pause. Breathe deeply for a minute or two. Repeat the process for three more times (a total of four sets of four intonations).

5. **Stand feet close together**, knees bending, hands by your side. Now move your arms up so that your elbows are bent as high as your face, hands in front of your face. Collect your energy in imagination. Now bring your hands really fast straight down the front of your body, palms to the earth, nearly touching, and say loudly the word “Ho!”, seeing and sending your energy into the Earth. You should bend your knees slightly as you move the hands down in front of your body.

6. **Stand outside.** Knees slightly bent. Place your hands on either side of your belly, so that your palms and inside of your fingers are facing up and your small fingers and side of hands are touching your skin. Now imagine you are holding a large rock in the palms of your hands. Feel its weight increase. When it is really heavy let it go as you lower your hands really quickly. See the rock disappear into the earth.