

## GROUNDING - do you know where your feet are?

I've written several articles about the work I do with the Higher Self but the issue of grounding or being present still has many people confused. Why is it important to be grounded and how do we get there?

We are all looking for the root causes of the dissatisfaction we experience in our physical lives and asking the questions: Why do I feel disconnected, overwhelmed, anxious, depressed. We've orchestrated very busy lives, hurrying to fulfill our daily obligations or filling every moment with activity, both mental and physical. And we pat ourselves on the back for that. Rarely do we take a moment to check in with ourselves. It sounds easy but try it! Spend one minute just locating where you are. If you're like most people, your mind is very busy. You might be reading this on a computer and have spent the day in cyberspace. Did you notice how difficult it was to connect with yourself? Our minds are going constantly (50,000 thoughts a day!). How many times during the day do you stop and ask yourself: Where am I? How do I feel? Where are my feet?

Mostly, we don't ask because we don't really want to know. Being in the present can be overwhelming as we notice for the first time a dark shadow lurking inside or come face to face with a fear that has been plaguing us for years. We want to run, hide, pick up a book or turn on the television, anything to escape the uncomfortable feeling. Our society provides us with plenty of distractions to keep us from what we fear is the truth - we must be guilty of something or even worse, we are nothing. We learned to become escape artists and masters of avoidance. We created countless techniques to avoid feeling pain. Something hurt us in the past and our subconscious made a firm decision to avoid, at all cost, that negative feeling again. Survival requires that we repress the memory of certain experiences but the body and soul don't forget - the bad feeling or emotion is registered at the cellular level and will play out over and over until we are ready to confront it and release the energy. How do we do that? The answer is to use our senses, our God-given senses.

I was first presented with the concept of sensing on a much-anticipated trip to Sedona, Arizona. Because of its reputation for having powerful energy vortexes, Sedona is considered by many to be a spiritual center. I had just begun my hypnotherapy work and was struggling with feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt, especially about so-called spirituality. A friend and mentor suggested that we make the trip and trek up to one of the vortex areas to meditate. He told me that many people receive messages there that change their lives. I had to see this to believe it so I went along with him. After a very steep and rather rough climb through sagebrush we reached the top of one of the vortex plateaus and quietly settled into a meditation, he at one end and me at the other. Imagine how stunned I was when, after just a few minutes, I heard the following: **You learn your Spirituality through your senses!** The message was so clearly and precisely stated that my first thought was that someone was playing a trick on me? But there was no one nearby. It took a few minutes to realize that I had actually received this message, a real message. And from Spirit! It had spoken to me for the first time in plain English and given me a message that seemed meaningful.

Over the next few weeks I thought about the message and how it seemed to contradict everything I believed about becoming a spiritual person. Organized religion had warned us against the temptations of the flesh in our quest to become spiritual. And how many people had I met and studied with on my spiritual journey desperately hoping for an escape from the suffering of physical life. The physical body and its incessant needs became nothing more than an obstacle to overcome. They insisted that you could only find spirituality on other dimensional planes or after death. I contributed in my own way by becoming an expert at guided meditation and helping my clients enjoy wonderful journeys **OUTSIDE** of their bodies. They'd be flying above the earth or floating happily somewhere in the universe, keeping a safe distance from the ground. Together we were exploring uncharted and unlimited consciousness. Though these sessions were fabulously entertaining and mind expanding, the only tangible result was a great desire on the part of the clients to **escape** again and plenty of frustration that we still weren't feeling the ever-illusory goal. We didn't even know what goal - peace, love, fulfillment of some kind, happiness?

I had a lot more faith in myself and especially in my Higher Self when I returned home from Sedona to my private practice. I began to invoke the help of the Higher Self, remembering the biblical phrase "**Be still and know that I am**". I'd start with relaxation as I always did in guided meditations and then ask the Higher Self to take the client on a journey. The more I trusted the Higher Self the more I was able to let go and not try to direct the outcome. I would ask for strength and energy for the client and **WAIT**. Inevitably, the clients would feel themselves dropping down to earth or coming out of a fog, some movement that brought them closer to their physical lives. I even had a client who spent most of his session in an airplane. I just waited and he finally landed! A short time later the client began to either sense discomfort in his/her body or, experience an unpleasant memory. This happened so often that I realized that the person was being "grounded", their spirit brought back to their body. Shamans call this process "**Soul Retrieval**", bringing the disconnected parts of the soul back to the body. As my trust level grew I began to ask the Higher Self to show the client what the discomfort was about or make the memory very clear. Sometimes an image would appear and we would begin to follow that thread. Who's in the image? How old is the person you are seeing? How do you feel about them? If there were pain in the body I'd ask for the client to be shown what it represented. I didn't know where we were headed but I was feeling confident as the intermediary. Whatever I was guided to ask for was given. What soon became apparent is that the Higher Self was taking us on a "**healing**" journey. Through relaxation and grounding, wounds that are normally blocked from our conscious minds were brought up to our awareness to be felt or sensed. The Higher Self then has something tangible to work with - through the senses the pain of the past could be explored and released.

Many of us arrived in this world fully grounded, all our senses working. We certainly felt the discomfort of leaving our mother's womb, though I've worked with lots of people who first separated out from themselves before birth. They "knew" that they weren't wanted. The mother had disconnected from the fetus. In some cases the disconnection came when the father abandoned the mother. Her fear and anguish caused her in turn to abandon her unborn child emotionally. There are many times during a child's life that it can disown parts of him/herself. Even when a child is clearly loved and wanted, a parent or teacher, someone important to the child can inadvertently leave an emotional scar that forces the child to abandon him/herself. Abandonment, neglect, and emotional distance are the major contributors to being ungrounded.

The child leaves his/her body and hangs out in the ethers where it can at least remember the loving spirit world it left behind.

Disconnection can happen as a result of a physical trauma as well. I have a client who was born with cerebral palsy as a result of a fall that his mother had just before he was born. In taking him through the healing process he clearly saw the image of himself in the womb as his mother was falling down a flight of stairs. He felt the searing pain in his head that resulted in nerve damage after his birth. He nearly died immediately after birth but was resuscitated and from then on underwent operation after painful operation so that one day he might be able to walk. His memories of early childhood were mostly severe physical pain, and thus he had learned to leave his broken body as often as possible. With the help of a dedicated doctor he finally healed enough to walk and even run. By the time he reached adolescence the only remnant of his cerebral palsy was a slight limp and some weakness on the right side of his body. However, this man had trained himself to leave his body so well that he was rarely present. Whenever he experienced anything unpleasant or difficult he escaped into that comfortable place where he didn't have to feel. By withdrawing his energy from the physical his relationship with himself and others suffered.

Being present in the physical body is so important to our spiritual development that people will often unconsciously manifest physical problems to keep themselves grounded. I've had clients come to me after suffering untreatable pain or discomfort for years. They had so thoroughly checked out of their bodies that the pain was the only thing keeping them present, and then only occasionally. Psychics and healers have to grapple with staying present, as well. They spend a good deal of time out of their bodies, doing amazing work for others and, meanwhile, ignoring their own well-being. To the point of risking serious health damage, many gravitate to excessive eating, drinking and smoking to help them stay grounded. Over the course of my practice I've met quite a number of people who say, "I don't want to be here. It's too uncomfortable and I want to leave".

**Why do we find being grounded difficult and confusing?** Our deeply ingrained beliefs play a big part. From the time we are small children society dictates that we should act strong and hide our vulnerability. We deceive ourselves into believing we can outrun our dark shadows. If they show up, as they inevitably do, doctors and pharmaceutical corporations are ready to provide us with neat little pills to keep us from feeling. So how then do we heal if we can't feel? Our bodies are the link to our spiritual development. When we block all our sensory perception our spirit is forced to find other paths to heal us. We literally can get stopped dead in our tracks if we ignore the signs.

A few years ago I visited a Buddhist retreat. I had just arrived and going through the registration process when I heard a gong ring. Suddenly the woman handling my registration closed her eyes and didn't make a move for a minute or more. That gong rang every ten minutes! The purpose was to get the participants to **STOP**, stop everything: talking, walking, eating, cleaning, answering the phone, cooking food, everything. At first the continual gonging was an annoyance, a big interruption in whatever I was doing at the time (probably talking). The point was to force us to be present. Spiritual teachers of all varieties are spreading the word about being here now. It's not an esoteric message. Our physical lives tell us everything about our spiritual lives. Ask

yourself: am I physically well, vibrant? Am I making enough money to live a decent life and pay my bills? Am I able to love? Do I have someone to love me? Do I know where my feet are?