

Centering
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Each person has a center of wholeness within and can be in harmony within her/himself by thinking of this center. Without exerting effort, we can consciously direct our energies in order to recognize an inner space of stability within ourselves. Centering is a state of deep, inner quiet.

Centering allows us to be fully present. It is important for ourselves and for others that we learn to quiet ourselves and feel a sense of inner peace and strength. When this happens our personal anxieties cease to dominate. They are placed on the sidelines of our minds so they do not easily block or distort the flow of life-giving energy through us. Centering is bringing the mind and heart to a quiet place in the present moment.

Staying centered means learning to recognize and bracket thoughts, feelings and conditions that pull us off center. Some of the traps that can affect our ability to come to a quiet focus and to stay centered are:

1. Worry about outcome
2. Doubting
3. Taking on another's problems
4. Smothering
5. Holding back
6. Spacing out
7. Attention seeking
8. Worrying about what others will think
9. Personal issues
10. Reacting to outside stimuli

All of the above reduce the inner quiet, compassion, focus of helping another and trusting our own essential knowing or guidance.

Aids to centering include:

1. Daily quiet time
2. Pausing to feel the harmony in the situation or with another
3. Using an image of a tree or some aspect of nature to trigger inner quiet
4. Bracketing by putting aside for a period of time what is taking attention
5. Seeing the beauty in another person
6. Compassion

Developing the ability to center and then to maintain this deep quiet for long periods of time is a process built on experience and self-growth. Self-awareness and self-examination are important, but the fostering of compassion and harmony with all life is the essence of inner peace.

References:

1. CENTERING Barbara Janelle January, 1995
2. WRITINGS ON CENTERING Mary Simpson