

## Balancing and Centering

Balancing and centering is the foundation for all Leonard Energy Training work. By viewing the body as both a part of and a metaphor for your life—your way of being in the world—you can lay the foundation for creating a well-balanced and centered life.

You'll need space around you, so please stand and take what we call the "spread formation." This means you're far enough away from other people or objects so that you can extend your arms straight out to the sides and rotate at the hips, allowing the arms to swing freely, without touching anyone or anything.

Your feet should be slightly farther apart than your shoulders, with your trunk in an upright position. Allow for a slight bend of the knees. Using your left hand, take the tips of the middle and fourth fingers and touch a spot an inch or two below your navel. Press in firmly. This is your center, your body's physical center of mass. Located in the center of your abdomen, it is the point at which the body is perfectly balanced and centered—your hara. Now drop your hand to your side.

Take a few moments now to focus on your breathing by becoming aware of its process. Let air enter your nostrils. Follow it downward through your body as if it were going directly to your hara, then up and out your nose. As you inhale, let the abdomen expand outward from your center to the front, to the rear, to the sides, to the floor of the pelvis.

Your weight should be equally distributed between your left and right foot. If it isn't, fine-tune your body by shifting slightly from side to side so you become evenly balanced. Now check and see if your weight is centered between the heels and balls of your feet. If it isn't, rock slightly forward and back until you feel balanced.

Move your head slightly forward and back and side to side to find the point at which it balances on your spine with the least amount of muscular effort. What about all the parts of your head and neck? Relax your temples and forehead, your jaw, your tongue, the muscles around your eyes, the throat muscles.

Now become aware of your shoulders and arms. Let them melt downward, like soft, warm chocolate. With each outgoing breath, let them melt down a little farther. If this is difficult for you, first raise and tense your shoulders as you take in a breath, then exhale as you let the shoulders drop and melt downward. Do this a few times if necessary.

As you continue to breathe from center in a relaxed manner, check to see if your chest muscles are at ease. Now become aware of your stomach. Is it relaxed? How about the lower abdomen and pelvic areas? Are they at ease? If not, relax these areas.

Now relax your thighs as your legs continue to support your upper body. Check your knees. Remember, they should be slightly bent. Let your calf muscles relax. Let your ankles relax. Loosen any tension in your feet as you sense the ground beneath you with the entire soles of your feet, from heels to toes. With each outgoing breath, let your entire body relax.

Most of us pay little attention to the back half of our bodies. How would it be if you could sense what's behind you? Imagine yourself having "sensors" over the entire back half of your body. Become aware of what's behind you by sensing with the sensors at the small of your back, at the back of your knees, at the back of your neck. How would you experience life if you could sense things from the back of your heels? How would the world look from that angle?

Now that you're pretty well balanced and centered, send a beam of awareness throughout your entire body, seeking out any area that might be tense, rigid, or numb. Simply illuminate that area by focusing on it. Awareness alone often takes care of these problems.

Can you entertain the possibility of your center also being the center of the universe? What would happen to your state of consciousness if this were so? As you go through the rest of the day, you might recreate the balancing and centering process at various times.