



Centering Practice

1. Stand with your legs hip distance apart and your arms at your sides. You may want to shift from side to side or shake your arms and legs to settle into a comfortable place.
2. Begin by bringing your focus to your **Body and sensations**. Notice the sensations, such as temperatures (*colder or warmer*), pressure (*where do you feel tense or relaxed*), and movement (*you may feel your heart beating or your stomach gurgling*). You may also feel numb or have places inside you that are blank. Let your focus move away from thinking and toward sensation. Notice whatever is happening inside your Body.
3. Next, notice your **feelings**. In this moment, what are you feeling emotionally – sad, happy, content, anxious, grateful? Notice what you feel right now.
4. Bring your attention down to your abdomen, **your center**. Place your hand there if it helps. This is the center of gravity for your Body. Go ahead and breathe into your center.
5. First, starting from center in your belly, feel your **length**. Let yourself fill in down to the ground and up to the sky. Feel your whole length. Allow your spine to lengthen. Feel your spine, the length of your legs. Feel your feet on the ground and see if you can extend your energy down into the Earth. Imagine the top of your head reaching up to the sky. Breathe into your length.
6. Next, once again from your center, experience your **width** from side to side. Feel your sensations and fill out from shoulder to shoulder, hip to hip, feel the outsides of both arms. Fill in and take up the space of you. Breathe into your width.
7. Now, experience your **depth** – feel yourself from back to front. Find your low back, the space between your shoulder blades, or the back of your legs. Then find your breath and heartbeat. Fill into the clothes resting on your belly. How much depth do you feel? Do you feel thinner or thicker? Breathe into the depth of yourself.
8. Again, notice your sensations. Now ask yourself, **“What is it that I love, care about, or value?”** Listen to the answers from your whole being including your Body. Breathe what you care about into your center, so that it is something you can act from and live. What else do you love? Breathe that into your center, too. This is the fourth direction of centering – Length, Width, Depth, and what is Meaningful to You.
9. Now bring your attention to feeling all of you – your length, width, and depth. Notice your sensations. Where do you feel more present? Where less? What are you feeling emotionally?

This Centering Practice comes from the Strozzi Institute. According to them, these are the ways that Spirit moves into the world through the body, i.e., with dignity, connection and belonging, legacy, presence, and commitment. Taken together, these qualities are the constituent elements of embodied spiritual presence. Obviously, there are other descriptors that could be employed, but this brings awareness of these aspects to our physical dimensions.