



Move...your body

Move...to flow

Move...to live

SomaFocus

The place where you made
your stand never mattered.
Only that you were there...
and still on your feet.

~ Stephen King

Get grounded: Your feet are your foundation.

Feet are complex structures built to carry the weight of the entire body. Each foot is made up of 26 bones, 33 joints, and over 100 muscles, tendons, and ligaments. When we think of grounding, one of our first thoughts may be about our feet. Our daily activities, our shoes, how we walk, how we stand, and pathologies such as arthritis, bunions, thick callouses, and plantar fasciitis contribute to a myriad of issues that cause pain and discomfort, impede healthy circulation, and contribute to musculoskeletal alignment issues, causing discomfort in other areas of the body. In Biofield Therapies, the feet are also significant because they contain chakras and the beginning and ending points of meridians, all of which connect our biofields to the Earth. (The biofield is the energy within and surrounding the body that affects the body.) When we “ground the feet” physically, we are also grounding our energy to the Earth, fostering stability and balance. Caring for our feet is essential to our well-being.

Examine the soles of your shoes. The most worn area is likely the part of the foot that bears most of your weight while walking. When standing, notice how your body weight is distributed between each foot. Is there more weight on the right foot or the left foot? Are the ankles rolling inward, or is the weight on the outside edges of the feet? Is the weight shifted toward the heels or the toes? Ideal alignment of the feet occurs when body weight is distributed equally between each foot and equally between the plantar (bottom) surfaces of each foot.

Deliberate, focused movement of the feet maintains and even increases strength and flexibility, improves circulation and energy flow to the feet, and reduces discomfort from some musculoskeletal issues. Do the movement exercises on the next page, one foot at a time, to notice any differences in discomfort, ease, tension, agility, and flexibility between the two. The exercises can be done standing or sitting. If you have difficulties with balance, sit in a chair. Hold onto a wall or other stable structure if you choose to stand.



Walk as if your feet were kissing the earth.

~ Barbara Ann Kipfer

MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Stretching his hand up to reach the stars, too often man forgets the flowers at his feet.

~Jeremy Bentham

Mindful Movement

1. Stand with feet hip-width apart. Bend knees. Shift weight forward into the bases of the toes (balls of the feet), then shift weight backward to the heels. Repeat the shift slowly, 3-4 times, and notice how the rest of the body responds when the weight is forward and the weight is backward. Come to stillness, distributing the weight equally between the bases of the toes and heels. Notice how the body responds.
2. Lift heels, shifting the weight onto the balls of your feet (the bases of your toes). Lower heels. Do 1-3 sets of 10 repetitions.
3. Lift toes and arches, shifting weight onto the heels. Lower toes and arches. Do 1-3 sets of 10 repetitions.
4. Lift toes, keeping the bases planted on the surface beneath your feet. Lower toes. Do 1-3 sets of 10 repetitions.
5. Scrunch (flex) toes, keeping heels on the surface beneath your feet. Relax toes. Do 1-3 sets of 10 repetitions.
6. Spread toes, then bring toes back together. Do 1-3 sets of 10 repetitions.
7. Place a racquetball or tennis ball under the foot and massage the plantar surface for 1-3 minutes.

Challenge

8. Lift all toes, keeping the bases of toes and heels planted on the surface beneath your feet. Lower each toe one at a time, starting with the little toe. Do 10 repetitions and repeat, this time lowering the big toe first.

The movement exercises are not intended to be painful. If you experience pain, stop and see a health professional for further evaluation.

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