

THE  
*Mindful Prof*

# HOME BODY

**somatic grounding  
exercises for coming  
home to your body**

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Somatic Grounding Exercises For Coming Home To Your Body

## ON SOMATICS

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Somatics is relating to the body, and recognizes the indigenous methodologies it has originated from. Using the body as a gateway for reconnecting to the safety, vitality and joy that is available to us through our awareness. There are many subtle, and not so subtle ways we become disconnected from our bodies & somas. It is an inevitable, and normal part of this messy human experience. It is extremely useful and a wise adaptation to daily stress and more severe trauma.

These practices are just that - a practice. May you use them with radical self compassion and a deep reverence for all your bodies wisdom.

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## 4-4-6-2 BREATHING

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A parasympathetic twist on box breathing

Set a timer for 2-3 minutes on your phone

- Inhale through the nose for 4 seconds
- Hold for 4 seconds
- Exhale through the mouth for 6 seconds
- Hold for 2 seconds

Repeat for duration of timer

This helps to slow breathing & the long exhale engages the parasympathetic system - The rest & digest function. This is helpful to do when feeling activated or anxious, before bed or when you need some grounding.

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## 5-4-3-2-1

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5- name 5 things you SEE

4- name 4 things you FEEL

3- name 3 things you HEAR

2 - Name 2 things you SMELL

1- Name one thing you TASTE

This is a simple grounding exercise for anytime you feel anxious, panic or when you just want to practice mindfulness through the senses.

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## BODY TAPPING

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This exercise is especially helpful when we are feeling dissociated, having a hard time connecting with feelings in our body or when somatic/body sensations are feeling a little out of control. This can help to bring us back into a safe and contained embodiment.

Exercise: With flat or gently cupped hands tap up and down your limbs and torso. Try to notice what parts of your body are easy to feel and what parts feel disconnected. Just practice noticing and being with sensation.

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## BALL UNDER FOOT

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This exercise helps with grounding & what is called dual awareness - which simply means being able to hold awareness of two things at once. This is important in the context of trauma as it helps us start to expand the window of tolerance by the practice of holding internal stimuli AND an awareness of safety in the present moment.

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## BALL UNDER FOOT

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Ball under foot exercise:

Take an exercise ball or tennis ball and place it under your right foot while standing. Slowly apply pressure with your foot to feel the shape of the ball underfoot. Now practice shifting your attention from your internal/somatic state for a few moments to the sensation of the ball under foot for a few moments. Alternate a few times, then practice holding both in your awareness at the same time.

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## BALANCE ON BLOCK

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Balance exercises are great for grounding because they require focus, mindful movement & the parts of the brain required for balance help to down regulate sympathetic activation in the body (fight or flight).

This exercise is meant to feel easy and playful. If balance is difficult, you can start from the floor instead of a block.

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## BALANCE ON BLOCK

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Balance on block exercise:

Take a yoga block or similar household item (a small stool or old book) and place it under one foot. Practice balancing on one foot, and then pendulating your free leg back and forth in circles. If this feels easy, you can try balancing forward towards the floor and then back to upright position. Play with your balance zone, how far can you stretch, reach or swing before you feel at your edge? Can you balance with your eyes closed? Notice how your system feels after a few minutes of balancing play.

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## BALANCE ON BOOK

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This exercise works on spatial awareness and motor skills. Both of which are helpful in regulating the brains response to stress. Using fine motor skills can help down-regulate sympathetic activation.

This exercise is meant to feel playful and can be done with a partner.

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## BALANCE ON BOOK

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Ball on book exercise:

It's really as easy as it sounds. Place a ball on top of a block or book. Practice walking around the room without dropping the ball. Can you speed up your movement? Can you make them more complicated by laying down and getting back up while still balancing the ball? Can you toss the ball and catch it with your book? Explore and play.

Take a moment to notice how your system feels after this exercise.

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## SHAKE RESOLUTION

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Shaking helps to discharge “fight, flight and freeze” impulses in the body to bring completion to the stress cycle.

You can try shaking each limb one by one, shaking your whole body, or even putting on a song and having a good whole body dance.

This is helpful after a stressful day or situation. Coming down from an anxiety attack or even after intaking stressful information like watching the news or social media.

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## PENDULUM SELF HUG

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Cross your arms over your chest and give yourself a hug. While hugging yourself, alternate tapping each hand against the opposite shoulder. Try to keep a rhythm.

This exercise helps send signals to the brain to encourage communication between the right and left hemispheres. (thinking & feeling). Keeping a rhythm helps to soothe the amygdala (the brains fire alarm).

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## "VOOOO" SOUND TONING

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Take a deep breath and on the exhale make a long "voooooo" sound.

This vocalization has been reserched to help regulate stress & calm the nervous system. Repeat 5-7 times. Try it with a partner for extra co-regulation.

Take a moment after to notice your internal sensations and any shifts that may have occurred.

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## CO-REGULATION

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Co-regulation is simply connecting with a trusted other, to help regulate our nervous systems together. This is most often with another human, but pets are wonderful for helping our nervous systems too. This can be with touch - a long hug, a cuddle, taking some breaths together or receiving body work. Or it can be socially distanced like going for a walk, talking on zoom, or sending soothing voice notes.

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## I ACKNOWLEDGE

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This resource was created on the traditional territories of the Mocosso and Tocabaga peoples.

If you have benefitted from this resource and have the means to pay-it-forward please consider making a donation to a person or cause that is close to your heart. This is how we take care of each other.

In community wellness,

The Mindful Prof

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