

The Ground of Your Basic Goodness

A lot of the time, life can be pretty stressful:

- You feel like you're treading water, or drowning from an overwhelming number of things to do.
- You feel bad about yourself because you're not sticking to things, you're in debt, you're overweight, you feel like you keep messing up.
- Your relationships are a mess, you're fighting a lot, you feel lonely.
- Things suddenly happen to shake up your life, or maybe it's constantly being shaken up, and you're facing tremendous change and uncertainty.

Basically, life can feel groundless - no solid, stable ground under your feet.

And the truth is, that's almost all the time. Our lives are always groundless, even if we try to get routines and control and stability. Things constantly happen to pull the rug out from under our feet, and that kind of uncertainty can be stressful, disappointing, painful, uncomfortable.

So what can we do?

We start by just dropping into the moment. Just notice the particularities of this incredible moment. Start to tenderly feel the moment as it is, right now, without trying to make it any different. Start to feel, with a raw and open heart, the magic of this miraculous moment.

That's a pretty good start.

Then drop into this short meditation:

1. Pay attention to how your body feels. What does it feel like to be alive right now? It's a feeling, this aliveness — what does that feel like? Feel that for a minute.
2. Synchronize your mind with your breath. Instead of having your mind doing something else, let it just rest on the sensation of the breath. What is that like? Stay here for a minute. Come back if you start to wander off.
3. Now just keep an open awareness on your experience. Notice how your heart feels. If there's any kind of pain, tension, tightness — just notice that.
4. Notice the tenderness under the pain, tension, tightness. That's your tender heart.
5. Start to feel the basic goodness inside of you. That includes your tender heart, but also your pain, stress, discomfort, and all the sensations of your breath and body. It includes your everpresent awareness. It includes everything. You don't *have* a basic goodness, you *are* basic goodness.

This is the ground of your existence. It's not stability in your life, not routines or systems, not a sureness of who you are or what your world is. It's just awareness of your basic goodness. And you can start to feel it, if you practice the meditation above. You can start to sense it, and trust in it. It's always there, in the background. It's the vast blue sky to the clouds of your thoughts and feelings.

You can trust that it's there, sense it whenever you need to, once you learn to sense it. This basic goodness that is unconditional, wider than you can imagine.

Practice this for five minutes a day, or anytime you notice yourself feeling groundless.