

## Chapter 6

### GROUNDING AND PROTECTION

In the previous chapter I talked about the importance of helping someone stay focused on their day-to-day life and also about keeping their ego reasonably in check. These are essential strategies for making sure everybody and everything stays on track.

There is also a process called “grounding” that people in the metaphysical world use to keep themselves healthy and safe and it’s important enough that I’m dedicating a whole chapter to it.

Though attitude and intention are the most fundamental mechanisms for self-protection and success, it’s a good idea for you and your significant other to learn specific energetic grounding and protection techniques because they’re relevant for anyone practicing psychic or healing skills, as well as those around them.

I want to say up front that you shouldn’t let my mention of self-defense worry you. These are mostly precautionary measures so little things don’t turn into big things. Think of using these processes and tools as similar to bolstering one’s immune system. Making sure that minor annoyances don’t turn into stress-induced illnesses. Or maybe compare it to doing preventive maintenance on your car. It’s just more sensible to be proactive and not take unnecessary risks.

We all have Spirit Guides looking out for us so that level of protection is always available, but they generally won’t step in unless explicitly asked or if it’s an emergency. Humans have free will and must ask for “our team on the other side” to intervene on our behalf or lend us additional support. If you ask, you will usually get the information, guidance, or shielding that you need from them.

But just like we can’t expect doctors to fix us if we’re not willing to change our habits, we can’t expect our Guides to do all the work of protecting us without taking some responsibility for ourselves.

#### **What does grounding even mean?**

Energetic grounding is basically the first step in what we consider “psychic protection.” It is often taught as the visual-ization of roots growing from the bottoms of your feet down through the Earth—a metaphor for feeling as steady, earthy, and connected as a tree.

A common protocol goes something like this:

*Sit in a comfortable position with your feet on the floor and close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths to bring your awareness into yourself. By focusing on your breathing you can let other thoughts go for now. (This, by the way, is the foundation of meditation. If you can do this, you are meditating!)*

*Now imagine that there are tree roots growing out of the bottom of your feet and down from your spine. Down into the Earth. As deep as you can make them go. As the roots spread out, imagine that they're pulling you tightly to the Earth, so you're really anchored there.*

*Take a few moments and a few more deep breaths to really experience yourself as connected to the Earth. When you're ready, slowly open your eyes.*

When someone says to “visualize” or “imagine,” don’t think that you have to actually see anything in your mind for it to work. Some people have trouble with visuals and instead get a feeling. Or really, just setting your intention to be successful and trusting that it’s happening is usually adequate, even if you’re not having any sensory response.

This applies in almost all circumstances when someone tells you to visualize something for psychic or metaphysical purposes. Seeing the target in your mind is just one way of engaging with it. Don’t get stuck on the word “visualization” and feel like you’re doing it wrong if you can’t see anything. Just trust. Intention is the key.

There are many techniques similar to the tree roots approach to energetic grounding, all designed to achieve that same sense of solidness. All of the sequences are really quite simple and as I’ve said, they rely mostly upon intention and visualization (and occasionally a symbolic item, but only if the person so desires).

People (and animals) have inherently different degrees of groundedness. For example, I’ve been told by psychics that I am exceptionally grounded. One even said it’s as if I am “walking ankle deep in the Earth itself.” (That’s one of my favorite compliments I’ve ever received.) And I already knew that about myself before anyone else said it. So basically it’s like I don’t need to ground because I’m a walking ground for others.

Now in comparison, think of someone you consider spacy, whose “head is in the clouds,” or who seems like a balloon that might float away if they weren’t tethered to something. This type of person is easily identifiable as ungrounded. There are many legitimate

reasons for a person to not want to engage thoroughly with our dense reality, but in order for them to achieve genuine balance in their lives, those people need to figure out how to reestablish their energetic bond with the Earth.

However, just because someone you meet has a lofty thought process or a worldview that seems unrealistic to you, that does not necessarily mean they are ungrounded. Consider the Dalai Lama and how he embodies both groundedness and elevation of thought.

Most people fall somewhere in between the two extremes (like with any other characteristic) and our levels are always in flux. So there shouldn't be judgment about anybody's position on the grounded/ungrounded spectrum because we're all just trying to figure out our own optimal functioning and health.

### **The importance of grounding**

When your loved one first exhibits their psychic gifts, even if they were very grounded before, it is likely that they will become somewhat less grounded until they learn how to integrate their new skills into their life. The same kind of diminished groundedness can happen under many ordinary positive and negative circumstances, as well, such as having a baby or being newly in love, or grieving over the loss of a family member or job. This is all natural and you don't have to panic, just make sure you're helping them move in the right direction.

Grounding links our bodies' energy to the Earth's energy so for people who are highly psychically gifted, energetic grounding is absolutely critical because they might leave their bodies frequently, either intentionally or unintentionally. We want them connected here as securely as possible.

Your partner might even do part of their work in different dimensions on purpose. Making sure they're anchored through grounding can keep them from losing touch with reality (or shall we say, crossing over that line from psychic to psychotic) and will help minimize or “ground out” any negative energy that comes back with them. (Think of it as analogous to grounding in electrical systems.)

On a few occasions early on, before he learned to effectively ground, Brett felt like he was spiritually and energetically drifting too far away from this physical dimension while practicing, so he would ask me to grab his hand to shift his course and bring him back to this plane of reality. Based on the extent of his ability to work interdimensionally, he'd been warned to be careful about going too far for too long. So it turns out that the depth of my roots made me the perfect foil to his tendency to float away. As usual, together we are more than the sum of our parts.

Your loved one’s need for grounding may not be so extreme or literal, though. They will probably only need to learn techniques like the one I mentioned initially in order to ground their own energy and your role will be mostly as a reminder of home base and as emotional support. You represent the place they want to return to when they’ve been off in la la land for a little while. If they want your touch during practice it will probably just be for reassurance and comfort.

Grounding techniques are actually good for everyone, though, even people who aren’t doing any kind of spiritual or metaphysical work. There’s a reason the saying “keeping your feet on the ground” has positive connotations. Being grounded is the first phase of protection from the energetic/psychic negativity and nonsense that’s swirling around all of us each and every day. That’s why it’s worth trying it for yourself.

There are ample suggestions online if you’re not satisfied with the tree roots technique. Or if you prefer a guided meditation (where someone walks you through the process via audio recording instead of you having to remember the steps) there are also plenty of options for that format.

## **Psychic protection**

Related to grounding are what we call psychic protection techniques, which you use to protect your energy from the negativity or neediness of others. Psychic protection keeps them from draining you, keeps them from changing your mood based on their issues. Even people who are not practicing psychics benefit greatly from learning this type of self-defense.

You may have heard the term “psychic vampire” or “energy vampire” —the people who suck energy out of you by their mere presence. People who always make you feel bad to be around them, even if they’re not saying anything negative. You can ward off such an intentional or unintentional assault with psychic self-defense. (And common sense dictates that we not associate with those people anyway, if we can help it.)

Psychic protection can also help in situations where group energy is overwhelming, which is a very common feeling even for people without psychic sensitivity. Or perhaps more accurately, with unacknowledged psychic sensitivity.

I’m sure you know people who avoid crowded places because it just feels too intense for them. Maybe you’re one of those people. Perhaps you’ve always chalked that up to the noise level or even too much body odor. Indeed, those sensations can be annoying to most of us but they can actually be painful to people with hypersensitivity to sound or smell. (Granted,

hypersensitivity is also associated with other physical, cognitive, and psychiatric conditions, but here we’re just focusing on psychic sensitivity.)

But many people’s vague sense of discomfort when in large groups is due to the fact that their energetic space is being invaded. Think of it as analogous to being overpowered by a terrible smell. It feels like the stench gets on us. It distracts from whatever we were doing. We want to make sure it doesn’t stick to us. This is similar to how someone who’s sensitive to energy can feel another person’s moods. It’s distracting. It’s invasive. It’s uncomfortable. It may be putting them in the bad mood that they’ve sensed from the other person. They want to avoid that.

Sensitive people having a visceral reaction to being bombarded with emotions might not make sense to those who can’t feel others’ energy because everything seems fine to them. But the sensitive won’t want to go to a concert or sporting event or even the movies, because for them it’s like not wanting to hang out at a garbage dump.

However, these people (whether they label their empathy as psychic ability or not) can significantly diminish the discomfort of being around others by employing psychic protection and grounding.

### **Intention to be protected**

As with grounding, most psychic protection techniques are easy, requiring only your imagination/visualization and your intention to be protected. You might be tired of hearing about intention but it is arguably the strongest force at work when talking about the subtler aspects of our existence so I’m going to keep bringing it up.

Someone could do a master’s guided meditation for psychic self-protection and if they’re going through the motions but also secretly thinking “this isn’t going to work,” then guess what? They just wasted their time and shouldn’t expect any results.

On the other hand, a person who uses no technique at all but is confident that they are protected will have a shift in their energetics that results in them being safer than the naysayer who toiled.

### **Techniques**

Our primary defense against negativity, of course, is to make good choices. Stay away from situations and people that bring you down or give you a bad gut feeling whenever possible. But since that’s not always an option, it’s valuable to know some psychic protection techniques to help bolster your energetic immune system.

Similar to grounding, most of these techniques utilize visualization. Again, don’t get tripped up by thinking you actually have to see anything, even though the term visualization seems to imply that. Imagine, intend, trust that you are being protected through your efforts.

By far, the most common technique is simply surrounding yourself in a ball of white light, with the expectation of being protected by this sphere of energy. (White light is almost universally considered positive and protective, and sometimes healing, so you will hear about it a lot as you learn about psychic and metaphysical techniques.)

As you envision/feel this ball of white energy materialize around you, your heart and mind need to be on board with the process. You need to say to yourself (can be in your head) something to the extent of “I am surrounded and protected by white light. I am only touched by the energy that uplifts me and serves my highest good.” And then trust it’s going to work. You don’t need to be continuously putting energy toward it. Make part of the intention that it will work even when you’re not actively thinking about it.

Too easy, right? I told you this stuff was simple. But you need to embrace its power to work for you, not be dismissive because it seems too basic (or too illogical) to be effective. Intention, intention, intention. It works!

Depending on the circumstances, people may add other colors or additional protective imagery or metaphors. The variations are almost endless.

For example, if they feel a strong negative vibe coming at them, they might imagine a bubble or force field that is mirrored on the outside. Then if someone projects negative energy at them, it is merely reflected back. That way they aren’t actually being actively negative. In fact, if someone was radiating love to them, the mirror would equally reflect love back, right? This is good because we want to cultivate a mindset of doing no harm, even against those we believe in the moment to be our enemies.

Brett taught one of his eighth-grade students a version of this technique about five years ago. The boy was feeling defeated by what he experienced as relentless browbeating by the girls in his middle school classes. (Can you blame him?) Within a few days he came back and told Brett he was feeling much better—less assaulted, more in control—now that he knew how to activate his shield when the girls were getting intense. How’s that for a life skill they don’t usually teach you in school?

Be forewarned, though. The downside of the mirrored bubble is that nothing positive gets in either, so it’s only for use in situations where you are actively experiencing hostility from someone. You don’t want to be cut off from the healthy exchange of energy between you and your surroundings for very long. As our skin needs to breathe, our energy needs to flow.

Extra layering and complicated shielding beyond white light are not necessary for most people or most situations, but some people get pretty elaborate. I would dare say unnecessarily so except that everyone has to do what they believe will work. Go with what makes sense to you instead of copying someone else’s protocol just because they claim it works for them. So if swirling ribbons of razor wire are what it’s going to take for you to feel protected from a particularly strong negative force in your life, go for it. I personally like to just decide that I am protected and let it be so.

Shields are a good proactive way to keep our energy separate from others’ and “cutting cords” is also important. By cords we mean the energetic connections we establish with others when interacting or even just thinking about them. These connections are represented visually (in your mind’s eye) by what appear to be actual cords reaching from each person to the other.

Having a lot of cords built up is like having too many devices plugged into one power source. So sometimes, when we feel like someone is having too much influence on us, when we’ve done psychic/healing practice, or when we just feel drained in general, we need to envision cutting not just the cords between us and one person but between us and everyone.

Don’t worry—the ones that are supposed to be there will grow back naturally. You’re not going to be disengaged from your closest loved ones. But you will be releasing people and entities who have improperly connected to you and may be taking advantage of your psychic and emotional energy.

Some of these cords manifested a long time ago. So long that you don’t even realize those people are still draining or influencing you. Just let all of the cords go and trust that the positive ones will reestablish themselves without any conscious effort on your part.

To do this, just close your eyes and see all cords being cut away or disconnecting from your body. You can imagine using scissors or even a machete if that helps. Whatever instinctively works for you. I use a “quick release” visualization: all of the cords disengage simultaneously and fly away from me as if they’re being retracted back to their points of origin.

You can find information about these and myriad other grounding and protection techniques on the internet or in books. There are practically as many techniques as there are teachers so it behooves you to seek out a protocol that feels right for you and not just limit yourself to whatever I’ve mentioned briefly.

Experiment with them in the privacy of your own comfortable space so you can use them on the spot when you need them. And when your partner is feeling under assault, remind them to put up a shield. When they’re feeling unduly influenced by someone, remind them to cut cords. Teamwork!

## **Tools for protection**

Some people use tools, like crystals, for protection. I know several women who wear pendants or bracelets to make sure the specific energetic properties of those stones stay close to their bodies. Some men prefer to keep stones in a pocket but many wear a pendant or bracelet. I’ve seen men who never wore any jewelry besides a wedding ring who suddenly find comfort and meaning in wearing a bracelet or necklace with stones and religious symbolism of personal significance. You never know what’s going to change when psychic ability emerges.

And lots of people (including me, and probably some people you know personally) keep crystals around the house to create an environment of peace and safety in their domain.

While the “encyclopedias” of crystals list the properties of hundreds of stones, there are a few that are most commonly recommended for protection. Quartz, black tourmaline, and the combination of both (tourmalated quartz) are fundamental and are favorites of ours. Now that you have a psychic in the house, you should definitely consider getting some. Hematite and amethyst are usually considered principal stones for protection on most lists, too. Beyond those, you can experiment on your own or get suggestions from websites or your local metaphysical store.

I’ve tried a wide range of stones favored by psychics I admire, but I’ve only come across a few crystals that I can actually *feel*, regardless of what people say about the other ones. I love selenite. In wand or tower form, polished or unpolished, doesn’t matter. When I touch selenite to my skin and ask it to take away negative energy, I can feel it happening. And because I believe it, that makes the effect even stronger. So for some reason selenite is just my thing. It won’t necessarily be yours.

I also feel connected to jewelry made of lapis lazuli and fluorite, and my pendulum is fluorite on twine instead of chain, which is more common. (A pendulum is for getting answers, not for protection. See Chapter 7 for more discussion on psychic tools for divination.)

Some people burn sage, palo santo, or incense (which is called “smudging”) with the intention of letting the smoke clear their aura of outside influences and purify the energy in their homes. They may take a bath with salts or certain herbs, or use the act of showering itself as a mechanism for cleansing themselves energetically as well as physically. Have you noticed how taking a shower at the end of a rough day does more than just wash off the sweat and dirt? There’s more to it than the warm water relaxing you and soothing your muscles. The water is actually clearing your energetic field, too, and also bombarding you with negative ions that have multiple beneficial effects for your physical and mental health.

Some use a cross or other religious symbol that holds personal meaning for them. Others burn candles to protect their home. (Candles are a nice lower-smoke alternative to smudging, but don't forget to make your intention strong.)

As you can see, some techniques are proactively protective while others are intended for restorative effect after the fact. Regardless of strategy, psychic protection methods have long histories spanning just about every culture and religion. You probably recognize some of the approaches I mentioned but perhaps you didn't specifically associate them with psychic protection until now.

If you just feel like there's inert negative or unwanted energy hanging around your house, you can ring a bell or walk through each room clapping. It sounds crazy, I know, but you'll hear the difference between an average chime or clap and how it sounds when you're in a spot (often a corner) where stuck energy has accumulated. Continue ringing or clapping in that area and the sound waves will break the stagnant energy up, and you'll notice the sound changes. Even just the ordinary act of opening your windows and cleaning the house can usher out unwanted energy.

Maintaining a positive, flowing space is a strong first line of defense. It's like having a healthy physical body—you're more likely to stay well during flu season than someone who's already run down.

Maybe candles, sage, and salts feel too magicky for you. Or too pagan. Whatever. It's fine not to use them. Or any tools at all really. And while I agree that stones, blessed candles, and the other paraphernalia associated with spiritual practice have intrinsic properties, I still assert confidently that the biggest factor in protection is one's intention to be protected.

For the vast majority of people, visualizations will be adequate. But if the idea of a sacred or symbolic object, candles, incense, or any of these items resonate with you or your partner, check out your options online or visit a local metaphysical bookshop. The people who work there are eagerly awaiting a chance to talk to you about psychic protection tools.

### **Good for you but essential for them**

I am a huge proponent of psychic protection for everybody, but to be entirely honest, this type of protection is even more critical for your partner, the practicing psychic, than it is for you. They're more susceptible to negative energies in our everyday world and they might also be very sensitive to the energies of other dimensions, where they become more vulnerable than we are here.

Different people like different methods but in general, ones that make us feel empowered are best, in contrast to methods that cause us to feel a decrease in control because we’re giving away our power to an outside source in exchange for protection.

By taking charge of our own psychic protection processes, we grow stronger. And when you or your partner notice a positive outcome from using psychic protection, it will be great validation that the skills of intention and visualization make a perceptible impact on your lives.

Consequently, it’s important that you help your significant other find and practice methods that work for them. Remember, the only wrong way to do it is to have a lack of intention. Plus using techniques that are aggressive, offensive, or hostile toward others is not preferred and will often get you in trouble, but everything else is legitimate and fair game.

You’ll probably be happy to hear that the routines associated with psychic protection skills generally become less labor intensive, requiring less conscious effort as one gets stronger. You may hear accomplished psychics talk about “set it and forget it” when discussing their protection mechanisms. This means they don’t always work through a visualization or protocol, they merely check on their grounding and other protections periodically to make sure they’re intact.

Don’t let this give you an excuse to be lax in the beginning, though. There is value in mastering the basics, as with any art or discipline worth learning.