

Grounding



INTRODUCTION TO THE DIMENSION OF GROUNDING

Embodiment is a dynamic state of being which allows us to be fully present in any given moment, equally responsive to our inner experience and the outer world. It can be explored through the interplay of two opposing and complementary energies: attraction (the effect of gravity on the body) and repulsion (the opposing upward energy to gravity, sometimes called buoyancy). Together they allow us to feel vital and capable to move at ease in the world.

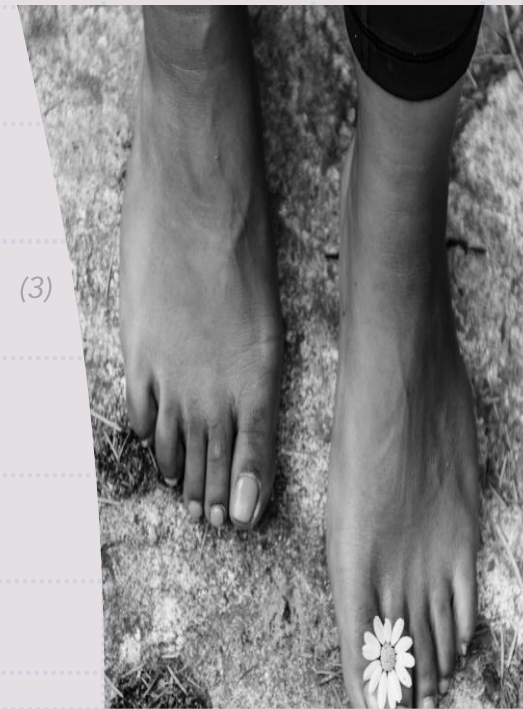
Many people do not understand their direct relationship to the earth and our dependence on it for support. If we become aware of the action of gravity on the mass of the body we can consciously connect to this support of the ground, and discover a solid base to rely on and to move across and away from. This we can call grounding.

The human body has evolved to stand on 2 feet in its vertical axis with a minimum of effort. When the body is fully at rest on the earth in gravity, there is an equal and opposing energy that rebounds upwards (buoyancy). This energy draws us up so that we are able to see wider and further, thus giving us a greater facility to find a clear direction in the world. This we can call verticality.

The dynamic interplay between grounding and verticality, between up and down, where we come from and what we move towards is vital to our capacity to be fully present in a teaching context. When these two forces are in balance there is a spontaneous life-fulness in the person which keeps the person fully grounded, while promoting easeful mobility and creative responsiveness. Thus an educator can maintain a clear direction of learning while adapting to the immediate ever-changing environment.



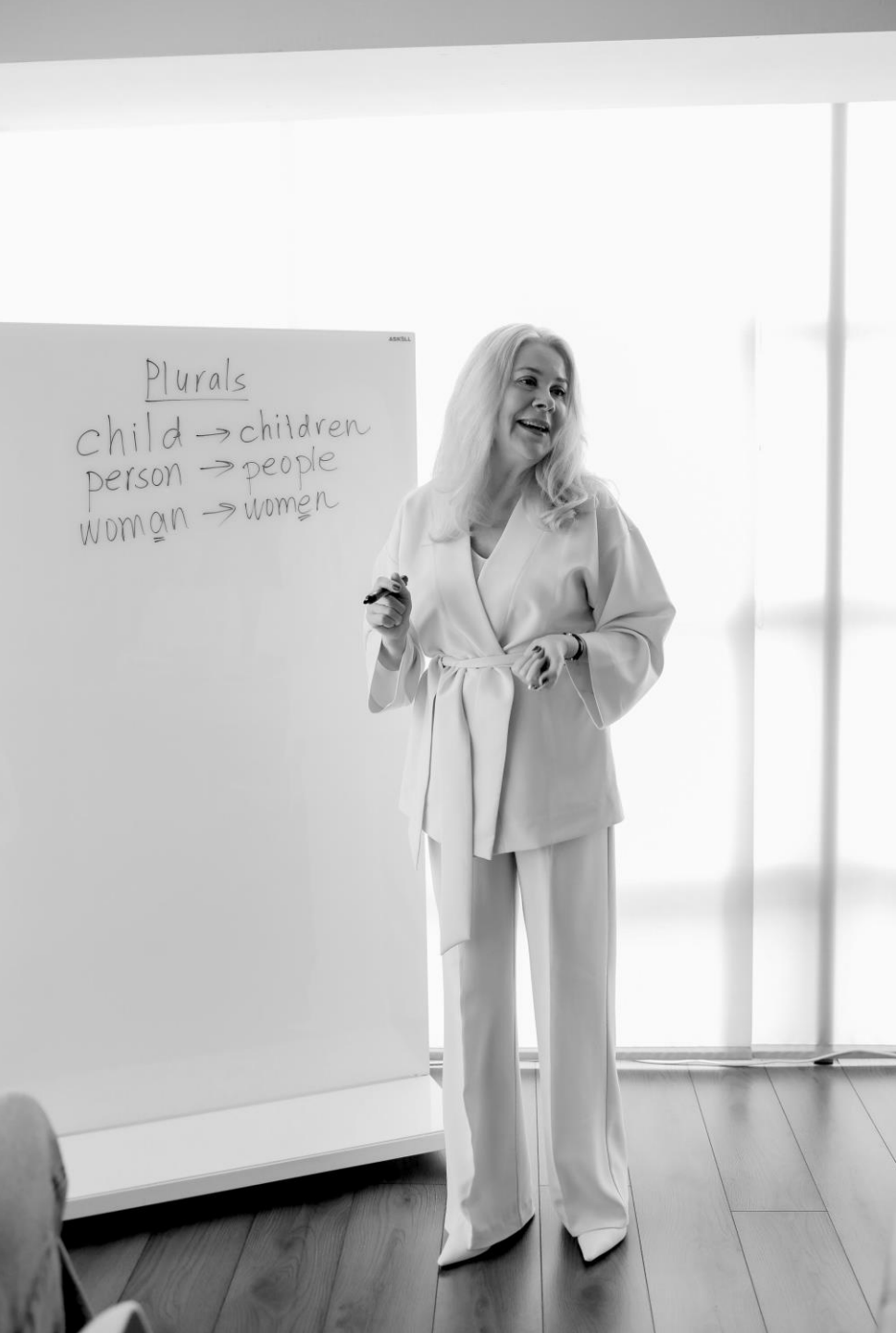
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(2) Photo by Mic Oller

(3) Photo by PNW production



How is grounding relevant in adult education?

Being grounded and easeful in one's verticality can give a sensation of self-confidence during the teaching process, so that the educator can maintain clarity at all times. This can reassure participants and help them engage with the session.

Being grounded is an optimal condition for moving in an economic, effortless way. This allows the educator to feel at ease, connected and ready to interact.

By finding a balance between grounding and feeling the upward, resilient thrust into verticality, helps the educator attain an open posture which gives them flexibility and mobility. This state allows them to be more available and creatively responsive to a situation, and agile in their adaptation to the different demands of the evolving environment .

Questions for self-assessment

Questions to answer before watching your video

Open questions

- What do you know about how your body is influenced by gravity?
- When you are working with your groups in your classroom what is your relationship to the ground and the vertical?
- How does feeling stressed influence your connection to these two points of connection?

Questions you can use to take quantitative measurement

Please answer using the 1 to 5 scale where 1 stands for *not at all* and 5 for *very much*

When you are working how aware are you of your contact points with the ground ? (This can include sitting or standing if ground is anything that supports the body)

To what extent do you focus on "grounding" while you are teaching?

To what extent do you take pleasure in feeling "grounded"?

To what extent do you relate your recurrent postures / shapes to your connection to the ground?

To what extent do you connect your breathing to being grounded?

After watching your video

While watching your video did you notice anything particular about your grounding and verticality ?

Would you like to gain more knowledge or improve your relationship to grounding and verticality ?

How would this additional knowledge help you in your teaching environment?

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