

## Coming Home to Yourself

By Elaine Pendergrast

After chopping apples for several minutes, I scooped them into a bowl and the movement of my arms reminded me that I have a body. I stood in front of the table briefly, and let that fact sink in. I recognized that from the time I started preparing the apples until then, my mind was lost in thoughts about the future, and my feelings shifted quickly from one reactive state to another.

### Simple Steps to Becoming Present

I had been "absent" that whole time, but from having practiced Breema for many years, I knew how to take some simple steps toward becoming present. Breema is a holistic system that uses movement, touch, and nine universal principles as practical tools for nurturing a true connection between body, mind, and feelings in any activity or condition of life, and becoming present.

I continued cutting apples, but now experienced my feet contacting the floor and the motion of my hands as I completed each slice. I remembered the Breema Principle *No Extra*. After a brief period my mind quieted down, my feelings were calm, and I was connected to my body. I had "come home" to myself, to the experience—the *taste*—of being present.

### Being With the Body, We Are Supported

Later in a phone conversation with my friend Laura, a licensed acupuncturist and like myself, a Breema instructor, she related how much Breema has been supporting her in daily life.

"Being connected to my body is what makes it possible to have at least a few moments of real participation in my day," she said. "In my treatment room, there's a light that comes on when a client arrives in the waiting

area. When I see that light, rather than automatically rushing out to greet them, I take it as a cue to come to my body. I sit or stand and follow my inhalation and exhalation for three or so breaths. I often experience a fresh energy, and there is a moment of being present. As I move into the session, I'm available to my client, and to myself."

### Nine Principles to Nurture Balance and Harmony

Laura continued, "There are so many moments in my day when one of the Principles supports me to handle situations more harmoniously rather than resisting or reacting. This morning I spilled some juice on the floor and felt a reaction instantly well up, not wanting to take the time to clean it. I remembered *Single Moment/Single Activity* and instead of paying attention to my grumbling mind, I wished to experience my movements—hand reaching for towel, body kneeling, wiping, tossing towel in the trash. It became a satisfying activity rather than a waste of time."

The other Nine Principles of Harmony are *Body Comfortable, Firmness and Gentleness, No Judgment, Full Participation, Mutual Support, No Hurry/No Pause*, and *No Force*.

I'm very grateful for all the moments of coming from the past or future to the present that practicing Breema has made possible for me, and I'm inspired by hearing Laura's experiences. Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, applying one of the Principles can support you to "come home" to yourself as well. If you'd like to discover a tangible sense of wholeness and aliveness, find an opportunity to experience Breema for yourself.

Elaine Pendergrast is a Staff Instructor at the Breema Center in Oakland. She will be teaching a workshop with Laura Rawson and Cathrina Susoev in Petaluma on Saturday, June 8 from 1-4pm. [www.breema.com](http://www.breema.com) or email Laura at [laurar@breema.com](mailto:laurar@breema.com).



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