

STANDING PRACTICE

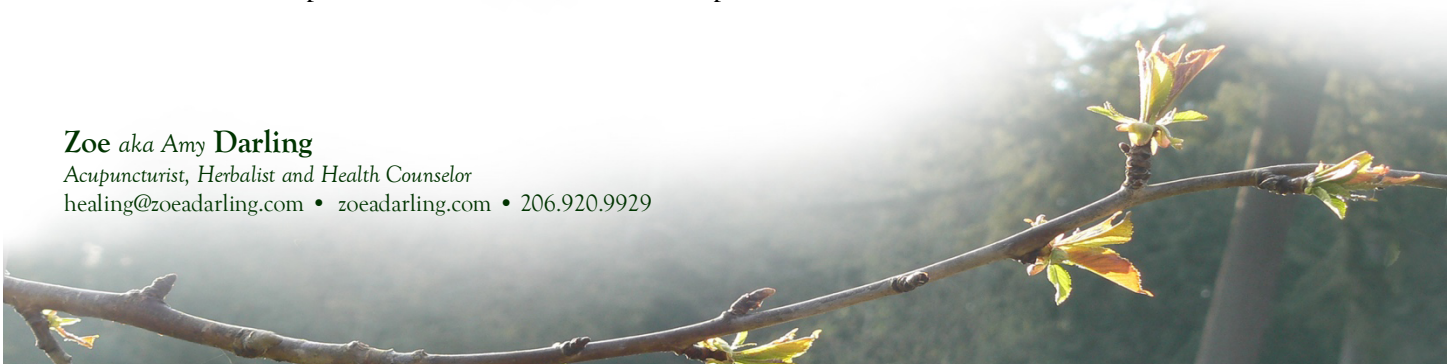
If you feel sleep, unfocused, or can't sit comfortably for any period of time, standing practice can be a good alternative. You can also practice more conscious standing throughout the day. Think of all the moments you spend standing and waiting for something; for a bus, on the telephone, in a line to purchase something, at an elevator. Consider bringing attentive alignment to your body and greater awareness to these moments.

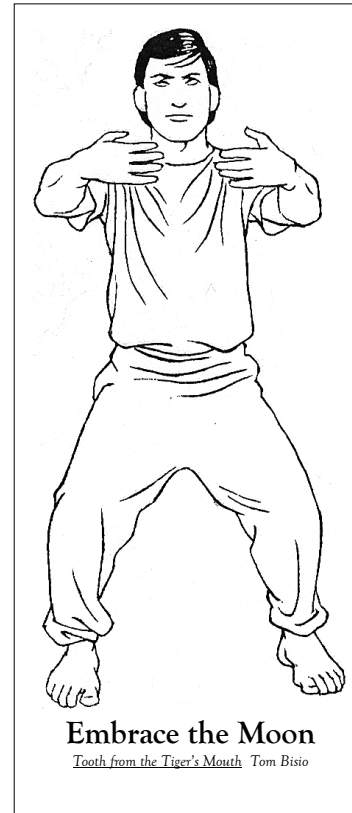
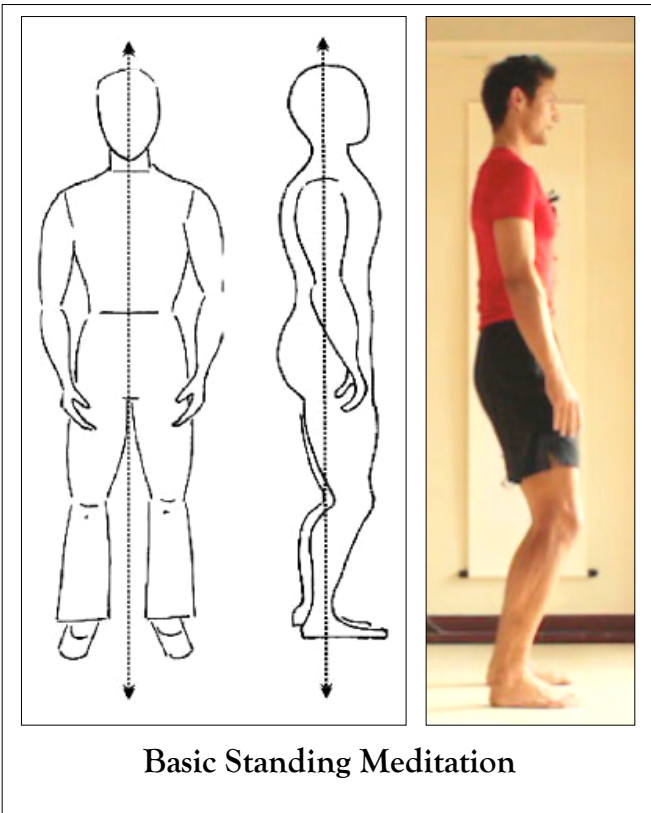
1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, your body weight spread equally between both feet.
2. Gently, without forcing, tuck your tailbone under.
3. Soften or slightly bend your knees. Soften the crease between your thighs and abdomen.
4. Imagine a string suspended from the top of your head up toward the ceiling or sky. Feel as if the spine is long.
5. As the spine extends upward and the head reaches for the sky, your chin falls softly toward your chest. Just a little bit.
6. Keep your shoulders relaxed, heavy, and your chest *hollow* without excessively rounding the shoulders.
7. Close your lips.
8. Breathe through the nose.
9. Place the tongue against the upper palate, just behind the ridge of your upper teeth. This reduces saliva and allows for proper *qi* circulation.
10. Take several expansive breaths, filling your chest and abdomen completely. As you exhale, root through your feet into the ground.
11. Like a feather gently falling, allow your attention to settle in your lower belly. This area of the body is called the *dantian* (Chinese) or *hara* (Japanese). It lies 2-3 inches below the navel and several inches deep into the body.
12. Breathe comfortably and naturally. When distracted, gently bring your awareness back to the *dantian* or *hara*. Breath counting can be done in standing posture.
13. As you stand, you may notice tension cropping up in your shoulders, knees, hips and buttocks. Breathe softness into these areas. It may help to clench and then release, teaching your body the difference. . For alternatives to a basic standing posture, you can also experiment with *Embrace the moon* posture as shown below.

Zoe aka Amy Darling

Acupuncturist, Herbalist and Health Counselor

healing@zoeadarling.com • zoeadarling.com • 206.920.9929





Contact me with questions and curiosities about this practice and meditation in general. Supporting people to tune in is my greatest passion!!!

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