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Patting and stroking

Patting (or slapping) and stroking your body can stimulate the flow of energy, improve circulation, and help release tension. Use a quality of touch that feels good and matches your sense of your body's needs: a vigorous slap to stimulate, a gentler pat or squeezing action to relax, stroking to move energy in or out, up or down.

The shoulders are a good place to start as we accumulate so much tension there. Support your right elbow with the back of your left hand and use your right palm or fist to pat the shoulder area. Work down along the outside and top of the arm, then turn the arm over and work back up along the inside of the arm. As you get near the shoulder, raise your arm so you can pat the armpit area, then move onto your ribcage. Just below the collarbone is especially good for the lungs.

For centering and energizing, pat your belly, hips, buttocks, then (carefully!) over your kidneys; use the thumb side of a loose fist for the kidneys. A good slapping can leave you feeling invigorated and centered in your lower body.

For grounding and releasing the legs, pat or slap down from your hips and pelvis; down the outside, the back, and the front of the legs, and up the inside.

After each set of pats, pause and focus on the sensations awakened in your body.

After the patting, you can stroke along your limbs, and up or down your torso, front and back. Find which direction feels best to you. Often out from the shoulder along the outside of the arm and in up the inside of the arm to the armpit feels good; down the outside and back of the legs and up the inside; and down the torso, back and front.