

Body Prayer
Heather Ruce

First time through (you may want to use “we” and pray it on behalf of all):

May I be anchored, tethered

May I be surrendered, trusting

May I be connected, inter-abiding

May I be free, wide

Second time through (you may want to use “we are” and pray it on behalf of all):

I am anchoring, tethering

I am surrendering, trusting

I am connecting, inter-abiding

I am freeing, widening

Third time:

anchored, tethered

surrendered, entrusted

connected, inter-abided

free, wide

In times of disorder, disorientation, chaos, and shifting paradigms, it is important to be able to have words and practices which can provide a ballast and some stability rooted in Something of great heft and substantiality. This Something must be outside of circumstance, beyond time and what is to come, and is beyond our usual way of seeing. I would like to share more fully about the significance of each of the words that accompany the gestures. You may find your own meaning in them but I offer you this.

‘May I be anchored and tethered.’ We can be anchored, tethered to ‘mystical hope’ and to the ‘mercy of God.’ The work of Cynthia Bourgeault gives great depth to these two substances. Mystical hope is about not being tied to a desired outcome but rather able to draw from an inner wellspring, to remain connected to the One who is always Present to us, to experience a lightness of being regardless of what is happening. The mercy of God can also be recognized as God’s warm-heartedness, a fierce bonding love, compassion, forgiveness; God’s inner most being turned outward to sustain the visible and created world in unbreakable love; an electromagnetic field of love, a vast gentle wideness, a wholeness of love from which nothing can ever possibly be lost; the great weaver collecting and binding the scattered and broken parts of our lives in a tapestry of Divine Love.

‘May I be surrendered and trusting.’ Surrender and trust are what we practice when we practice centering prayer. This practice begins to suffuse our lives throughout each day. It imprints in our physiology the path of kenosis or non-clinging that Jesus laid out for us. We do not cling to what we suppose life ought to be like. We let life come and we let it go. Non-clinging does not mean passively allowing life to happen but rather opens us up to be able to more fully participate in its unfolding. Surrender requires trust, trusting in a benevolent universe that we have a place in. Trusting that what we do is simultaneously insignificant and very important. We have a responsibility to engage without clinging and to trust the help always surrounding us and supporting coherence to emerge.

‘May I be connected and inter abiding.’ We are always connected, whether we recognize it in any given moment or not. We cannot be outside of God, for in God we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). It’s all God, the whole thing, and we can never fall out of it. Jesus

revealed that he is in the Father/Mother, and we are in Jesus, and Jesus is in us (John 14:11). There is an inter-abiding making it difficult for us to find where we end and God begins. We can remember this and begin to recognize this reality in our own heart that is not wholly other than God's Heart.

'May I be free and wide.' We learn to be more free to allow the fruits of the spirit to move through us and into the world. We are free to see and to know that we operate from more than this horizontal realm. We participate in an ever reciprocal Divine exchange. We are enlarged and become wide so that we live from wholeness, from an undivided heart through singleness as Jesus showed us. Whatever we do from that wholeness whether it is saying yes or saying no, can emerge from fullness for fullness. Rather than from divided-ness reinforcing divided-ness.

And through all of the ever-changing and intense external circumstances, may we all trust the invincibility of our own heart. Our hearts are capable of great wisdom and paradox. We are not as fragile as we may at times feel. Our hearts can be present to great suffering and great love in equal measure. Our hearts can stretch and break and generate and heal and nourish. How can we continue to be healing balm? Givers of nourishment to the world and all beings? Through collected heart presence we do not acquiesce in detached disengagement, but rather live into these questions without jumping too quickly to answer them.

May we be anchored and tethered.

May we be surrendered and trusting.

May we be connected and inter-abiding.

May we be free and wide.

May we trust the invincibility of our heart.