

# TOOLS FOR GROUNDING, PROTECTING, AND BLOCKADING

**Time:** 10 minutes for each

**Goal or purpose of the exercise:** To learn tools that can help you protect yourself and others in your group and de-escalate a situation.

## How it's done/facilitator's note

- **Centring:** When you are centred, you are calm, stable, present in the moment, and hard to push off balance physically or emotionally. You can also have a calming effect on those around you. In order to centre yourself, focus on your centre of gravity. It's just below your navel, deep inside your body. Focus here when you feel upset or under pressure in order to ground yourself and reconnect with your power within.
- **Point to attacker:** You can make a violent attack very visible by getting everyone in the vicinity to sit down so the attacker is suddenly visible to all and to the media.
- **Puppy pile:** To protect someone being attacked on the ground. One person kneels and forms a bridge with their body over the victim; others then pile onto the bridge. Don't squash the person attacked!
- **Step in between perpetrator and demonstrator:** Keep your palms open and visible, try not to touch the attacker, or at the very least, do not hold onto him or her. Just inter-positioning yourself can often be enough to stop an attack. Talk reassuringly to the attacker.
- **Surround ("U") and move perpetrator away:** With several people, step between the attacker and the demonstrator, form a U shape around the perpetrator, and move him or her away. Don't completely surround the attacker; make sure to leave him or her an 'out'. Talk with the attacker reassuringly as you do this.
- **Surround ("O") and absorb demonstrator:** Totally surround a demonstrator who's being attacked and absorb him or her back into the crowd.
- **Form a line between opposing factions/blocking:** Knees relaxed and not locked, stand shoulder-width apart. Be aware of how strong a line you need to make and the different impacts of different stances, e.g.: standing separately > holding hands > linking elbows > linking wrists.
- **Staying put/holding your ground:** For use, for example, in a blockade. Centre yourself, send your roots down deep into the earth, feel yourself relaxed and heavy.

### ***Other variations***

- Sitting in a row: place larger people on the ends.
- Sitting in a circle: Cross your hands between your legs and hold each others' wrists with a strong grip. In this formation, you can see each other and give emotional support. Make sure to warn each other about what's happening behind, where the other side of the circle cannot see.
- Sitting in a column: Wrap your legs round the person in front, lean forward, put your hands around the chest of the person in front of you, and keep your head down.
- Self-defence posture: First lace your hands together at the base of your skull, with your elbows together protecting your temples. Curl up in a foetal position on the ground, lying on your right side to protect your liver. Most main organs and head are thus protected, although your kidneys are still vulnerable