

Stacy Remke ([00:07](#)):

Hello everyone. Welcome to the practice space where we'll explore ideas and skills to support us in our professional practice. I'm Stacy Remke, a clinical social worker, and currently a professor at the University of Minnesota's Graduate School of Social Work. Before coming to the university, my practice experience was in the field of pediatric palliative care where I dealt with complex themes like grief loss, child welfare, and sustainability. Within the field, I have a great interest in exploring how social workers can find support and develop skills to sustain their important practice.

Sara Remke ([00:40](#)):

And I'm Sara Remke. I'm a practicing end of life doula and a meditation teacher. I have a particular interest in energy and boundaries. I also have a private practice where I work with individuals and professionals, often therapists and caregivers, where we explore these various concepts and how they intertwine with our work and what does our energy communicate, how do we discern our own energy versus someone else's energy? And how do we create and maintain these boundaries? I find these subjects absolutely fascinating. And I am the sister of Stacy Remke.

Stacy Remke ([01:21](#)):

Thanks for joining us in this space, the Practice Space. We would like to talk about the intersections between our meditation practice and our various clinical practices and how we've found these skills to be really helpful with promoting our wellbeing and also our engagement with our clients.

([01:45](#)):

So today we're going to talk about challenging energies and how we often encounter those in our practice, especially when we engage with people who maybe have a lot going on in their lives. Maybe they're dealing with something very intense or emotional. I think of situations like there's just been a death in the family, or someone's got very difficult news about a new family situation. Maybe they got news of a divorce or there's some issues around domestic violence, for example. When you walk into a situation and you're confronted by an atmosphere that's composed at least in part of your own energies of hopefully curiosity and inquiry, but also sometimes trepidation, sometimes a little bit of sort of a bracing for whatever's going to happen. And then you encounter people who have their own energy related to meeting with you as a social worker, as a clinician or as a teacher, whatever it is. And so there's suddenly a lot going on in those rooms. And so today we wanted to talk a little bit about what you do or what meditation skills can be helpful in those encounters and protecting our own, protecting is the right word, I want to say. The ability that we carry with us to maintain our own, center our own energy in that process.

Sara Remke ([03:21](#)):

Yeah, I would call that how do we maintain our center? I think that's a good word for that. And for me, the first thing I go to is grounding, grounding, grounding, grounding. And what does that actually mean? There's methods to actually ground yourself. And when you're a well-grounded, you are not jumping out, chasing, I think you might've used that word before, Stacy. It's like when we're ungrounded, we're kind of chasing everything in the room. And when you're really well-grounded and centered in yourself, you have different powers of observation about what's actually taking place, and you don't necessarily have a need to right away get involved with whatever's energies are happening. Does that make sense?

Stacy Remke ([04:04](#)):

Yeah. And I think probably what I've talked about before is a tendency that I've experienced to have my energy reach out ahead of me. And yes, I think it's kind of chasing maybe, or even at least just seeking or searching, which is also ungrounded. So it can become ungrounded very quickly.

Sara Remke ([04:27](#)):

I mean, I talk about that a lot in my classes. People's energy enters the room before they do's the description that you're using. And when you're really well grounded, you, you're kind of holding that back a little bit.

Stacy Remke ([04:43](#)):

Well, and you reminded me too of sometimes we joke about it, you have this great plan and then you walk into the room and something else is called for. And I think sometimes that's what's going on is that we're actually interacting with the room, not just in terms of energy, but also in terms of our own imagination. We start to conjure up expectations of what's going to happen, and we can almost play it out in our own minds that may or may not be related to what actually happens. And sometimes those pictures that we carry in our minds actually become kind of problematic and kind of create a barrier to being able to engage the situation as it actually is in the moment.

Sara Remke ([05:26](#)):

And that's what that grounding helps you to be present to that. I think what also goes along with that is when we can resist saying, oh, that's the bad guy, or Oh, that's the abuser, or, oh, that's the narcissist, or that's to really try and resist those labels and really ground yourself and it helps you to be present to just what is happening in that moment.

Stacy Remke ([05:50](#)):

Absolutely. To encounter the situation as it is and not what imagine or prefer it to be.

Sara Remke ([05:59](#)):

Right. And I always think it's interesting in my experience with people dying, there's so many similarities, but each situation is completely unique. So we have that probably you're used to going into, I know what the situation is that I'm walking into, and in some sense you do, but in the other sense, it's also completely unique to this family,

Stacy Remke ([06:22](#)):

Right? I think of when I walked into situations and I can almost see the eye roll of, oh no, the social workers coming. So it's not only my expectations, but theirs kind of create almost like a third potential reality. So the more neutral we can be going in, the more open, the more grounded, the more likely we are to be able to engage in a real encounter in the moment, less baggage attached. Just maybe one way to think of it,

Sara Remke ([06:54](#)):

Our own baggage as well as the other's baggage. Exactly.

Stacy Remke ([06:57](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah.

Sara Remke ([06:59](#)):

So the other thing we mentioned is how before is you're walking up to the house, you're walking up to the situation, you take a minute to ground yourself and then to place a rose out in front of you, maybe two feet out in front of you. And that rose is the collector of all the energies that are racing around the room, and it helps to create a very natural boundary between yourself and whatever is going on. Would you agree with that?

Stacy Remke ([07:30](#)):

Yeah. And we use the rose just as a common symbol of something that has a lot of positive associations with it. And that visualization helps us organize our energy and kind of collected, like you say.

Sara Remke ([07:49](#)):

Yeah, it's just a tool. And me, what I think of is how layered a rose is. So it's got layers of what going on. I found that incredibly helpful.

Stacy Remke ([08:01](#)):

And our teachers talk about it as a symbol in the west of a lotus is in the East, that it's just kind of through history in a powerful symbol

Sara Remke ([08:11](#)):

And it's neutral. You're not protecting throwing up a barrier. It could be a very neutral thing that could just collect whatever is not needed in the situation kind of.

Stacy Remke ([08:27](#)):

Right. Have we talked about grounding like techniques for grounding? Maybe we could review that quickly.

Sara Remke ([08:35](#)):

Sure. Well, I mean there's a lot of different ways to ground. How I like to teach it is that you, there's a space that we call the center of your head. And if you were to go two inches back from your eyes, and then imagine from the bridge of your nose straight back, you're going to find the center of your head just above your ears where those lines kind of cross and it's very spacious. It could take you a little bit of practice to find that. And you're not really trying to see, you just want to kind of tap into that very spacious spots. And then what you do is you imagine a literal grounding cord coming all the way up from deep in the center of the earth, which is 4,000 miles. And just let that come up and connect to the base of your spine, which is also known as the first chakra, but the base of your spine.

([09:30](#)):

And you can let that be three inches, six inches. If you're walking into a really heavy situation, you might want that as wide as your hips, and it really can support you. And it's, I think of it as a magnet that's kind of really holding you to the earth and keeping you very present. And you think of it as a resource. It's a resource for you. When you're not grounded, you're kind of up high, as we talked about, chasing or going after what's in the room. It's a difference of being receptive or being pushing out, I think. Yeah.

Stacy Remke ([10:08](#)):

And I noticed the center of the head for me is always a little bit further back than I first think it is. And so I go to that space and then I kind of ask myself, am I there or do I need to step back even a little bit further? And often when I do that, then it's like, ah, there it is. That's how I find it. It's easy to kind of try and stay for me as a visual person sort of close to my eyes, but the center of your head is actually further back into your brain, if you will.

Sara Remke ([10:42](#)):

And that's interesting that you say it's further back for you. I always think it's lower than I expect it to be. So this is a good, it's going to be a little bit different for everybody. And just if you don't get too hung up on where is it? Where is it? Just trying to relax into that space, and when you find it, you're just going to feel it and you're going to know.

Stacy Remke ([11:03](#)):

And I love how our teachers talk about the energy knows where to go, so we don't have to overthink it, but we can be receptive to finding that space and allow that part of ourselves that knows how to find it to take us there.

Sara Remke ([11:17](#)):

Yes, exactly. Exactly.

Stacy Remke ([11:20](#)):

And that's really, for me, it's very relieving to be able to turn over that responsibility, just a part of myself that's smarter than me.

Sara Remke ([11:31](#)):

And so then what you want to do is just once you create that grounding cord, think of it as being, it's open, it's hollow, it's literally energies can move up and down through that grounding cord. And it's really developing a relationship to the earth. That's what it is. You can just really allow that to happen and you can change your grounding cord. I would suggest with every client, with every house you move in and out of with every hospital room, you move in and out of with every patient, client you see, create a new one, just drop off the old one. Let it get recycled down in center of the earth, bring up a fresh one. That would also keep you very present to whoever you're dealing with.

Stacy Remke ([12:11](#)):

Each encounter I think of for those clinicians too, who may sit in an office and have people come in and out of their office all day, that kind of grounding creates a neutrality in the space as well. And it's just kind of a good habit. It's like a good discipline to just kind of keep clearing the space, like our own auric space, but also the literal space that we're in occupying.

Sara Remke ([12:44](#)):

You just reminded me that I used to have a woman in my classes. She was an attorney for the state, and she was on the phone all day with really, really hard cases, just one after another after another. And we really talked about changing that grounding court after each phone call. It could just be 20 seconds just to acknowledge that phone call is over, now I'm dealing with something different. It's giving more attention to the person you're actually interacting with,

Stacy Remke ([13:13](#)):

Freeing yourself up for the new encounter. And also, as you mentioned, the grounding as a resource. So it's also bringing up fresh energy to support you in that encounter. And I think of a lot of social workers, by the end of the day, you feel pretty wiped out. And I think of part of what you're doing is expending energy all day. And if we don't have ways to replenish it, we think of ways like sleep and eating, and I dunno, whatever, doing something fun as ways to replenish, but this is another more kind of, I want to say essential way of replenishing.

Sara Remke ([13:51](#)):

Yes. And it's also a way to just allow whatever energies you're done with to just fall off down your grounding cord and get recycled. You don't have to literally carry those around all day. You can just be like, okay, let me just let that go down my grounding cord

Stacy Remke ([14:05](#)):

Given. Yeah. And I think of how often in our practice we talk about things like, let that go. This adds a layer of visualization and whatever you think of the actual energetic mechanics, I think even just that habit of appreciating each encounter is impacting us at some level and letting that go. In our yoga teacher, she reaches way up and she's like, let that go. I like to do that stretch up and whatever it takes to let it go. So we're kind of talking about layering. There's a thought process, there's visualization process, there's a energetic process that we're undergoing, and we're, I think talking about engaging all those different levels, all those different layers of interaction at the same time.

Sara Remke ([14:58](#)):

And then the other thing that you can do anytime throughout the day is to just replenish your space, right? So you could cut off your grounding cord, you could create a new grounding cord, and then just imagine from well above the top of your head, just bring in lots and lots of gold and cosmic suns and just let them fill your personal ORIC space and let go of that Spence energy. Any energy that's not yours, anything that you can't do anything about in this moment in time, just let it fall away down your grounding cord.

Stacy Remke ([15:32](#)):

And I think of that as an exercise you could do too, to notice any tension in your body, any place you're holding tension in your body, invite those golden suns to just melt that away so you can use it as another resource. The energies are drawn in to replenish and also ease or soothe.

Sara Remke ([15:56](#)):

You remind me that grounding is a resource because you're utilizing the earth's energy instead of your own. If you're sort of seeing one hard case out there all day long, and you're just completely using your own energy for that, that's what depletes you.

Stacy Remke ([16:16](#)):

Absolutely.

Sara Remke ([16:17](#)):

You can allow yourself to draw on that earth energy and replenishing with those golden suns. You're getting assistance from the universe and it's not going to deplete you yourself.

Stacy Remke ([16:29](#)):

That's a very good point. The burden of the expense of energy, if you will. It doesn't have to be ours. Yeah,

Sara Remke ([16:40](#)):

It doesn't have to be ours. And I just really want to remind people that, I mean, these are practices. It may take you a little bit of time, even if you just remember one grounding cord in the morning, it's going to be better than none. But the more you feel that it's helping you, the easier it's going to be to just be like, okay, I'm going to see a new client. Let me do a new grounding cord. Let me replenish. And then you're just going to be fresher and more present all through, more

Stacy Remke ([17:05](#)):

Available to

Sara Remke ([17:06](#)):

And more available. I like

Stacy Remke ([17:08](#)):

That. Whatever's going on. I think of I'm essentially a pretty lazy meditator. I've spent hours and hours doing meditation of course, and classes and stuff. But nowadays, I think of, I very frequently use these techniques in a very quick way, but often grounding a mindful practice of checking in with myself that where my energy going to the center of my head. So I just want to reinforce, we're talking about techniques that we found really helpful. And as you just said, even starting small, starting with one thing at a time, just think about what grabs your attention. Maybe that's a clue for you of something that's going to be really helpful to start with and just start practicing it.

Sara Remke ([17:57](#)):

And really, if you come home at the end of the day and you are just wiped out, I highly recommend just kind of making a grounding cord and filling your space with fresh, neutral energy, cosmic energy. I think you'll instantaneously feel a little bit of a boost and just,

Stacy Remke ([18:16](#)):

Yeah. So one of the brief interventions or meditations that I often do for myself is at the end of the day, and I often do this before I go to bed, just create a new grounding cord, fill up my space with lots of golden cosmic and green earth energy, and then create a spiral of roses going around me all around me and allowing that to just kind of capture the tensions of the day. And then I explode those roses and recycle that energy. And it's just, for me, a nice little visualization exercise helps calm me down, helps. And I think it's very helpful to remind myself that I've collected people's energy through the day and it better serves them when they have it back to them. And

Sara Remke ([19:08](#)):

Well, you brought up a very good point. I'm not sure that we mentioned that. So if you do create that rose before you walk into a situation to collect the energies after you leave, you do want to explode that and recycle that energy, right? Yeah. You want to take back whatever's yours and whatever's anybody else's, they can have it back. And people do give us their energy because they don't want to have to deal with it,

Stacy Remke ([19:33](#)):

Or they're doing the thing of they're racing out ahead of themselves as well. I mean, there's a lot of reasons why I met some. I've met some very psychotic people, for example, who are in the throes of their psychosis are projecting a lot of energy out into the field. And that can stay with you too. And maybe we should clarify when we talk about exploding the rows, you can literally just visualize that exploding. But I think it can also be helpful to send enough cosmic energy into it, golden energy to just allow it to explode.

Sara Remke ([20:11](#)):

I mean, it's a tool. So what you're doing is you're just letting it become dust. Sometimes I think of fireworks or whatever image works for you, the important concept is that you're taking something solid and you're letting it just explode into dust. And then

Stacy Remke ([20:31](#)):

Recycling.

Sara Remke ([20:32](#)):

Yes. And then recycling. Yeah, exactly.

Stacy Remke ([20:35](#)):

That energy. Yeah. So it's not lost. It's like a continual movement,

Sara Remke ([20:39](#)):

Right?

Stacy Remke ([20:40](#)):

Yeah.

Sara Remke ([20:42](#)):

What it does is it brings it into a flowing state. It makes it easier to assimilate. Yeah.

Stacy Remke ([20:52](#)):

Sort of process what's happening. I could say that too. Yeah.

Sara Remke ([20:56](#)):

And it's funny because when I first started doing that, I was like, what is this crazy stuff? And I thought it was really weird and odd, and now it's so embedded in what I do on a daily basis. So it does work if you're willing to try it.

Stacy Remke ([21:13](#)):

Well, and probably it's worth saying, as you mentioned before, it's a practice and it's going to feel a little clunky at first or maybe a little brother or whatever, A little weird. But yeah, look and see what resonates and look and see what helps you feel better and let that guide you.

Sara Remke ([21:33](#)):

For me, I just think of it as a language and it becomes a language of like, okay, there's some energy here that's not working for me. What do I do? Oh, I can put it on a rose, explode that rose. I can replenish my space. I can make a new grounding cord. It is just a tool that's representing a concept of how to replenish and refresh yourself.

Stacy Remke ([21:58](#)):

And it's a way of talking about things that tend to be invisible, but are something that many of us experience like that atmosphere when you walk into a certain room or when you engage with someone in a really intense way, you feel like you carry them with you kind of thing. And it's interesting, I just was at a funeral recently, and I was very aware of that when I was at the funeral and for a while afterwards of just kind of carrying with me some of the energy, the intense emotional energy that was there. And it was really helpful to use these tools to kind of move that energy, let it find a resting place. So I could imagine years ago that might've kept me up at night thinking about various things. My mind would go spinning about something, but now I know better about how to work with that energy so I can rest.

Sara Remke ([22:54](#)):

Yeah. And how else would that, I mean, that could also be, you could be overcome with grief, you could become depressed, you don't know what happened, you just feel really down, and that's what you're talking about. That's what those energies manifest in our lives in different ways,

Stacy Remke ([23:10](#)):

Right? Yeah. So depending on what happened, of course it's going to play out differently in our own life. But yeah, I think of a lot of the things that people struggle with sleeplessness or feeling confused or feeling like they don't know what to do. Kind of stuck or stymied.

Sara Remke ([23:31](#)):

Angry.

Stacy Remke ([23:32](#)):

Angry, maybe even sad for reasons that you're not quite sure. It's welling up in you and you felt fine 10 minutes ago and now you're crying. Think about that. How much of that is even our own energy? And maybe we could talk about gauges here and that kind of exercise of checking in with ourselves.

Sara Remke ([23:54](#)):

Yeah, that's actually a really great one. So say you get home from work and you're feeling really sad and you don't really know why you're feeling sad. Everything else in your day was kind of okay. And you can put a gauge out in front of you and you just ask yourself, how much of that is my energy? And sometimes that can be very surprising. You get 80%, you get 20%, you get 60 I, and then it tells you, oh,



okay, I'm feeling that sadness because of that kid that I over identified with or felt helpless. Who knows why you picked that up? So just knowing that it's not necessarily your energy can be incredibly helpful.

Stacy Remke ([24:36](#)):

One of the things that used to happen to me a lot is the disavowed energies would be the ones that I would be carrying with me. So the sadness that no one was expressing or the anger. And so having those tools allows me to process it in a way that's authentic for me, even if it wasn't able to come out in the conversation of where the other person was at. Both can be kind of true. And by a gauge, you could use a thermometer kind of idea or a radioactive kind of one of those little dials, a little needle that moves. So you could be creative with that as well.

Sara Remke ([25:16](#)):

Yeah, exactly. It's just something with numbers on it with a needle. That's what I think of.

Stacy Remke ([25:21](#)):

Right. They can give you some kind of quick and dirty assessment of where you're at

Sara Remke ([25:26](#)):

Yeah.

([25:29](#)):

And so then what happens if you discover that 60% of the energy is not yours?

Stacy Remke ([25:37](#)):

Well, I would put a rose out there and invite that rose to collect the energy that doesn't belong to me, that's not in current time with me. And then to explode that rose, recycle it, and send the energy back to the other people with the intention that it goes to their highest good. So not to sort of fling it at them, but to offer it back whatever way their spirit can use it.

Sara Remke ([26:09](#)):

Right, right. Yeah.

Stacy Remke ([26:12](#)):

So today we talked about grounding. We talked about exploding roses, maintaining going to the center of our head, maintaining our own center, using these tools, using a gauge to,

Sara Remke ([26:28](#)):

And filling your space with fresh,

Stacy Remke ([26:31](#)):

Refreshing your energy space and using a gauge to figure out, to help you assess how much of this is your own energy. Yeah, that's a lot. It's lot. But I think we were both saying, you know, start small practice, whatever resonates. We'll have descriptions of these exercises too, so you can refer back to them and just invite you to try it and let us know how it goes. Yes. Good luck, everybody.

Sara Remke ([27:03](#)):

Well, that does it for our practice session today. We hope you will practice these skills on your own. Let us know how it's going, and we'd love to hear from you. Thanks for listening.

Stacy Remke ([27:15](#)):

Thanks for joining us today. Bye.

Speaker 3 ([27:19](#)):

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