



Ecotherapy grounding exercise

Moving from Tiger vision to Horse awareness as a Hakalau meditation

Hakalau meditation is a wonderful way to become present and grounded-in-the-moment. The practice of Hakalau is straightforward: first you choose a fixed point of focus, and then you slowly bring your awareness to your peripheral vision, while continuing to hold your attention on the fixed spot. Finally, you allow your focus to spread out to fully experience peripheral vision, still connecting to the fixed spot, but now within the broadest of visions. Sounds simple, and it is, but Hakalau medication can be powerful and profound.



Animals move between fixed gaze and wide vision throughout their day. Basic survival demands an ability to do this – a predator needs to be sharply focused on prey ... and a prey animal must maintain a soft, broad focus that acts as an environmental scan to pick up any movement of predators. As all animals need both types of vision, they must become expert in moving between these foci, and in using all their body to provide continual feedback. Herd animals—grazers and browsers—have adapted beautiful ways to read their environment; in fact, ‘reading’ is a much more organic process than reading a book! Animal ‘reading’ is much more mutual and connected, not only to herd members, but to the environment itself. For example, horses can pick up increased heart rate and blood pressure from meters away and can pick up vibrations through the sensitive parts of their hooves, too. Their large electro-magnetic cardiac field influences any creature within its wide range. Horses pick up the ‘vibes’ of their herd mates almost instantly.

Chickens and bird flocks function in much the same way. Chickens have focused gaze to see that tiny seed or the movement of a small bug in the soil in front of them, but respond in milliseconds to a shadow casting over their area—it might just be a predator hawk after a meal. The waft from the wing of one flock mate results in the entire flock scattering. Animals and birds are truly present in their environment.



Being able to move from a narrow focused ‘predator’ gaze to a soft, broad focus of a herd animal is both a necessary skill for life ... and a great way to become centered in our environment.





Tiger vision to Horse Awareness

Tiger vision: Pick a fixed spot to look at, preferably above eye level, so that your field of vision seems to bump up against your eyebrows, but the eyes are not so high so as to cut off the field of vision. If you are outside, a spot on a tree trunk is ideal. A bird nest or a knot in a fence post ... whatever is in front of you ... pick it and focus your tiger eyes ...

1. **Tiger eyes** ... As you stare at this spot, gently drop all non-essentials from your mind, giving your prefrontal cortex the job to focus all of your attention on the spot
2. **Melting tiger eyes** ... Begin to melt your tiger eyes. Envision your vision-focus softening, liquifying, melting out and spreading to your left and to your right. Keep looking at the spot, but become aware of the peripheral vision pooling to your right and to your left
3. **Melting tiger eyes** ... Continue melting and allowing your vision to spread out right to left ... but now allow it to pool down and rise up, so that your peripheral vision has four directions: left and right, and up and down ... keep a looking at your spot, but more and more fully expand outward and enjoy the power of the soft vision of your peripheral gaze, broadening ... widening ... expanding your connection with your environment
4. **Softly disengage your eyes from the spot and enjoy your horse eyes!**

This is a great practice to do throughout your day ... especially when you are not able to focus, or feeling very 'in the box' focused. Let the horses out ...



But, be ready when tiger vision is needed in your day ... we need both horse and tiger vision!

