



## **Short Term Trauma Healing Resourcing Exercises**

1. Have the client ground—feel their feet, sit bones, pelvic floor, chair under them, couch behind them, earth, etc. If you'd like, you can have the client sit on floor and sit with them. Ask them to describe what they notice in their body as they do.
2. Have the client wiggle their fingers and toes.
3. Have client look around the room and allow their eyes to land on something that feels good to them. Next, have them describe three details of what it is they see. This takes the attention off the body, where the charge is, and into the present moment.
4. Have the client scan for what feels good in their body and take a vacation into it.
5. Invite the client to place a hand or two on their own body—perhaps a hand on the heart and a hand on the belly in a containing touch. Have them feel hands from torso and torso from hands. Ask—what are your hands communicating to you right now?
6. If appropriate, use relational regulation through touch: Your foot on their foot, your hand on their back, or kidneys, etc. Ask permission before you contact—check it out with them, ask them to tell you when they are ready for the contact and when they are ready for you to remove the contact.
7. Teach the client the practice of savoring—deepening and anchoring a resourcing experience in the body. Pleasure signals safety.
8. Help the client tolerate what doesn't feel good (and not get sucked into the trauma vortex). Help them stay with awareness enough to metabolize the anxiety and discomfort and move it through their bodies.
9. Have client make a list of their inner and outer resources and spend time savoring each one.

10. Import resources either into the trauma (deep imagery and psychodrama), or into the moment (what's it like to have your loving husband next to you? And how do you notice that relaxation in your body?).
11. Help client tap into their spiritual resources—the Divine, the energetic matrix/field of love, the earth as a holding container, etc., and have them notice what happens in their body as they do.
12. Reality check: What's different now than when the trauma was happening? What, if anything, communicates safety to their nervous system in the present moment? (You there with them, the color of the walls, the capacities they have in their life now that they didn't have before, etc.)
13. "This is my....." tapping, squeezing body exercise
14. Invite the client to push against your hands or the wall. This can help them move from immobility and hypo-arousal into activation and sequence some anger, or simply feel contact, which in and of itself is resourcing.
15. With enough safety, we come out of freeze and dissociation and back into sensation. When that happens, it doesn't always feel good. This can catapult the client back into anxiety and freeze. When this happens: Help them tolerate what doesn't feel good, with the safety of the present moment to metabolize the discomfort, while not getting sucked back into the trauma vortex .
16. Help the client tolerate novelty.



## Recognizing Trauma: Signs and Symptoms

<p><u>Hypo:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of eye contact</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Cowering</li> <li>• Physical freezing</li> <li>• Disassociation</li> <li>• Shock</li> <li>• Unable to speak or answer</li> <li>• Lack of humor</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Not aware of own body</li> <li>• Change in skin color - pink, pale, clammy</li> <li>• Voice change - flat affect</li> <li>• Shallow or irregular breathing</li> <li>• Lack of ability to concentrate</li> <li>• Avoidance of touch</li> <li>• Tightened musculature</li> <li>• Increased heart rate</li> <li>• Inability to form healthy relationships</li> <li>• Inappropriate physical or emotional boundaries</li> <li>• Showing discrepancy between emotion and situation</li> </ul>	<p><u>Hyper:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of eye contact</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Acting out</li> <li>• Overuse of humor</li> <li>• Nervous laughter</li> <li>• Crying</li> <li>• Shaking</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Change in skin color - red and dry</li> <li>• Voice change - high pitched</li> <li>• Shallow or irregular breathing</li> <li>• Lack of ability to concentrate</li> <li>• Overreaction to a situation</li> <li>• Anger or irritation (easily triggered)</li> <li>• Avoidance of touch</li> <li>• Tightened musculature</li> <li>• Increased heart rate</li> <li>• Inability to form healthy relationships</li> <li>• Inappropriate physical or emotional boundaries</li> <li>• Showing discrepancy between emotion and situation</li> </ul>
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## Resource List

### **Make a list of your resources.**

Resources are essential for trauma healing. In order for the body to come out of freeze and/or sequence any stuck fight or flight energy, we have to neuroceptively (that is, with our felt sense) register safety. Our resources, and especially noticing what we feel in our bodies when we experience or imagine our resources, helps us to register safety, move the energy in our bodies, and regulate.

A resource is anything, anyone, or anywhere that lights you up, helps you feel safe, helps you calm down when you are stressed, makes your belly happy, warms your heart, or feels like home. These can be internal or external resources.

### **Examples of external resources:**

- People you care about and/or who you know care about you
- Places in nature that are special to you
- Articles of clothing or jewelry that have special meaning to you
- A pet
- Your home or bed
- An activity like hiking or riding your bike or riding horses
- Spiritual resources: ancestors, guides, angels, animal guides, the divine, etc.

### **Examples of internal resources:**

- A sense of self-confidence
- Knowing you've gotten through challenges in the past
- Humor
- Self-love
- Strength
- Determination
- The capacity to surrender, etc.

Keep your list near by. Grow it. Make a collage or a book of pictures that remind you of your resources. Spend time looking at your list or collage and notice what you feel in your body as you do. Resources are invaluable assets; guard them and grow them.



## **Somatic Trauma Healing Goals**

- Attend to own self-regulation for personal sustainability and to entrain clients' nervous systems—there are two different levels at which healing happens, conscious and implicit, attend to both
- Attend to any real world safety or survival concerns
- Provide appropriate psycho-ed info to help strip shame and normalize clients' experiences
- Reestablish safety in the body
- Utilize relationship to heal wounding with self, others and the world (attachment and relational healing)
- Help the client complete any incomplete defensive responses—allow any stuck fight, flight or freeze to process through the body
- Help the client rework the trauma story in their nervous system with a new outcome
- Help the client restore exploratory orienting vs. defensive orienting (play)
- Support cognitive integration of the traumatic experience
- Support integration of fragmented parts and bring clients into the here and now
- Reestablish clients' abilities to move fluidly between sympathetic & parasympathetic states
- Help clients to develop somatic self-esteem, somatic mastery and the capacity to sequence and process energy on a daily basis
- Help clients reframe the experience to include an organic empowered view
- Help clients heal their relationship with the larger spiritual field and a develop a sense of trust in themselves and the world (earned secure attachment with the Divine)
- Mark any initiations or transformations