

other patterns.

Adult coloring books with mandalas and

composition.

setting up photos and thinking about

softly focus your gaze on it.

Find an object that you find calming and

environment for things of that color.

Choose a color and look around the

the present or a calmer state of mind.

purpose and focus on them to come back to

jewelry, charms, etc.) with an intentional

Carry or wear small objects (trinkets,

Visual Anchors

system into a calmer state.

patterns and objects to guide the nervous

spaces with visually soothing lights,

And in a crafted environment, we can fill

way to ground ourselves back in our bodies.

through vision might is a quick and easy

Engaging mindfully with our surroundings

Interception & Embodiment Practices

Internal

body sensations, like hunger, thirst,

pain, temperature. It also refers to

emotional sensations like fluttering from

anxiety or warmth from joy. Embodiment is

the process of connecting to these

sensations.

Trauma works to make us dissociated, numb

or uncomfortable in our bodies, hindering

our ability to be aware of our internal

sensations. By understanding the body, we

can understand and regulate our emotions.

How to increase bodily awareness:

From head to toe, focus on each part of

tensions and emotions without judgement.

from muscles & tendons.

Gently work out chronic tension

Stretching & Massaging

the jaw, neck, shoulders, hips and

prone to carrying stress, especially

Certain areas of the body are more

energy.

of "fighting back" against trauma

relaxing. This gives the body a sense

body and then exhale slowly while

Inhale while tensing the entire

Whole Body

tense, then relax each muscle group.

Starting from the toes, gradually

One Muscle Group at a Time

connection.

sensations to strengthen the mind-body

exercises, be mindful of bodily

muscle tension. While doing these

trauma energy and reduce chronic

whole body. This helps to release

muscle groups to gradually relax the

PMR is when we tense and then release

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

from muscles & tendons.

ones that bring back unwanted memories or

that cause allergic reactions.

Discover what scents you enjoy or remind

you of happy memories, and try to avoid

ones that bring back unwanted memories or

that cause allergic reactions.

that cause allergic reactions.

potpourri.

Herb sachets, handkerchiefs,

Scented Items

out your living area, walking in nature.

using essential oils in diffusers, airing

Making or burning candles and incense,

Aromatherapy & Crafting

states.

environments can help shift our mental

Putting ourselves in different

Walking & Hiking

Local environment.

flowers is a great way to understand your

Collecting, pressing, and arranging

Pressed Flower Art

world, and maybe share it one day.

observe and record what you see in the

Journaling, Drawing, Photography

might cause an allergic response.

avoid in a general sense and anything that

of tactile stimulus. Also know what to

leaves and flowers provides a wide range

Interacting with trees, plants, grass,

Exploring Textures with Fauna (safely)

ground with the Earth.

Walking barefoot on grass or sand to

Barefoot Grounding

sometimes see ourselves as above it.

one part of this world, even if we

that we tend to overlook. And humans are

Nature is one of our great teachers, one

Nature-Based Somatics

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leaves and flowers provides a wide range

sitting.

Can be done while standing or

Balancing Poses

ways to engage your body positioning

Animal Walks

The perfect way to make chores fun!

Dance & Freeform Movement

and the sensations they provide.

Practice mindfulness with each step

Intentional Walking or Pacing

sitting or laying down.

This can be done while standing,

Swaying or Rocking

and mind.

nervous system, which calms the body

can stimulate the parasympathetic

repetitive or rhythmic movements, we

systems. By engaging in gentle,

proprioceptive (body position)

the vestibular (balance) and

because it engages the brain through

Movement

Somatics

Somatics for Everyone!

Therapeutic Exercises, Crafts & Hobbies

Trauma, Dissociation, & Sensory Needs

And always remember to love yourself.

to process trauma. There's no one right way

your own pace. Everyone's healing journey is different,

so use whatever works for you and go at

Everyone's healing journey is different,

When in doubt, listen to your body.

Anything else?

emotional regulation and resilience.

Anyone looking for ways to improve

disconnected from their body.

Survivors of trauma who feel

Individuals with particular sensory

needs.

Taste
Scent and taste are closely linked, so eating and drinking brings a lot of awareness to the body. Taste is especially effective while being mindful about sensations like texture and temperature. Remember to be mindful of your own and others' allergies.

---Aromatic Foods
There are any number of aromatics to cook with. If you're up for the intensity, try chewing on or eating raw ginger, garlic, horseradish, hot sauce, etc.

---Custom Tea Blends
Find your favorite tea blend with dried leaves or grow your own herbs.

---Cooking Techniques
Different cooking techniques can give the same foods different textures, so experiment to find your preferences.

---Baking
Baking involves multiple senses, and there's no limit to what you can put in bread or other pastries. Keeping bread cultures alive, like sourdough, is also a way to give a unique quality to your baking.

Touch
Touch is one of the most direct ways to ground the self and feel connected to the body. Deep pressure, warmth, and different textures activate the parasympathetic nervous system and is a direct way to reconnect with the body.

---Purposful Pressure
Use weighted objects or the surroundings to apply pressure on the body, especially joints.

---Exploring Textures
Running fingers and hands over different fabrics or objects to focus on the textures and how they feel.

---Self-Massage & Squeezes
Gentle squeezes on the hands, arms or shoulders, massaging or rubbing tense areas.

---Working with Fabrics & Crafts
Knitting, crocheting, sewing, weaving, looming, embroidery, pottery, clay molding, bead making.

---Fidget Toys
Spinners, puzzles, rope, etc.

Vagus Nerve Stimulation
The vagus nerve is a key part of the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for the body's "rest and digest" state. It extends from the brainstem through the neck and down to major organs, including the heart, lungs and digestive tract.

When the vagus nerve is activated, it encourages a sense of calm by slowing heart rate and relaxing muscles, shifting the body's focus away from fight/flight/freeze/fawn responses.

Ways to activate the vagus nerve:

- humming, singing, whistling, chanting, resonating
- deep breathing exercises
- gently synchronizing breath control and body movements through activities like Tai Chi or Qi Gong
- cold water splashes on the face
- gently tapping or vibrating the back of the neck

Sound
Focusing on sounds is a powerful way to ground in the present moment or help induce states of relaxation or meditation.

---Surrounding Sounds
What do you hear around you? How does it make you feel? Try to find one to focus on.

---Vocal Movements
Humming, singing, chanting or harmonizing creates vibrations in areas around the vagus nerve.

---Binaural Beats
When we hear two tones, one in each ear, that are slightly different frequencies, the brain processes a new beat that is the difference of those frequencies, creating an auditory illusion to induce something similar to meditation.

---ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response)
A tingling sensation focused on the scalp, back of neck and upper spine. There are numerous sounds that can activate this reaction like tapping, brushing, scratching, whispering, etc.

---Soothing Sounds
Natural or artificial soundscapes, music like ambient, drone, polyrhythmic, noise (white, pink, brown, etc.)

Containment for Emotional Safety
Containment refers to creating a sense of emotional safety and control over for intense emotions. By creating internal and external boundaries, we can avoid becoming overwhelmed or burntout. Containment is not about suppression or repression, but about setting things aside until we're ready to process them.

---Safe Container Visualization
Create physical containers like a box to store small notes or writing in a journal dedicated to expressing feelings, or mental containers in our headspace, as a way to put intense emotions aside to revisit later in a safe environment.

---Self-hugs & Comfort Objects
No one is too old to hug themselves or a stuffed animal!

---Personalized Body Movements
Creating a system of body movements, like touching two or more fingers together in various combinations, can bring awareness to emotions and contain them.

Containment for Emotional Safety
The overarching goal of somatic therapy is to help individuals heal from trauma, manage stress, and develop emotional resilience by reconnecting them with their bodies. The core ideology behind somatic therapy is that the mind and body are deeply interconnected. This means that emotional experiences, especially traumatic ones, are both mentally and physically embodied in the muscles, nervous system, and bodily sensations.

It also acknowledges that healing is a holistic process, so there is a focus on integrating multiple techniques & frameworks into any number of body-centric practices.

Its key goals are to...

- raise body awareness and promote mind-body reconnection.
- encourage emotional regulation by engaging with physical sensations.
- process and release stored tension from trauma & chronic stress.
- foster a sense of safety and presence in the body.

Breathwork Techniques
Breathwork is a core part of somatics because it activates the vagus nerve. Slower, deeper breaths can promote calmness and regulation, while shorter rhythmic breaths can energize or stabilize the nervous system.

---Diaphragm Breaths
Breathe deeply into the belly and slowly exhale to activate the vagus nerve.

---Breathing 4-7-8
Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 7 counts, then exhale for 8 counts. This slows the heart and reduces anxiety.

---Box Breathing 4-4-4-4
Inhale for 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, pause for 4. This technique creates a sense of rhythm to help stabilize ourselves in situations where deeper relaxation may not be possible.

---Blowing Bubbles
This can also help with breath control and mindfulness, and it's fun!

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This can also help with breath control and mindfulness, and it's fun!