

List of Somatic Practices

Here's a list of somatic practices that can help when feeling emotionally overwhelmed or distressed. They are simple, accessible, and can be done in almost any environment:

1. Breathing Techniques

- o **Deep Belly Breathing:** Inhale deeply into the belly, then exhale slowly. Focus on the sensation of the breath moving in and out.
- o **Box Breathing:** Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat.

2. Grounding

- o **Feet on the Floor:** Press your feet into the ground and feel the solid surface beneath you, reminding yourself that you are supported.
- o **Weight Shifting:** Gently shift your weight from one foot to the other to reconnect with the present moment.

3. Orienting

- o **Notice Your Surroundings:** Shift your focus to objects around you—describe them silently or aloud (e.g., "I see a blue pen," "I feel the fabric of my chair").
- o **Look Around:** Scan your environment slowly, noting shapes, colors, and textures. This helps bring focus back to the present.

4. Sensory Channel Switching

- o **Touch:** Feel an object in your environment, like the texture of your clothing, a pen, or a cushion, and focus on the sensation.
- o **Sound:** Focus on one sound around you (e.g., birds, traffic, a fan) and listen closely for as long as you can.

5. Movement Practices

- o **Wiggle Fingers and Toes:** Move your fingers and toes in any direction. This helps to reconnect you with your body and release tension.
- o **Gentle Stretching:** Stretch your arms, neck, or back slowly, focusing on how the muscles feel as they lengthen.
- o **Small Tapping:** Gently tap your body, such as on your arms or legs, to stimulate a calming response.

6. Body Scanning

- o **Scan from Head to Toe:** Start at the top of your head and bring awareness down through your body, checking for any areas of tension or discomfort. Breathe into these areas to release them.

7. Containment Practice

- o **Imaginary Container:** Imagine a container (like a box or jar) that can hold your overwhelming emotions, and picture placing those emotions inside it for safekeeping.
- o **Create Boundaries:** Visualize a safe space around you, where you are protected and feel at ease, as if you have an invisible boundary.

8. Self-Holding

- o **Gentle Self-Hug:** Wrap your arms around yourself, offering comfort and warmth. Squeeze gently and breathe deeply.

- o **Hand on Heart:** Place one hand on your heart and the other on your belly. Feel the rise and fall of your breath as a reminder of your body's calm rhythm.

9. Temperature Change

- o **Cold Water:** Splash your face with cold water or hold an ice cube in your hand to help reset your nervous system.
- o **Warmth:** Wrap yourself in a blanket, hold a warm mug of tea, or sit in the sun to bring a sense of safety.

10. Imagery and Visualization

- o **Safe Place Visualization:** Picture a place where you feel completely safe and at ease, allowing your body to relax into that imagery.
- o **Grounding Visualization:** Visualize roots growing from your feet deep into the earth, anchoring you and offering support.

11. Body Movements and Posture

- o **Shake It Out:** Gently shake your hands, feet, or whole body to release tension and reset your energy.
- o **Posture Adjustment:** Stand or sit tall, rolling your shoulders back and down, and lifting your chest slightly. This opens up the chest and signals calmness.

12. Mindful Sipping

- o Take a slow sip of water or tea, focusing fully on the sensation of the liquid as it moves through your mouth and down your throat.

13. Self-Compassionate Words

- o Place your hand on your heart and gently say kind things to yourself, like "I am safe," or "This too shall pass."

14. Sound-Based Practices

- o **Humming or Chanting:** Softly hum or chant a sound, focusing on the vibration it creates in your body.
- o **Singing:** If it feels right, sing softly to yourself. It can help calm the nervous system and redirect focus.

These practices are meant to bring you back to your body and the present moment, which can create space to process overwhelming emotions.

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