

# A 6-step somatic exercise:

Think of your triggers as a *google translate* to knowing what is happening on the inside.

In order to offer relief, we want to *notice* what is happening, and then process and release the experience on a mind and body level (Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Ogden, Minton & Pain, 2006).

Next time you feel triggered, practice this 6 step somatic exercise to help you process through the experience and experience relief. Practicing this may also help you identify the stimuli that contributed to the change in "homeostasis" so that you can have awareness for the future.

## 1. Notice.

Inhale and exhale. Notice what you feel *on, in* and *around* your body. Speed of breath, heart rate and body temperature.

## 2. Think back to safety.

Think back to at a recent moment you felt most calm, safe and most like your "self".

## 3. Identify.

Identify at what point in time and/or which part of your body began experiencing disturbance or stress.

## 4. Replay.

Replay the scenario from calm state to stressed state, in slow motion (as if watching a slow movie). Identify people, conversations, objects or behaviors that may have made you stressed, uncomfortable or that stand out to you as you're replaying the recent event(s).

## 5. Tune in.

Tune in to your body sensations as you recall the event(s) and slow down and notice if there is any shift in your body, a sensation of tingling, tensing, warming, numbing or cooling in your chest, arms, legs, face or an overall change in body temperature.

## 6. Healing hands.

Place your hand on the area that has experienced a shift or change, and breath deeply. If it's an overall feeling, you can simply place your hands on your heart.

Doing this allows the body to process the *somatic experience*, and creates a passageway to release the tension.

Notice if something comes up, an image, sensation, awareness or understanding that offers clarity to the situation. If nothing comes up, that's ok. Simply slowing down, pacing your breath and raising awareness is progress and helpful in itself.

I encourage you to practice this after an upsetting experience, to allow your body to process the emotions and communications of your body. You may also choose to practice this before a stressful situation so that you can identify potential triggers and plan ahead ways to support yourself.

Sources:

Ogden, Minton & Pain (2006) Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) 1st Edition

Rothschild, B (2000) the Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment

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