WORKSHEET · SENSORIMOTOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

Resources in the body

Five gentle practices for discovering the steadiness your body already knows

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In Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, a “resource” is anything that helps us feel steadier and more able to cope. Some resources are outside us, such as a friend, a pet or a favourite place. Others live in the body itself: the way we stand, breathe, move or hold ourselves. Pat Ogden and Janina Fisher (2015) describe how noticing and building these somatic resources can help us stay within our window of tolerance.

Try each practice slowly, for a minute or two. Afterwards, notice any sensations, emotions or thoughts, without needing to change them. If a practice doesn’t feel right, stop and move on: what helps is different for everyone.

1. Grounding

Sit or stand with your feet flat on the floor. Gently press your feet down and feel the ground pressing back. Notice the weight of your body being supported by the floor or the chair.

What did you notice?

2. Centring

Let your spine lengthen gently, as if a thread were lifting the top of your head. Notice your core, the centre of your body, and let yourself be upright without strain.

What did you notice?

3. A sense of boundary

Slowly push your hands forward, palms out, as if gently pushing something away. Notice your arms, your shoulders and your breath. You might say, silently or aloud, “this is my space”.

What did you notice?

4. Holding yourself

Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly, or wrap your arms around yourself. Notice the warmth and pressure of your hands, and the rise and fall of your breath beneath them.

What did you notice?

5. Orienting

Let your eyes and head turn slowly around the room. Let them rest on something you find pleasant or neutral: a colour, a plant, the light. Take your time.

What did you notice?

My resources

Bring together what you have discovered. Resources can be small, and the more you have, the more choice you have when things get hard.

Practices in my body that help me feel steadier

People, animals and places that help

Activities, objects, music or memories that help

Which one resource could I reach for next time I feel overwhelmed?

Go gently. Paying attention to the body can sometimes bring up strong feelings or memories, especially after trauma. If that happens, open your eyes, look around the room and come back to something steadying. This worksheet is for self-reflection and is not a substitute for therapy; a therapist can help you explore this at a pace that feels safe.

If you are struggling right now: Samaritans 116 123 (free, any time) · Pieta 1800 247 247 or text HELP to 51444 · text HELLO to 50808 · emergency 112 or 999.

Ogden, P., & Fisher, J. (2015). *Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Interventions for Trauma and Attachment*. W. W. Norton.

Ogden, P., Minton, K., & Pain, C. (2006). *Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy*. W. W. Norton.

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