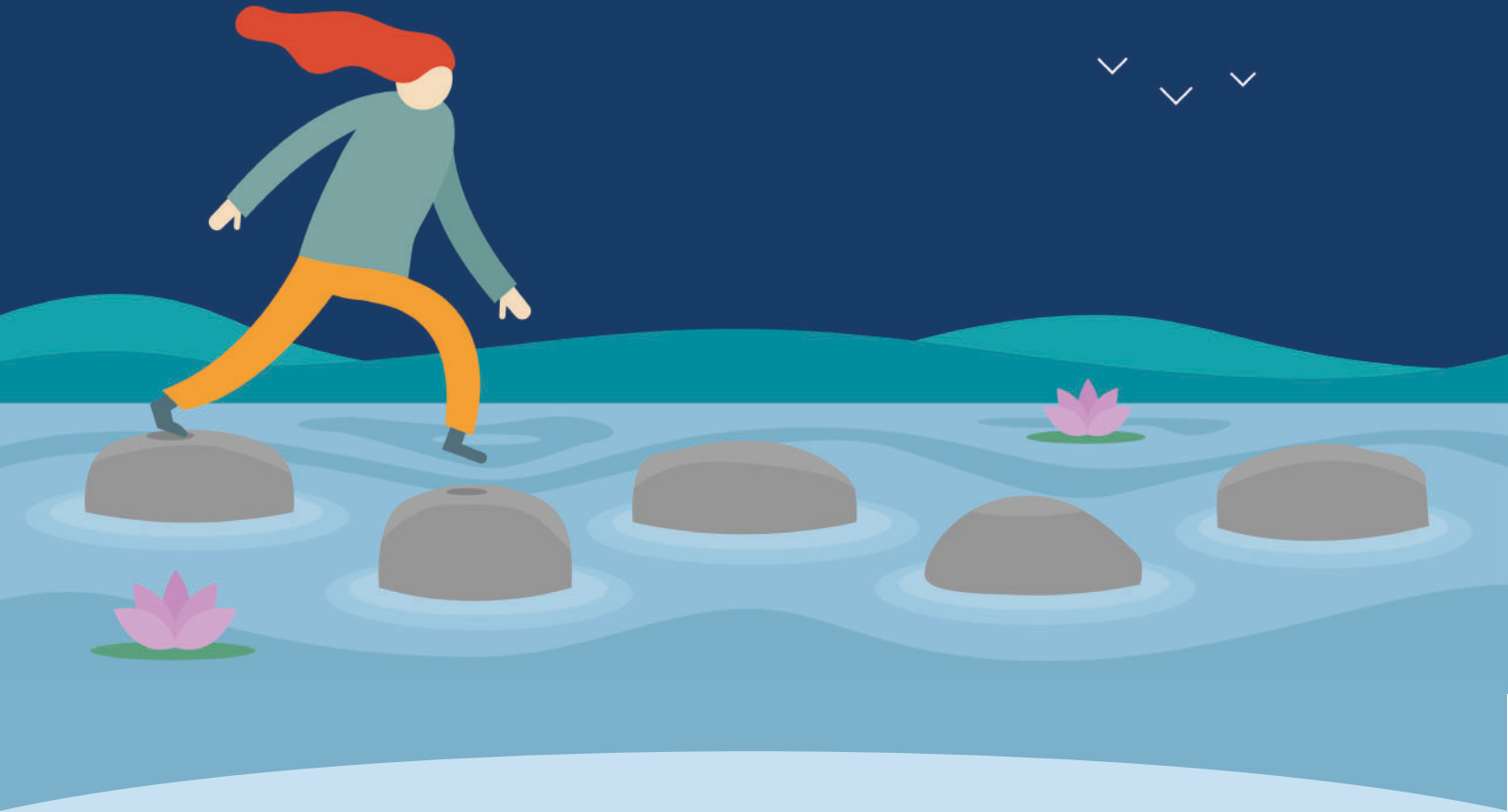


Trauma Healing Resource Kit



This resource kit was created to support your work as a helper walking alongside others in their healing.

Inside, you'll find practical, trauma-informed tools designed to be flexible and easy to use in your own practice.

We hope these resources help you feel grounded, confident, and better equipped to support healing in ways that feel right for you and your clients.

Here's what you're getting:

- Quietening the Nervous System
- Identifying Body Cues
- Identifying Body Sensations
- The Mechanics of Breathing



Mindfulness Activities

Visualization and mindfulness practices help calm the mind and support emotional regulation, especially for those experiencing trauma or anxiety. While imagination can fuel anxiety, it can also promote healing when guided intentionally.

How to use these activities:

- Practice mindfulness yourself before teaching others.
- Start simple and practice together – people may worry about “doing it right.”
- Explain the benefits and encourage repetition for the greatest impact.
- Pair with movement or stretching activities to help release tension.
- For visualization, guide people to imagine places or sensations that bring comfort or joy.

When to use these activities:

Use **Quieting the Nervous System** for grounding high anxiety, flashbacks, or dissociation.



IMPORTANT

Mindfulness and visualization can sometimes activate clients, emotionally in a negative way, and could cause flashbacks or elevate anxiety towards panic. Understanding your client's own emotional tolerance for body sensations and intrusive trauma images is a critical step before practicing mindfulness.

Clients need their own natural curiosity for somatic sensations. This is why training in trauma-informed practices, including mindfulness techniques, is necessary before starting treatment.

Quieting the Nervous System

PURPOSE

This grounding exercise is effective for reducing anxiety, preventing panic, and interrupting or recovering from dissociation.

INSTRUCTIONS

This is best learned with a support person guiding you. Then you can practice it on your own, perhaps saying what you notice out loud at first until you can easily remember and guide yourself silently in your own mind.

Notice and name out loud what you are currently sensing in the moment:

- 5
- Name five things you see (“I see the lamp, I see the window,” etc.) *(Pause)*
 - Name five things you hear (“I hear the fan, I hear my voice, I hear the birds outside,” etc.) *(Pause)*
 - Name five things you sense or feel (“I feel my shirt on my arm, I feel my shoes, I feel the pillow,” etc.) *(Pause)*

- 4
- Now name four things you see *(Pause)*
 - Name four things you hear *(Pause)*
 - Name four things you sense or feel *(Pause)*

- 3
- Now name three things you see *(Pause)*
 - Name three things you hear *(Pause)*
 - Name three things you sense or feel *(Pause)*

- 2
- Now name two things you see *(Pause)*
 - Name two things you hear *(Pause)*
 - Name two things you sense or feel *(Pause)*

- 1
- Now name one thing you see *(Pause)*
 - Name one thing you hear *(Pause)*
 - Name one thing you sense or feel *(Pause)*
 - Bring your attention back to your breath and body and notice how you feel now



Body and Movement Activities

Trauma, stress, and emotional dysregulation affect the body, keeping it on high alert. Even without trauma, stress can be stored physically.

For those who struggle to express themselves verbally or are physically constrained, movement can be a powerful path to healing.

Introducing physical exercises in counselling can be uncomfortable, especially for those with trauma. To support clients:

- Explain the mind-body connection.
- Begin with simple movements like neck rolls.
- Set clear expectations and safety cues.
- Pause or stop if the person feels distressed.
- Model the activity and watch for signs of discomfort.

When to use these activities:

Use **Identifying Body Cues** as an introductory activity to help the person link their physical and mental or emotional states.

Use **Identifying Body Sensations** to help people name what they are experiencing

Identifying Body Cues

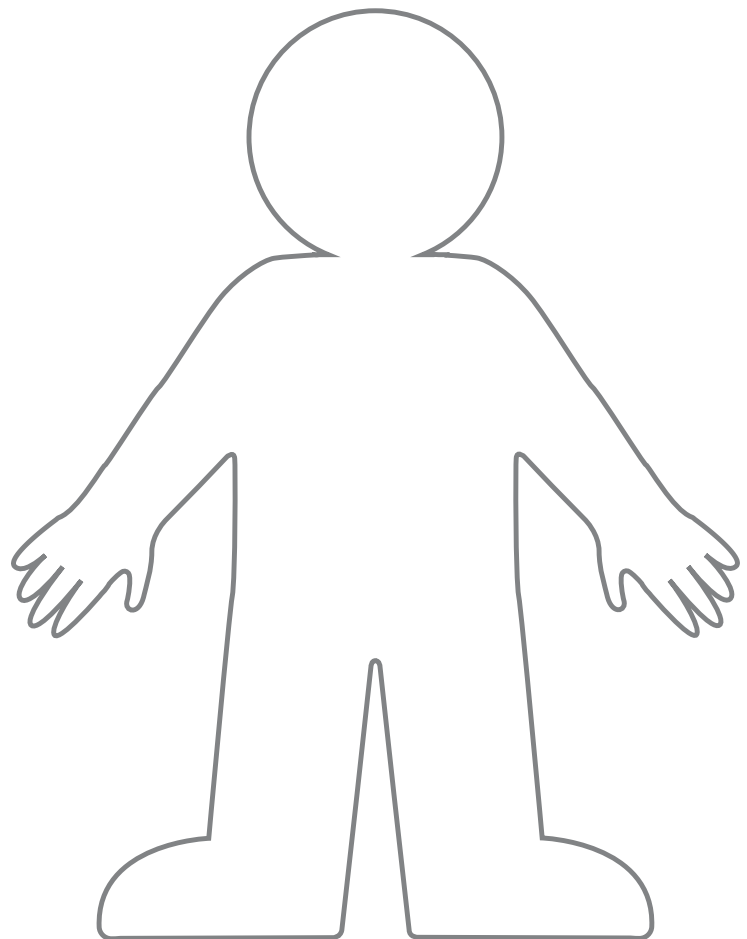
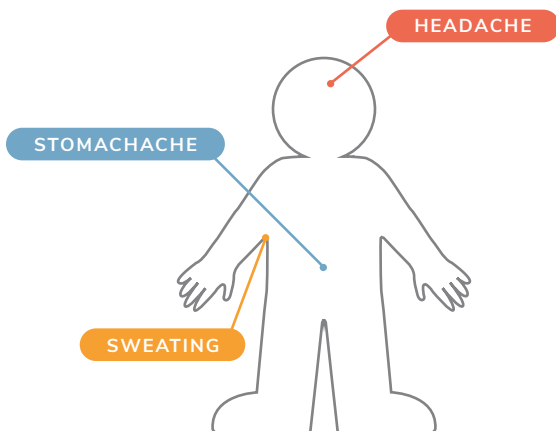
PURPOSE

This exercise is helpful for gaining awareness of how emotions are experienced in your body. It can also be effective in normalizing the physical symptoms of anxiety or emotional distress and helping you develop awareness and understanding of your emotional experience.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the instructions below to gain awareness of how you experience emotions in your own body.

1. Use the outline provided or draw an outline of a body on a piece of paper.
2. Imagine experiencing an emotion, such as anger, sorrow, joy, or fear.
3. Identify the physical symptoms and body clues experienced when feeling this emotion.
4. Draw a line connecting each body clue to the part of the body where the symptom occurs. If you'd like, colour the area where the emotion is felt in your body.



Identifying Body Sensations

PURPOSE

Noticing and identifying sensations is helpful for learning to recognize and manage emotions. This capacity is also essential for helping your body shift from a stressed, dysregulated state to a settled and regulated state. It is important to be able to notice and connect with sensations that are associated with both stressed states and settled states.

INSTRUCTIONS

Pay attention to what you sense in your own body when feeling stressed and when feeling settled. Use the lists below to identify descriptors for your sensations. These lists are just samples and may carry different meanings for each person – feel free to add your own words if these don't fit for you.

Sensation Words

Often associated with **stressed** and **dysregulated** states.

Abrasive	Dented	Grating	Ragged	Spiky
Angular	Dirty	Gravelly	Rasping	Spiny
Barbed	Distended	Greasy	Razor-sharp	Steely
Bendy	Distorted	Gritty	Ridged	Sticky
Bloated	Dry	Hairy	Rigid	Stiff
Blunt	Dusty	Hard	Rough	Stubby
Bristly	Edgy	Harsh	Rusty	Sweaty
Broken	Etched	Hollow	Rutted	Tepid
Bulging	Filmy	Hot	Sandy	Thick
Bulky	Flat	Icy	Saturated	Thin
Bumpy	Flimsy	Impenetrable	Scalding	Thorny
Bushy	Fragile	Inflated	Scarred	Throbbing
Chafing	Freezing	Irregular	Scored	Uncomfortable
Chapped	Frigid	Itchy	Scraped	Uneven
Choppy	Furry	Jagged	Scratched	Vibrating
Chunky	Fuzzy	Limp	Sculptured	Viscous
Clammy	Glassy	Lumpy	Serrated	Waterlogged
Coarse	Glazed	Metallic	Shaggy	Withered
Cold	Gnarled	Narrow	Sharp	Woolen
Corrugated	Gooney	Pointy	Slimy	Wrinkled
Dense	Grainy	Prickly	Soiled	Zigzag

Sensation Words

Often associated with **resourced, solid, and regulated** states.

Airy	Fluffy	Mushy	Slippery	Unbreakable
Aerated	Fluid	Neat	Smooth	Unyielding
Breathy	Frothy	Oily	Soaking	Varnished
Bubbly	Gentle	Open	Soapy	Velvety
Calm	Glossy	Padded	Soft	Veneered
Circular	Grounded	Patterned	Soggy	Vibrating
Clean	Grooved	Pliable	Solid	Warm
Cool	Hot	Polished	Sparkly	Wavy
Cushioned	Layered	Pulpy	Spongy	Well-oiled
Doughy	Leathery	Quiet	Springy	Wet
Downy	Level	Ribbed	Stable	Wide
Earthy	Lined	Rock-solid	Steely	Wiry
Even	Loose	Rubbery	Syrupy	Woven
Feathery	Lukewarm	Rolling	Tepid	Yielding
Firm	Malleable	Sheer	Thick	Zigzag
Fleecy	Moist	Silky	Thin	
Flowing	Moving	Slick	Tingly	



Breathwork

Breathwork is a powerful, accessible tool for calming the body and mind – especially when someone is anxious, fearful, or in a state of high alert.

Dysregulated breathing can heighten stress, while calming the breath helps reduce it.

How to use this activity:

Guide the person through the activity before providing the resource. Don't just give it to them – practice it together. If anxiety rises during a session, pause and breathe with them.

When to use this activity:

The Mechanics of Breathing will help the person notice and regulate breath.

The Mechanics of Breathing

PURPOSE

When we focus on our breathing, we can feel our chest expanding and contracting, our diaphragm contracting and relaxing, and perhaps other muscles that are connected to our rib cage. Learning to breathe into and soften our belly helps increase strength and flexibility in our breathing and in our felt experience.

INSTRUCTIONS

Find a quiet, private location and get into a comfortable, relaxed position. Use the steps below to practice breathing.

1

Put one hand on your chest and the other on your belly. First, tune in to your breath; notice how you are breathing without worrying about changing anything. *(Pause)*

2

Now you can intentionally move into belly breathing. Put your lower hand around your belly button area, and as you inhale, gently push your belly out into your hand. Relax and allow your belly to be soft; this is not meant to be strained. *(Pause)*

3

Now relax and exhale, allowing your diaphragm to rise up naturally. Soften your back and spine at the same time, curling your lower back in slightly. *(Pause)*

4

Continue breathing in this way for a few minutes. Stop if it gets uncomfortable.

Keys to incorporate into breathing practice:

- Practice sitting upright and “opening” your chest.
- Guard against exerting too much effort.
- Inhale through the nose to promote relaxation.
- Attend to adding or allowing a pause after you exhale.
- Practice noticing the rhythm and depth of your breathing.
- As you inhale, practice finding a little more room between the ribs; as you breathe out, practice exhaling just a moment longer – this helps increase diaphragm flexibility.



Noticing when our breathing becomes shallow lets us know that we are in high alert. At that point, we can focus on our breathing and calm ourselves, allowing us more choice in our response.