

Trauma and the Body Psycho-education

Focus on the “right kinds of information” in bringing attention to the body for therapeutic intervention in support of clients aims and therapeutic goals in resolving trauma

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Examples of right kind of information to explore collaboratively

- Role of body in trauma, trauma treatment, dissociation
- Left right brain functions
- Importance of mindfulness
- Benefits of working with the body
- Effects of trauma on cognition and emotion
- Parts and effect on body
- Existing resources, somatic resources
- Use of movement and completion of actions

Adapted from Ogden et al 2006

The First Task: Win Clients' Confidence in the Body as a Viable Target of Intervention

- Notice how the body participates in the presenting problem.
- Find out goals—what the client wants to accomplish or change
- Instill hope that somatic interventions might help accomplish client goals
- Consider specific physical changes to support therapeutic gains
- Psycho-education, appreciation and positive reinforcement

Ogden 2016

Some Psycho-education Options

- Ask if clients want psycho-education
- Reassure clients that they are in charge of body interventions
- Identify client's goals
- Elicit clients' questions or concerns
- Normalize their physical pattern
- Use your own body to illustrate potential value of somatic interventions
- Positive reinforcement

Ogden 2016

Portrait of Oda Krohg 1886 by Christian Krohg



What to share, why, how and when?

- Psycho-education includes sharing appropriately certain tailored aspects of your professional and psychological knowledge for the benefit of your client and their therapeutic goals.
- Includes choice pieces of information shared simply at appropriate moments during all phases of therapy.
- Psycho-education is usually information which is de-pathologising, normalising, resourcing and potentially freeing for the client.
- Instills confidence in bringing attention/therapeutic intervention to somatic level of experience.

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Psycho-education could include:

- How brain/mind/body interacts in trauma
- Physiology of memory in trauma re-activation
- ANS function and dysregulation (animal defense of fight, flight, freeze, flop, friend)
- Hierarchical information processing (Top down v Bottom up)
- Window of Tolerance/modulation model
- Information on dissociation and peritraumatic resources
- Truncated or Incomplete actions from time of trauma
- Attachment patterns, procedural learning implicitly encoded as somatic habits of posture, gesture, movement, boundary style, communication and relational behaviors

Tony Buckley adapted form Ogden et al

Various forms of psycho-education

May include:

Information sharing

Exercises, Story, Imagery, Metaphor

Diagrams, Illustrations, Lists

Recognition of triggers

Techniques for dual awareness

Therapist modeling, (using own body)

Somatic resources such as grounding, containment, alignment, centering, breath work, boundaries

Using client success examples gives hope and encourages client efforts and goals towards integration

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Q Search

CHAPTER 4

The Wisdom of the Body, Lost and Found

EXPLORING YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE BODY

Purpose: To become aware of some of the feelings, views, and attitudes you have about your body as a first step in learning to appreciate the wisdom of the body.

Directions: Rate the following statements by circling either *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, or *strongly agree*.

<i>I feel that I am connected to my body.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I view my body as a problem.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I ignore my body.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I override my body by "powering through."</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I feel that my body supports me.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I am content with the way I look.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I am disappointed in my physical strength.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree
<i>I am happy about my weight.</i>	strongly disagree • disagree • neutral • agree • strongly agree

Appreciating Your Strengths

REFRAMING A SURVIVAL RESOURCE

Purpose: To identify a survival resource from the previous worksheet that you view negatively and to reframe it as a resource that helped you when you needed it.

Directions: Look over the survival resources you circled on the worksheet RECOGNIZING YOUR SURVIVAL RESOURCES. Choose one of these resources that you think of as a liability or a personal shortcoming, deficit, or weakness. Then answer the prompts below.

1. Describe the survival resource you chose. (e.g., *I work all the time because that's what made my dad proud, but it gets in the way of me enjoying my life and building relationships.*)

2. Describe your negative thoughts, emotions, and body movements and sensations when you think of this survival resource as a shortcoming. (e.g., *I think there is something wrong with me because I don't enjoy life very much and I can't relax. I think about how I can hide my workaholicism from others. I feel ashamed, guilty, and anxious. My body tightens up, and my head comes down.*)

3. When have you used this survival resource? How did your resource help you when you needed it? (e.g., *I started working hard as a teenager to keep my dad from criticizing me. When I didn't work, or just hung around with my friends, he called me a slacker and said I was lazy. This survival resource helped me gain the respect of my dad, and kept me from having to hear his criticism.*)

4. Describe your thoughts, emotions, and body movements and sensations when you think of this survival resource as something that helped you deal with difficult times. (e.g., *I think I was a resourceful 15-year-old. I feel compassion for that person I was. I should have been allowed to just be a teenager and have fun. I feel a sense of pride, as well, for having made it through and for the determination I have. My body feels less tense, and I am able to breathe more deeply. I have the thought that maybe I don't have to work all the time to be OK, that I'm anything but lazy, and the guilt I felt earlier is diminished.*)

Defining structures and resistances



strengths and the starting point from which to begin further somatic exploration

The Princess and the Pea

There is often a highly significant moment/memory around which most of the traumatic symptoms crystalize.

Such moments often become an erroneous belief or sense of meaning made at the time of the trauma.

Beliefs made by traumatised children (self referential beings) especially contain aspects of magical thinking.

Usually with a quality of self blaming or feeling of shame this kind of belief becomes stuck like the pea beneath the mattress as in the fairytale of Hands Christian Anderson.

The fixed belief contributes to persistence of symptoms which prevents resolution of the trauma. Psycho-education is a powerful dialogical tool to help address this.

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