
Somatic Therapies and Emotional Healing

Introduction and Advanced
Methods for Mind-Body
Therapies

Introduction to Somatic Therapies

- ❖ Somatic Therapy (Integrates talking therapies with mind-body practices and physical methods)
- ❖ Body Orientated Therapies - **The Big 4** - Sensory & feeling related methods, Touch, Movement & Breath
- ❖ Traditional Eastern Practices - Yoga, Qi Kung, Buddhist Meditations, Yoga Nidra, meditative practices.
- ❖ Kriya Yoga -Triple Qualities: Subtle Vibration, Subtle Light, Subtle Sound
- ❖ Felt Sense - Body Awareness - Feeling into Sensation
- ❖ Trauma Exercises, Somatic Experiencing, TRE - Uses felt sense, movement and shaking to remove held trauma in the body
- ❖ NLP (Neuro-linguistic programming), CBT
- ❖ MABT (Mindful Awareness Body Orientated Therapy)
- ❖ Voice Dialogue & Body Dialogue

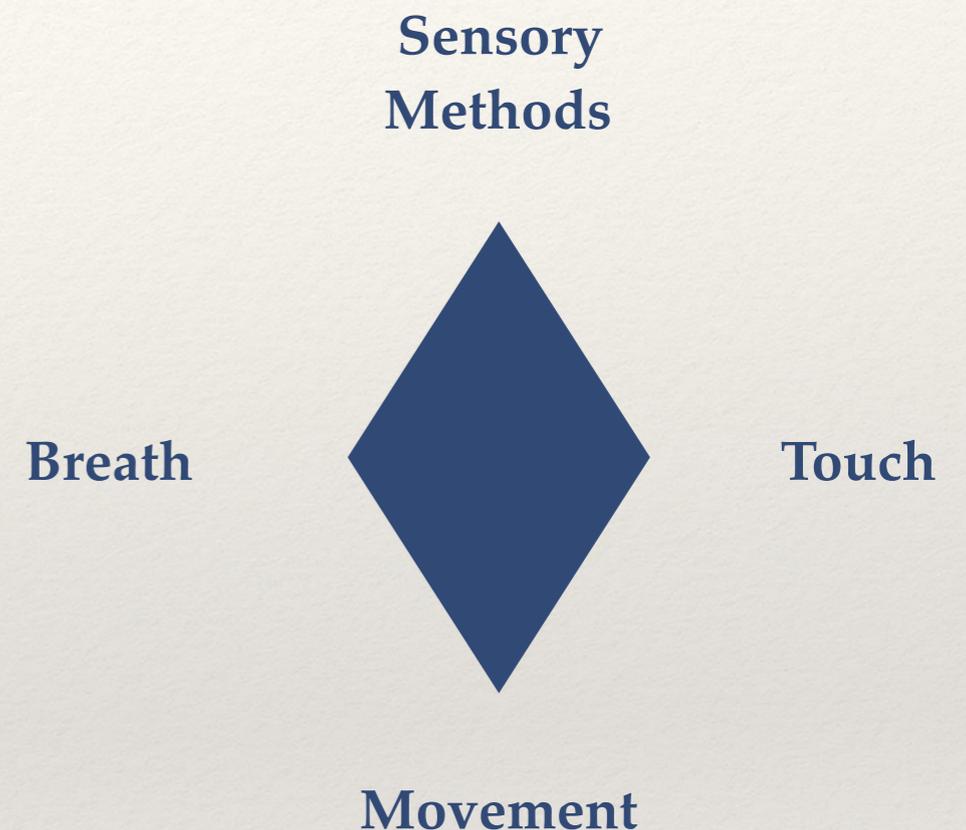


Emotional Healing

- ❖ Emotions consist of two basic components:
 - ❖ Sensations & Feelings in the Body
 - ❖ Inner Dialogue, Thoughts, Beliefs, and Stories in the Mind
- ❖ Manual therapies and acupuncture can be effective for releasing held emotions and emotional tension in the body
- ❖ However, it may not allow for deeper emotional unwinding and release such can occur with other somatic therapies (felt sense, touch, movement, breath work), talking therapies & counseling.
- ❖ Knowing how to use the Big 4 and speaking to clients in deep emotional processes is an unique set of skills.

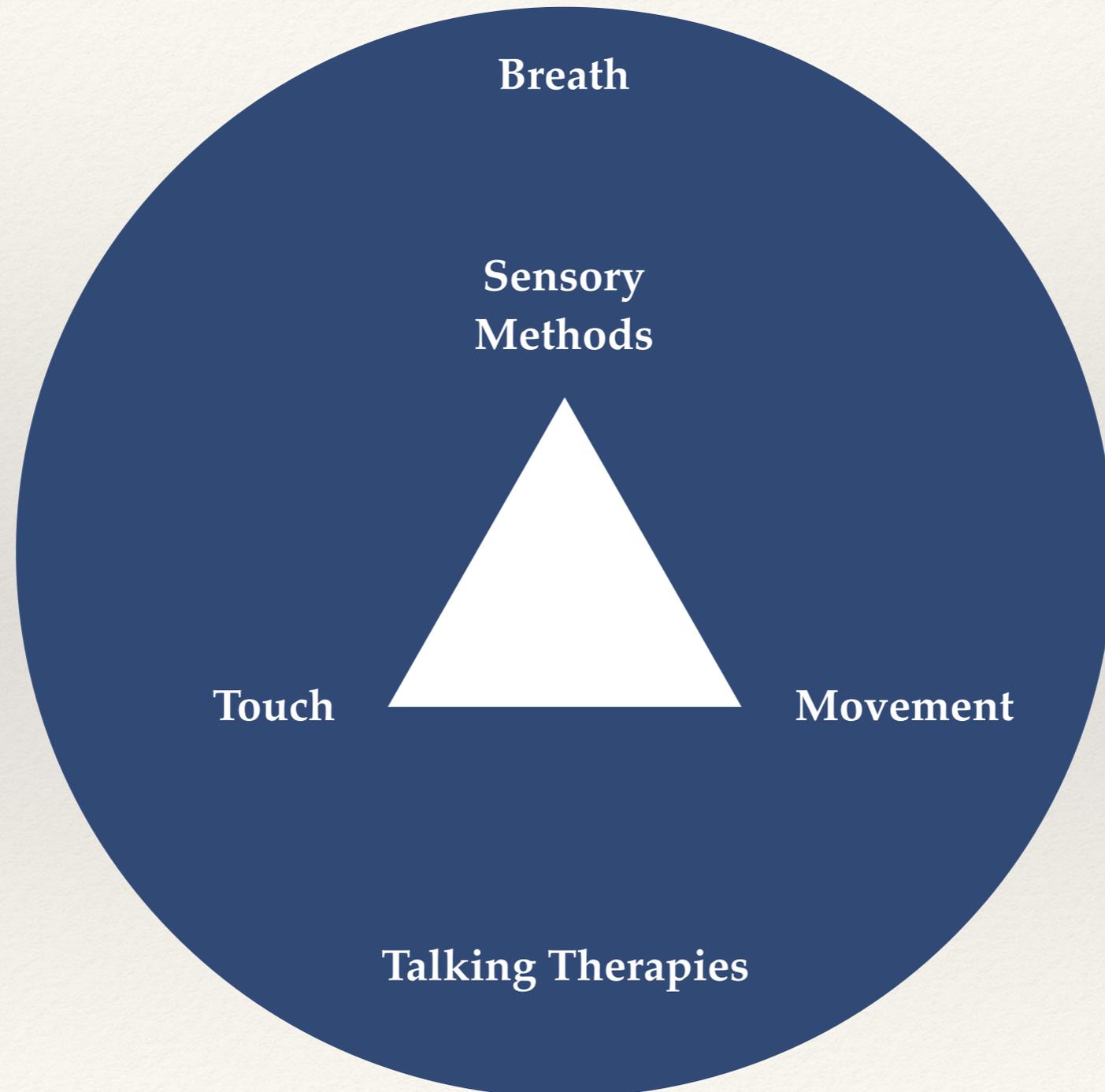
4 Primary Methods

- ❖ **Sensory Orientated Methods and Body Awareness Exercises** - Feeling into subtle sensations, vibrations, and feelings. Visualizations, vocalizations. Probing questions involving the **quality** of sensations and feelings in the body. Where do you feel fear or anxiety in your body? What color is the tightness in your chest? Are there any memories associated with the anxiety in your chest? Any sounds, smells or tastes associated with the feelings in your body?
- ❖ **Breath** - Is the bridge between the mind and body. Provides a strong physical basis for body orientated practices. Can be a root or anchor. Biofeedback.
- ❖ **Touch** - Gentle touch, massage, Chi Nei Tsang, abdominal massage, acupressure, self-touch vs. touching the client
- ❖ **Movement** - Moving body regions that hold tension, shaking, TRE, Somatic Experiencing, yoga therapies



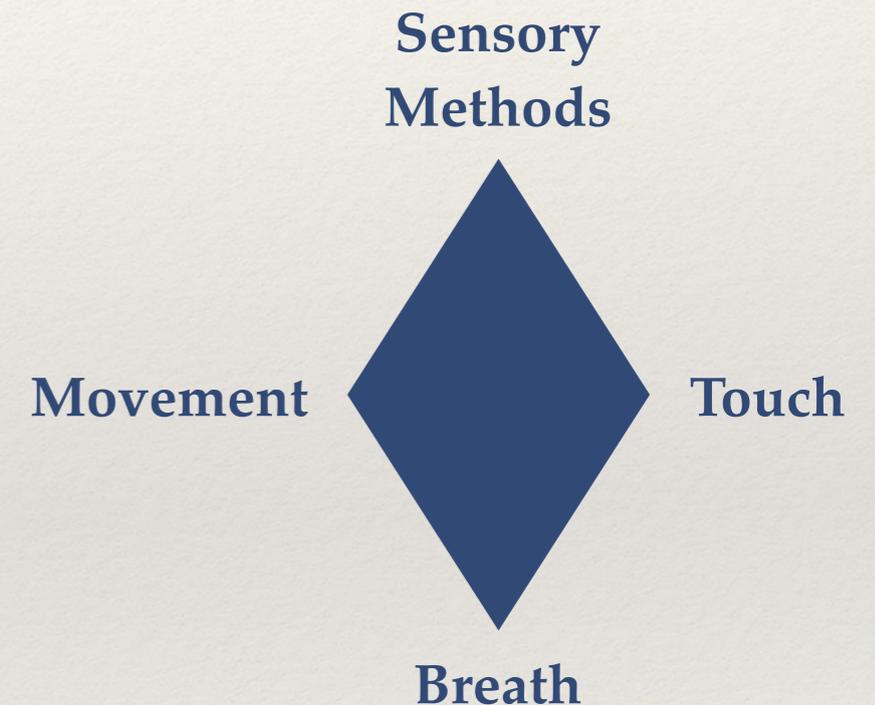
Interoreceptors - Sensory receptors within the body that allow us to feel the inner organs and interior body regions. These are strongly connected to our emotional feelings and sense of self.

4 Primary Somatic Methods + Talking Therapies



Advantages of Somatic Therapies

- ❖ Puts people in touch with feelings and body sensations while allowing them to experience it in a therapeutic environment.
- ❖ Releases unconscious held emotion in the body.
- ❖ Creates greater body awareness and this has broad applications for health, diet, exercise, self-development, well-being, and meditation.
- ❖ Taps into the body's wisdom and intuition.
- ❖ Allows for feeling the emotions without analysis, judgement and control.
- ❖ Gives people practical exercises they can use on a day to day and moment to moment basis.
- ❖ Is useful for releasing trauma held in the body



Key Points for Communication

- ❖ Active Listening / Acknowledgment and Recognition / Reflective Listening
- ❖ Create an atmosphere of acceptance and non-judgement
- ❖ Recognize your own limitations, boundaries, strengths and skills **& communicate these to the client when necessary. (Group acupuncture, setting boundaries before treating depression, anxiety, etc in group acupuncture).**
- ❖ Mirror back what they say / Rephrase / Stay neutral
- ❖ Ask open-ended questions / Don't ask these if you know you can't deal with it.
- ❖ Were not trying to fix or heal their problems / You may need to tell them this / Responsibility
- ❖ Be careful with interpreting and making conclusions
- ❖ **Be careful with your own expectations / don't lead them / don't anticipate how they're feeling / Check that your questions are not leading or inappropriately guiding them in your own prefixed ideas; How are you feeling today vs are you feeling depressed today?**
- ❖ **Have the client give examples / How did you sleep rather than did you sleep today? / Limit yes and no questions**
- ❖ Seek to understand where they're at in any given moment, and bring them back to the present as needed. Using touch, movement, breath, and questioning can bring them back to the moment.

Being Present with Clients

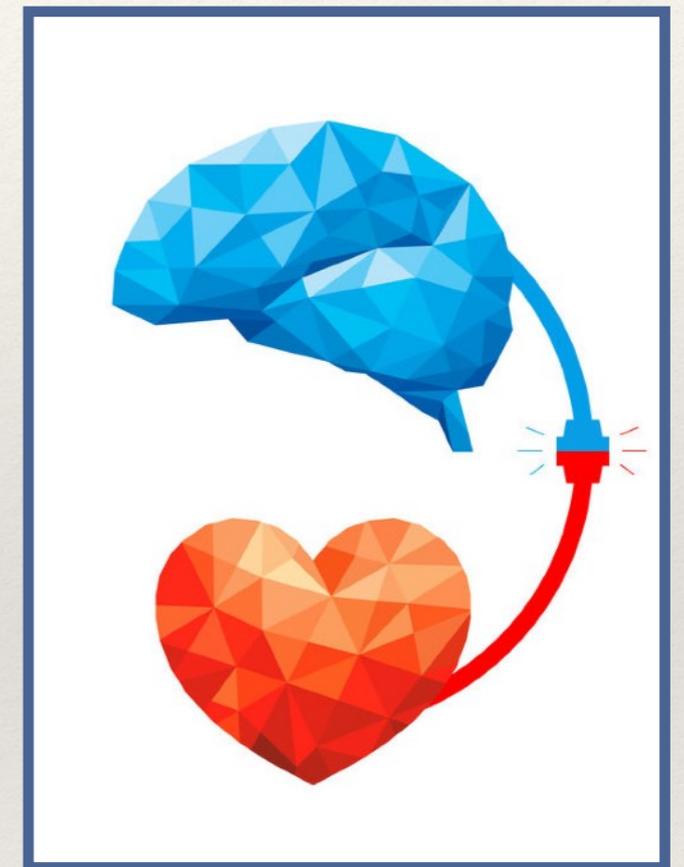
- ❖ People long to be heard.
- ❖ However, people can also remain stuck in their minds, thoughts and stories. Somatic therapies can be especially effective for those stuck in their head, as it releases emotion from the body.
- ❖ Simply being present when they go through emotional release is healing for many people.
- ❖ Being present can be expressed through listening, gentle touch, eye contact, a simple word. The key is to let them know you are present, without interfering when they are in a deep process. Simple acknowledgements are powerful.
- ❖ **How do they need you to be present?**
- ❖ Touch can be more powerful than speech.

Being Present

- ❖ Cultivate the ability to be present with what is - as the therapist we serve as a guide in the process.
- ❖ Be present for the client in a non-judgmental and accepting way.
- ❖ “Show up with compassionate loving presence.” Daisy Kaye, how do you as the therapist show this to your clients?
- ❖ Being present for patients emotions, is different than being present as a clinician. (Sterile cold doctors vs. warm compassionate healers)
 - ❖ Setting Intention - What is the clients intention? What is your intention as the therapist? Being aware of intentions determines much of the process.
- ❖ Everything is welcome.
- ❖ Move slow, don't rush. This creates more presence and the client feels this.

The Mind-Body Fork in a Treatment

- ❖ Is the person more body or mind orientated?
- ❖ Align your methods with where the client is at and what they need and want.
- ❖ Some people are more body orientated and respond best with somatic methods, others are more mentally directed and respond better with talking therapies.
- ❖ Often both mind and body processes will need to be explored together to allow for integration to occur. By definition somatic therapy uses both.
- ❖ Some people may resist certain processes. That may occur at the level of the mind or body, or be more specific to certain mind or body techniques. (Visual, tactile, auditory, talking, feeling into their bodies)
- ❖ Find the processes that work best for each person.



Mind-Body Unity

Regardless of using either a somatic or psychotherapeutic approach, we want to alleviate the suffering and symptoms.

Somatic Therapies

- ❖ Aim to release held emotion in the body.
- ❖ This alone may be enough to alleviate their symptoms and facilitate positive change.
- ❖ Often better for body orientated people.
- ❖ Can be very effective for trauma.
- ❖ Taps into body intelligence and wisdom.
- ❖ Can compliment counseling they may be doing.
- ❖ Often combines well with acupuncture and other manual therapies.

Voice Dialogue

- ❖ Aims to increase awareness of character structures, sub personalities, inner voices, **belief systems and behavioral patterns.**
- ❖ Gives conscious expression to the various inner voices without repressing them.
- ❖ Can serve to cultivate positive productive voices, while learning to balance or dis-identify from harmful voices, negative beliefs and behaviors.
- ❖ Seeks to find proper balance with the various inner character structures.
- ❖ Yin-Yang pairs and Triads.

Body or Mind Therapies

Client (Are They More Body or Mind Orientated)

Mind

Talking Therapies
Voice Dialogue
CBT
Counseling

Body

Sensory Related Methods
Touch / Manual Therapies
Breath
Movement & Shaking

Integrated Somatic Therapy