

Trauma Healing Techniques

As you know, trauma comes in many forms for example: physical, mental, emotional, sexual, natural disasters, medically induced, extremes of temperatures, etc.

Those with resilience shake traumas off and move forward in their lives unencumbered by negative effects from traumatic events. But others aren't so fortunate. Those who've had early childhood boundary violation and/or disturbed attachment bonding with parents and caretakers due to abuse or neglect are especially vulnerable. This segment of our patient population seems to have one problem after another or perhaps they never recover from a certain set of symptoms.

Trauma Healing Techniques help release and resolve the negative physical effects or symptoms of unresolved trauma that ricochet throughout the physiology, mind, and/or emotions of traumatized patients and clients.

There are many schools of Trauma Healing. The technique you'll learn from this presentation comes from Peter Levine's *Somatic Experiencing* training. The two part technique is called **Pendulation**.

Think of the pendulum of a clock. A pendulum swings from one side to the other. Like a pendulum there are two opposites to be aware of: the area where there's a problem and an area where the problem is less, OK or even good.

Humans aren't able to enjoy good health when they ignore or deny a problem. Focusing on what or where the problem is, as a compassionate observer, allows the stressed area to relax. Subsequently circulation improves delivering healthy nutrients and removing irritating toxins while reducing muscle tension. As a further benefit of being the compassionate observer, stressed breathing patterns shallow and high up in the chest become deeper and more expansive. A longer exhale generally accompanies deeper more expansive breathing thus generating a systemic PNS response that shifts stress, tension and alarm to calm awareness. *Gently bringing compassionate, mindful attention to a symptom can be enough to release or at least diminish the severity, frequency and intensity of any problem.*

The other side of the pendulum swing focuses on what's not as bad, OK or maybe even better than the problem area. For instance someone may have pain, tension and stiffness on the dominant hand side of their neck. *Focusing on the other or non-dominant side, noticing the OK-ness or ease in that side, can bring about a release of tension and soreness in the involved side simply by focusing on what's not as bad, OK or good.*

This is described as a "spill-over effect". It happens at the spinal cord level. Just like focusing on pain and misery begets more pain and misery, focusing on what's OK or good spills over both electrically and chemically to the stressed side applying a healing balm to the problem area.

IMPORTANT NOTE: To prevent a client/patient who's vulnerable and has few resources from spiraling more deeply into the dark side, you may choose to guide them first to the resource of focusing on what's not as bad, OK or good before bringing just 10-15% attention to the problem area. The biggest challenge is to continuously and gently bring focus back to what's not bad, OK or good. Attention needs to be maintained for at least 15 seconds in order to make a physiologic change for the better.

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