

## Healing Trauma with Somatic Experiencing (SE)

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### About Somatic Experiencing (SE)

SE is a short-term naturalistic approach for healing trauma. It was developed by Dr. Peter Levine, recipient of United States Association for Body Psychotherapy (USABP) Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020 for his study of nervous system regulation for trauma resolution.

Somatic Experiencing emerged from the observation of animals in the wild and through an integration of various shamanic wisdoms through a scientific lens.

Dr. Peter Levine observed that wild prey animals do not get traumatized, even though they face life-threatening circumstances on a daily basis. Their innate bodily systems regulate and discharge the intense levels of energy activation associated with instinctive defensive responses. This allows them to survive serious dangers and go back to stress-free living without trauma. Wild animals return to grazing, mating and sleeping peacefully even after surviving life-threatening experiences; it is the natural way.

Human beings are similar to other mammals when it comes to the body's inner mechanisms for self-regulation and tension release. Unlike wild animals, however, humans have learned to suppress their body's natural responses. This is quite common and it happens for many reasons, by society, education, cultural and circumstance. Suppression, however, causes the survival energies that have been naturally activated to remain stuck.

Survival energies are intense. Their 'stuckness' can cause symptoms late on in life, known as PTSD. Such symptoms can be experienced on a mental level, physical level and emotional level whereby part of how we are relating to the world is coming from a stuck defensive pattern. Somatic Experiencing is a process that relies on the body's inner self-regulation. The body's desire is naturally to move towards wholeness, completion and integrity.

Through Somatic Experiencing, we open up a space to connect with the body. We observe the body's process through felt sense and movement. By tracking body sensations in a gentle and slowed down manner, we increase body-mind integration and we avoid re-traumatization. Sense of goodness can be restored and defensiveness can be released while in an environment of safety. This is the key to healing trauma.

## Principles of SE

- SE creates an environment of *safety*.
- SE uses *awareness of body sensation* to help clients connect with their innate processes.
- SE practices *slowing down* and *titration* to avoid overwhelm and to allow for integration.
- SE offers guidance to *renegotiate* the experience so that it can heal and release rather than be re-lived or re-enacted as trauma.

There are many kinds of trauma that are addressed by the SE approach: Shock Trauma & Accidents, Attacks & Assaults, Wars & Disasters, Developmental Trauma, Complex Trauma, Pre-Natal and Peri-Natal Trauma.

For more information about SE please note the following references:

Levine, P. and Frederick, A. (1997). *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma: The Innate Capacity to Transform Overwhelming Experiences*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Kline, M. and Levine, P. (2007). *Trauma Through A Child's Eyes: Awakening the Ordinary Miracle of Healing*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

For further references and information online about SE go to <http://www.traumahealing.com>

## Addendum

SE can result in a number of benefits, such as relief of traumatic stress symptoms, increased resiliency, resourcefulness, and generally more ease in life. Like any other treatment it may also have unintended negative “side effects.” It is important to find what feels right you and to trust your own journey.

There are many forms of alternative therapies, body-oriented practices and somatic psychotherapies that may also be valuable in supporting your healing process, such as Acupuncture, Cranio-Sacral Therapy, EFT Tapping, EMDR, Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, and Bodydynamics.

Regular practices of Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong and martial arts, or creative practices like singing and dance, or sports and regular exercise also support overall health and resilience. And, of course, there are many non-somatic forms of psychotherapy and counselling that are helpful too.

## About Zena Takieddine

I am a certified Somatic Experiencing Practitioner since 2018 and a certified yoga teacher since 2009 working primarily in the Arab region.

Sessions with me can be conducted online or in person. Our work will involve me guiding you to pay attention to your in-the-moment experience beneath your thoughts and words. We will connect with your senses, inwardly and outwardly.

The beauty of working with the body is that there is no obligation to share anything you do not want to share. It is possible to gain full benefit and relief without getting involved in the story at all. By easing body tension and allowing mindful connection to the body's processes while in a context of safety and support, the trauma is gradually processed and released.

You are always welcome to express if you are uncomfortable with any parts of the treatment. We can always find alternative approaches or change the tempo as needed. You also have the right to refuse or terminate at any time.

Please note that I am not a psychotherapist and if our sessions move in that direction, I will need to refer you to the appropriate professional for that work.

Please sign here to verify that you have read, understood and agree to the above information.

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Client name (Print)

(Signature)

(Date)

## Fee & Structure

- Sessions are 50 minutes long.
- Sessions are available in person and online.
- The rate is \$80.00 per session.
- I offer a package for a commitment to 4 sessions at \$300.
- I accept cash, bank transfer or money transfer via Western Union or OMT or Wise.
- For clients residing in Lebanon *who do not have access to external resources*, I accept to be paid in Lebanese pound. Rates will vary, while aiming to be reasonable and remain accessible.

## Late Cancellations & No-Shows

Please note my cancellation policy. I require a 24 hours' notice otherwise the full session fee will be charged. Kindly confirm that you have read and understood.

Client Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Confidentiality

Your privacy is fully honoured and respected. You never need to share anything you don't want to share.

Any notes I may take during sessions are also confidential. Their purpose is to help me keep track of the general conversations and processes, without being overly specific. They do not analyse nor diagnose.

The SE approach honours the inner wisdom of each individual and acknowledges healing as a process of transformation and discovery. Privacy, safety and non-judgement are pillars of the process.

## Permission to Consult

As part of my own continuing professional education, I may desire to share some information with colleagues and supervisors in the trauma-healing field about our conversations so that I may better serve you in our work together. Any information would be shared in such a way that your identity is kept absolutely confidential.

Please initial here if you *agree to allow me* to discuss your information in *peer supervision or consultation*, while keeping your identity confidential. Do NOT sign if you have any reservations.

Client initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Client Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status:  Single  Married  Divorced  Its Complicated

Presenting Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician or other Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Active Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Active Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please notify in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_