

**The Soul Room and The Vermont Kindness Project
Trauma and Transformation Series**

Release and Connect Practices

Range of Motion (Movement)

Do these gently and at your own pace, and to the degree where you feel a good stretch or expansion but no pain. Repeat as many times as you want.

Neck rotation

- 1) side to side, looking over each shoulder
- 2) up and down, toward the ceiling and floor
- 3) look up to the far left corner, then down to your far right corner; then up to your far right and down to your far left

Hands

Make a fist, then open your hands with palms up and stretch your fingers out until fully extended
Press your hands together in prayer, feel the stretch

Wrist

rotate your wrists clockwise for several turns, then counterclockwise for several turns

Coin Exchange

extend both arms in front of you with palms up. Imagine a coin placed in one palm. Extend that arm and hand back behind you as if you are offering that coin to someone behind you with your palm up. Repeat with both arms.

Chest

spread your arms out wide to each side as if they are wings, opening and expanding the chest

Knees

bend your knees slightly, place your hands on them, then rotate both knees together clockwise, then counterclockwise

Hips

relax your knees, place your hands on your hips, and gently rotate your pelvis/hips clockwise then counterclockwise, as if you are hula-hooping

Tip: This may also encourage your body to release some energy through sound. If you get the urge to exhale loudly, sigh deeply, or make any other noise, do so if/when you can!

Pursed Lips, Snake, and Horse (Breath)

Pursed Lips/ or Birthday candles

Take a deep breath in, then breathe out through pursed lips, as if you are blowing out birthday candles or exhaling through a straw. (Use an actual straw if it helps!)

Repeat as needed

Snake

take a deep breath in, then breathe out making the sound of the letter S, like a snake

Horse

take a deep breath in, then press lips together so they flutter or flap while exhaling, like a horse

Tip: experiment with breathing in through the nose, and breathing in through the mouth, and see how that changes your experience!

Progressive Shudder

Begin by shaking your wrists (vigorous enough to get a good shake but not to cause discomfort or pain), then continue bringing the shudder through the arms, shoulders, torso, legs...until its full body. For full measure, include your lips and make a sound with it!

For help or inspiration, imagine you're a dog that just went swimming and you're shaking all the excess water off. :)

Laugh!

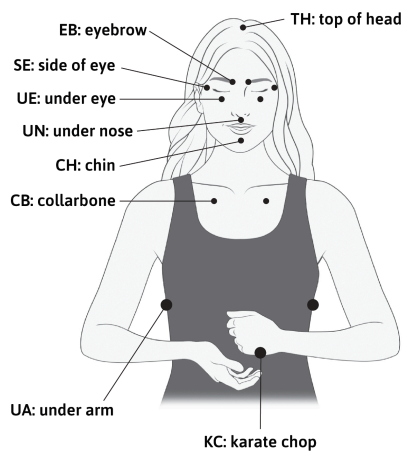
Start chuckling, or giggling, or laughing, and let it progress and become as full as possible. You may discover that while it started off as 'fake', your body catches the hint and it becomes genuine! If you need a prompt, watch something funny!

Tapping

Move through a series of acupressure points by either gently tapping on each point, or by applying gentle pressure. Try tapping or pressing for 5-6 seconds on each spot, but adjust according to what feels best to you.

- Top middle of the head
- Sides of the hand below the pinkie
- Top of eyebrows
- Top of cheekbones
- Between upper lip and nose
- Top of chin / just below lip
- Both collarbones
- Sides of rib cage

Tapping Points



Using Posture and Breath to Shift Zones

If you are in a reactive state, and want to shift to a connected state, try using different poses and breath to invoke the feeling you want.

Power Pose variations

Amy Cuddy's Power Poses, plus some more



Bold & confident



Wonder Woman



Victory



Generic superhero



Statue of Liberty



I'm a little teapot,
short but with clout



Walk like an Egyptian
(Pharaoh, that is)



Rawr!



Power yoga

Visualizations / Meditations

Say Hi to Yourself

In a relaxed position, begin softening your body from the shoulders down. Move at your own pace, going from the shoulders, down the arms and hands, then chest, down to torso, legs and feet. Then soften your jaw, then your mind, and allow yourself to gently drop down into your body.

When you feel relaxed and soft, think of someone who puts a big smile on your face. This can be a person, a pet, or even someone you imagine, like the perfect romantic partner. You are filled with joy when you see this person, and you let the feelings of happiness fill your whole being.

Then imagine or visualize that the person you are seeing is you. Savor the experience, allowing yourself to enjoy the experience for as long as you want to. Give yourself a hug. You can visualize it, imagine it, even wrap your arms around yourself physically - do whatever feels best and most genuine in the moment. Remain in the experience until it feels complete.

*If you do not experience positive feelings when you see yourself, that's ok! Try to remain soft and open, and allow yourself to explore those feelings without judgment, criticism or shame. It's ok to have complicated feelings, even toward yourself. The emotional information you are collecting about yourself in this experience is valuable, and can be used to deepen your self understanding and your healing.

Receiving Kindness

Begin in a relaxed position. Expand your arms and open your chest to see how this changes the energy flow for you. Also try turning your palms up, and slightly lifting or lowering chin - all as you observe the changes in energy flow. Settle on the posture that works best.

Soften and relax your body, staying open and curious, and slowly fill yourself with the energy of Kindness. This Kindness is unlimited, and you deserve it.

You may visualize the energy, imagine it, feel it, or simply intend it - these are all valid so allow the experience to flow naturally.

Freely allow and observe all your impressions and sensations.

Continue receiving the Kindness and remain in the experience until it feels complete to you.