

Self-Regulation in Trauma Release Yoga and TRE

The goal is for the participant to develop a sense of when they are moving into a place that is not comfortable and to come out of the tremoring on their own. This is important not only to maintain positive associations with the tremoring/release process and to prevent further stress and contraction but also to build this important skill for everyday life. Self-regulation can be challenging for those with past traumas who, out of survival, may have years of being completely disconnected from their body or not feeling that they have control over their own body and feelings. Discomfort from physical sensations and emotional feelings associated with the tremoring process may not register for them until they feel overwhelmed; triggering a defense response of freezing, flooding, and/or dissociation. Self-regulation is accomplished through increasing the participant's ability to be fully present in their experience, recognize when discomfort or fatigue begins to show and to, then, move out of the tremoring. It is important for a certified practitioner to be present to monitor and facilitate while a participant is learning self-regulation, to help them avoid overwhelm and to help them ground themselves if the need arises.

Steps in teaching Self-Regulation

1. Stay attuned to sensations and feelings during the tremoring process.
2. Give yourself permission to come out of the tremoring at any point and remember that you are in complete control of the process the entire time.
3. Remember this is a practice of releasing a little at a time... we are not trying to do all the work today! Small, easily integrated releases.
4. Go slowly and check in often with how you are feeling to build awareness about the very first signs and signals of feelings of discomfort or overwhelm.
5. You should be able to open your eyes and have a conversation about what you are noticing - physical sensation, feelings, etc. If you are unable to do so, it is time for a break.
6. As soon as you notice any sensations or feelings of discomfort or are merely getting tired, gently come out of the tremoring response to rest or, if needed, take steps to ground yourself.
7. Congratulate yourself for being able to recognize these early, and often subtle, signs. Typically, once you begin to have this level of awareness, you will realize there are even earlier cues and may to come out even sooner in the tremoring process the next time.
8. Sometimes, just a short break to slow down the tremoring is needed, while other times, it may be necessary to end the session altogether.
9. Allow time for savasana to come out of the experience completely and to integrate the release
10. If needed, take steps to ground yourself.

Grounding Techniques

1. Do some rounds of Tapping while describing what you are noticing in your body or how you are feeling.
2. If you are unable to tap on yourself, a practitioner may tap on you (with prior permission) until you are able to do so yourself.
3. Describe what you are noticing in your body (what are you feeling in your hands?, feet?, belly?).
4. Focus on the breath with an emphasis on extended exhales.
5. Remind yourself that you are safe right now.
6. Place feet securely on the floor.
7. Return to present moment awareness by describing your surroundings (name 3 things you see, hear, or smell in the room).
8. Rub body (arms, legs, face, etc.) to restore sensation to the skin.
9. Squeeze your hands, stand on your feet, bend forward, or take other postures to bring yourself back into the physical body.
10. Move into the child's pose or lie face down with forehead to the floor.
11. Sit up, drink some water, walk around slowly or splash water on face.
12. Sit back-to-back with someone and match your breathing to theirs.

Signs of Tremoring for too long or too often

The only mistake you can make is to tremor for too long or too often. One should only tremor 2-3 times per week and no longer than 20 minutes in a session. Sometimes just a few minutes is all that is needed.

While it is not uncommon to feel tired **-or-** energized after a tremor session, it should not be to the extreme in either direction. If this is the case, it is just an indication that you have tremored a little too long, it won't harm you, but it is good information to have for the next session.

Soreness

Muscle soreness is often a sign that something has shifted. It may indicate an increase in blood flow to an area of the body that have been contracted, numb, or out of your awareness. It may last a couple of days at the most. The best suggestion is to take an Epsom salts bath, like you would after having a deep massage. It is important to remember that the tremors will not injure you but may reveal unhealed places in your body or deeply held tightness.