Somatic Experiencing

Somatic Experiencing (SE)[1)2)] is a therapeutic approach developed by Peter Levine[3)] to help individuals resolve symptoms of trauma and stress. It is based on the idea that trauma and stress can create physical and emotional tension that is stored in the body, leading to ongoing symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and chronic pain.

SE utilizes the body's innate healing mechanisms to resolve symptoms by helping individuals become more aware of and release trapped physical and emotional energy stored in the body after traumatic experiences. This is achieved through techniques such as micromovements, gentle touch, and slow, intentional breathing, which help bring awareness to sensations in the body and promote the release of trapped energy.

It focuses on the role of the body in the healing process and emphasizes the importance of the therapeutic relationship and a collaborative approach, with the therapist working closely with the individual to create a safe and supportive environment. This allows individuals to process and integrate their experiences at their own pace, leading to greater resilience and a sense of empowerment.

According to Levine, trauma can be stored in the body as tension and dysregulation, and somatic experiencing aims to help individuals release this stored tension and return to a state of balance. The therapy involves helping individuals become more aware of their physical sensations and emotions, and using these sensations as a way to regulate their arousal levels and find relief from physical and emotional symptoms.

In somatic experiencing, the therapist works with the individual to identify and track physical sensations related to the traumatic event, and to gradually process and release stored tension in a safe and controlled way. The therapy is typically focused on the present moment and does not involve a detailed exploration of the traumatic event itself.

Micromovements

In his work, Peter Levine emphasizes the importance of micromovements as a means of accessing and releasing trapped physical and emotional energy stored in the body after traumatic experiences. He believes that many physical and emotional symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, are rooted in unprocessed trauma stored in the body. Levine argues that by bringing awareness to these physical sensations and emotions through micromovements, individuals can release trapped energy, reduce symptoms, and promote healing. Peter Levine views micromovements as a key component of his Somatic Experiencing approach, which helps individuals process traumatic experiences and resolve symptoms through gentle, body-centered techniques.

Pendulation

What is Pendulation in Somatic Experiencing® with Peter A Levine, PhD
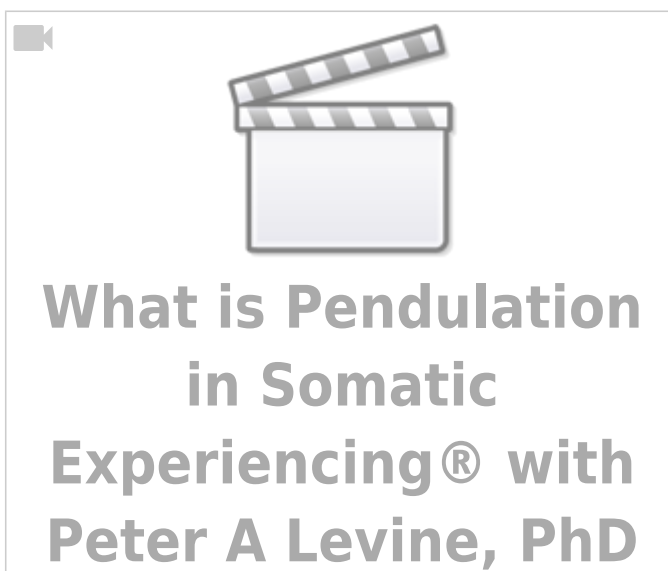
Pendulation refers to the rhythmic alternation between states of tension and relaxation, and is seen as an essential process in resolving trauma and promoting healing.

In SE, pendulation is achieved through various techniques such as breathing, movement, and touch. The goal is to help individuals alternately activate and discharge energy stored in the body after traumatic experiences, leading to the release of physical and emotional tension. The process of pendulation is gentle and gradual, allowing individuals to safely and effectively process and integrate their experiences.

Pendulation is seen as a key aspect of SE because it promotes a sense of balance and stability, helping individuals to regulate their nervous system and resolve symptoms related to trauma and stress. The process of pendulation can also help individuals develop greater resilience and a sense of empowerment, leading to long-term improvements in physical and emotional well-being.

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[1] Somatic experiencing[Wikipedia](#)

[2] Somatic Experiencing International[traumahealing.org](#)

[3] Ergos Institute of Somatic Education [Ergos Institute of Somatic Education](#)

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