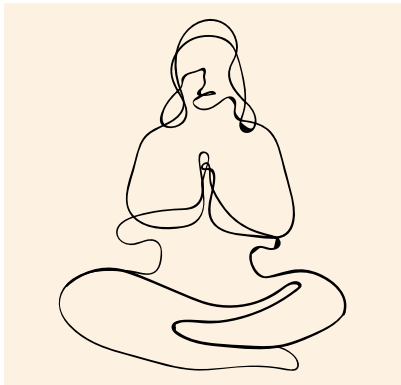


Felt senses

“Felt sense allows us to identify the nuances that weigh in on our feelings.”

Felt senses are our bodily feelings that are thought to correspond to unresolved emotional conflicts, which tend to resolve when one simply pays attention to them. The felt sense is the embodiment (bringing awareness inside the body) of one's ever-changing sensory/energetic/emotional landscape. The felt sense moves our focus from actions and things happening outside us in the world to qualities of our present, internal experience (e.g. textures, colors, sensations). The goal of the felt senses is to develop the ability to be in tune with and describe your felt sense, the sensations occurring on subtle and overt levels in all areas of your body.



A felt sense is a concept that describes internal bodily awareness of your body sensations that arise from increased awareness; it helps connect the dots to other experiences (ones that don't seem relevant until you dig a bit deeper.) Felt senses act as a connection between the mind and body, helping individuals feel more in tune with their bodily processes, which can help repair any of the frayed connections that have caused some wear and tear on our nervous system. For example, individuals that are in tune with their felt senses often feel as if they can feel themselves and their emotions within their stomach or chest.

After being through something traumatic or painful, tuning into your body awareness can be very challenging. In many instances, you may need to actively re-learn how to feel sensations in the body, particularly if your body is stuck in an arousal state of fight or flight. The felt sense is a simple but powerful exercise that encourages people to increase their bodily awareness and trust their intuitions, leading to a felt sense.

The steps we take to heal are not exactly from feeling the intense feelings, but rather, it's the ability to feel the more descriptive qualities associated with the emotion like the "heaviness" or "the frozenness." By tapping into the deeper layers of how the body actually feels the feelings, we help the intensity move through and out of the cells of the body.

When we feel into our bodies using our "felt sense", the intensity gets diffused, bringing our experience to a more tolerable level. This then makes processing the emotional experience a lot more tolerable too.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDOUT

- 1 Page 2 gives you the words: a vocabulary for sensations, and an intensity scale.
- 2 Page 3 is the exercise itself, in seven steps. Five to fifteen minutes.
- 3 Page 4 is a check-in sheet to fill in afterwards, or to bring to session.

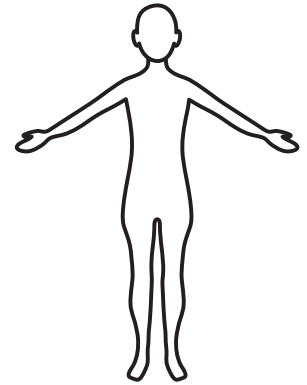
Tapping into your **felt sense**

Where you notice it, and the words to describe it

To calm yourself, sit or lie down in a quiet location where you can comfortably focus.

Take a deep breath and travel inward, focusing on the sensations in your body at this moment. Use descriptive language to describe the sensations you notice in your body. Pay attention to more and more subtle sensations and use as many descriptive words as you can think of.

For example, you notice that your heart is pounding. As you sit with that feeling, it becomes clearer and more descriptive: it's like a hand is wrapped around your chest.



WHERE CAN YOU NOTICE
YOUR FELT SENSES?

LANGUAGE OF THE FELT SENSES

PRESSURE

even, uneven, supportive feeling,
crushed feeling, cutting off circulation

AIR CURRENT

gentle, cool, warm, from right, from left,
stimulating, rush, like a feather, like mist

TENSION

solid, dense, warm, cold, inflamed,
protective, constricting, angry, sad

PAIN

ache, sharp, twinge, slight, stabbing

TINGLING

pricks, vibration, tickling, numb

ITCH

mild itch, angry itch, irritating itch, moving
itch, subtle itch, small itch, large area of
itching

TEMPERATURE

warm, hot, burning, cool, cold, clammy,
chills, icy, frozen, fire, sunshine, snow,
stone, shade

TEXTURE

rough, wood, stone, sandpaper, smooth,
silk

MOOD/EMOTION

sinking, pulling in, open, closed, uplifting,
sunny day, dark cloud, roiling

BODY SENSATION INTENSITY SCALE



Felt senses **exercise**

Seven steps. Go slowly; most of the work happens in the pauses.

- 1 Find a comfortable position, relax and close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and when you're ready, ask, "How am I inside right now?" Turn your attention like a searchlight into your inside feeling place and greet whatever you find there. Practice taking a friendly attitude toward whatever is there.
- 2 Take some time now to notice just where it is in your body. Notice if it would feel right to begin to describe it as simply as you might tell another person what you are aware of. You can use words, images, gestures, metaphors, whatever fits and captures your experience.
- 3 Ask and receive: ask the felt sense some questions. "What's the worst of this feeling?" "What makes it so bad?", "What does this feeling need?" "What is a good small step in the right direction for this thing?", "What needs to happen?" "What actions need to be taken?", "What would my body feel like if this thing were all better, all resolved?"
- 4 Let your sense form. Ask, "What does this whole thing feel like?". "What is the whole feel of it?" Don't answer with what you already know about it. Listen to your body. Give your body 30 seconds to a minute for the feel of "all of that" to form.
- 5 Sense for a stopping place. Take some time to sense if it is OK to end in a few minutes or if something more needs to be known first. If something more comes, then take some time to acknowledge that.
- 6 Receive and experience what has changed: Take some time to sense any changes that have happened in your body, especially anything which feels more open or released. This is sometimes called a 'shift.'
- 7 Bring awareness out. Take some time to bring your awareness slowly outward again, feeling your hands and feet, being aware of the room, and letting your eyes come naturally open.

If nothing comes. That is a normal answer, especially early on. "Blank", "numb" and "nothing" are felt senses too; describe them the same way.

Felt sense **check-in**

Fill in after the exercise, or whenever you want to put words to something in the body.

Date / time _____

How am I inside right now? First words that come.

Where in the body, and what kind of sensation? Use the words on page 2.

Intensity (1 to 10)

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②

③

④

⑤

⑥

⑦

⑧

⑨

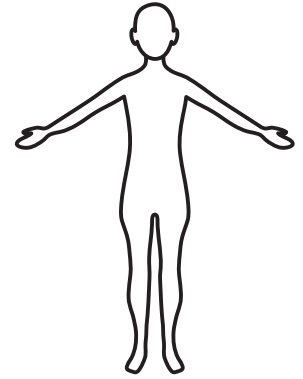
⑩

What does this feeling need?

What is a good small step in the right direction for this thing?

What changed after sitting with it? Anything more open, released, or different. A shift can be small.

What this might be connected to An event, a person, a memory, or nothing yet.



Mark where you feel it