

Somatic Cards

From the original "Somatic Cards.pdf" · 25 pages

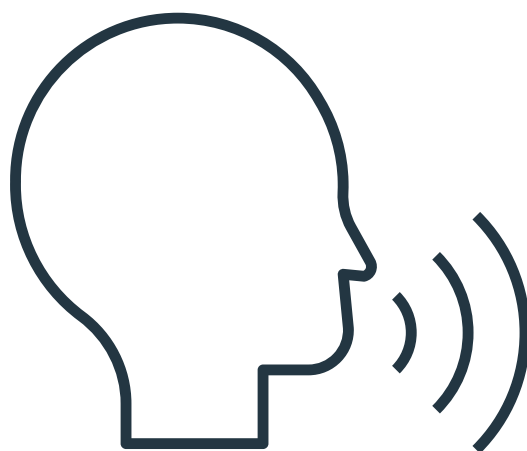
What this is. The original handout (25 pages) reproduced page for page inside the house frame, unaltered, so that every word, line, table and illustration is exactly as its author set it. It replaces the September 2026 redesign of this file, which re-set the text and chopped it.

Contents

Original page 1 · THE 'VOO' SOUND
Original page 2 · SHAKE IT OFF
Original page 3 · HUG HUG HUG
Original page 4 · YAWNING
Original page 5 · HUMMING
Original page 6 · YIN YOGA
Original page 7 · COOLING BREATH
Original page 8 · 4 7 8 BREATHING
Original page 9 · LEGS ON WALL POSE
Original page 10 · CHILD'S POSE
Original page 11 · ALTERNATE NOSTRIL
Original page 12 · SUPINE TWIST
Original page 13 · VAGUS NERVE
Original page 14 · SELF-HOLDING
Original page 15 · ROCK ON FOREARMS
Original page 16 · COLD PLUNGES
Original page 17 · SINGING
Original page 18 · DANCE IT OUT
Original page 19 · PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE
Original page 20 · GUIDED IMAGERY

THE 'VOO' SOUND

The 'Voo' sound is a deep, resonant sound made by softly vibrating the vocal cords while saying "voo" in a relaxed and prolonged manner.

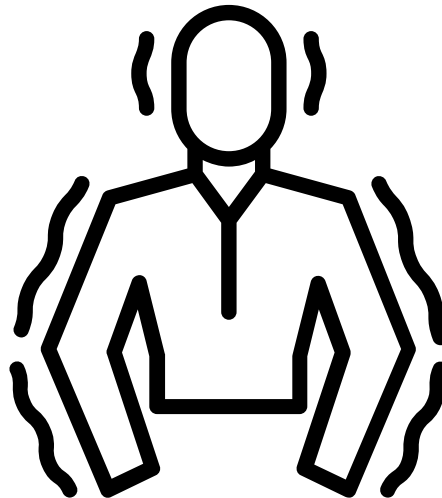


Take a deep breath, then imitate a foghorn, making a sound as low as possible. See if you can feel the vibrations of the sound all the way down to your pelvic floor.



SHAKE IT OFF

Animals often shake themselves to release the excess energy produced from the stress response. Allowing your body to connect with the trembling sensation produced by a stressful event can enable your system to settle.

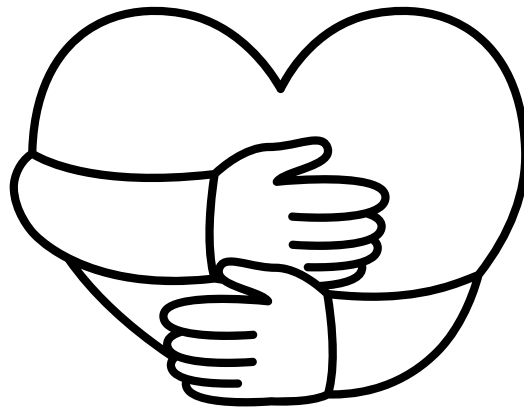


Spend five minutes shaking and moving your body around. you can choose to shake one body part at a time or shake your whole body all at once.



HUG HUG HUG

Hugs create a sense of trust and safety, relieves stress, and blood pressure, relaxes the body, and strengthens the immune system, among a million other benefits. Get hugging!



- Grab someone (whom you know!) and give them a proper squeeze
- Hold and breathe! Feel them!
- Hold for 20 seconds or longer to allow the bonding hormone oxytocin to get in on the action!



YAWNING

Yawns and sighs stretch the vagus nerve (which controls relaxation) and relax your muscles.



- Give a big yawn. Go for it like you're gonna win the lottery if you yawn big enough
- Lift hands above your head and stretch outwards and upwards
- Sigh on the exhale, being quite noisy about it
- Maybe shake a bit, letting go of any tension
- Repeat!



HUMMING

Using voice and vibrations to reduce stress and anxiety.



- Find a comfortable spot, sitting or lying.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths
- Put your fingers in your ears!
- Start humming: either spontaneously or a favorite tune
- Keep your focus on the sound of humming and bring your attention back if you get distracted
- Hum for 10-15 minutes



YIN YOGA

A slow, restorative style of yoga with
postures
that are held for longer periods of time

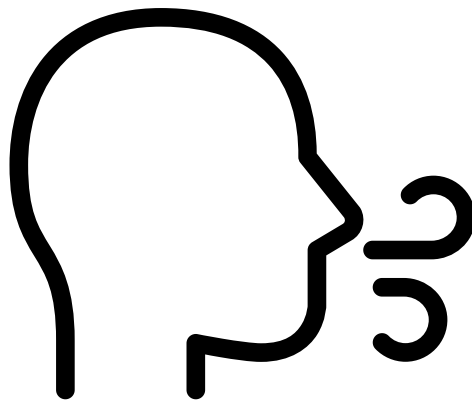


The point is not to ‘stretch’ your muscles per se
but to foster harmony in body and mind by
slowing down and paying attention to your body,
your breath, and your emotions.



COOLING BREATH

Cool and calm the body with this tongue-based breathing exercise



- Roll your tongue and stick it out of your mouth
- Inhale deeply through your mouth like you're drinking from a straw
- Focus on the cooling sensation of the breath on your tongue and into the body
- Pull your tongue back, close your mouth and exhale through the nose
- Repeat for a few minutes



4 7 8 BREATHING

Slow, deep breathing to reduce anxiety,
get to sleep, manage cravings and
triggers.

Inhale through
your nose for a
count of four
seconds.

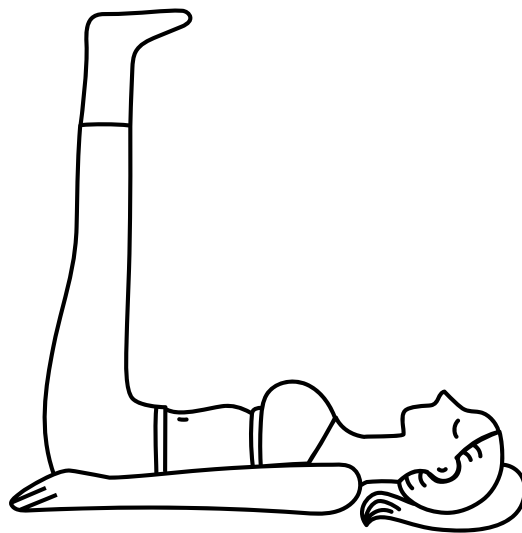
Exhale through
your mouth slowly
for a count of eight
seconds.

Hold for a count
of seven
seconds.



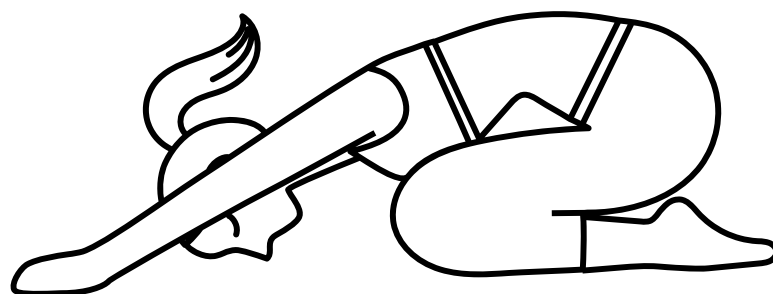
LEGS ON WALL POSE

Viparita Karani (Legs-up-the-Wall pose): Lie on your back with your legs raised against a wall, allowing your body to relax and blood to flow back to your heart.



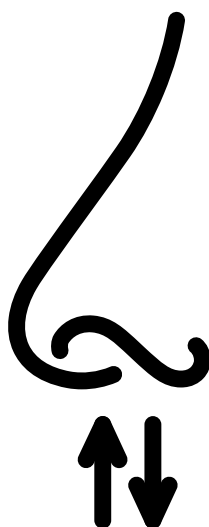
CHILD'S POSE

Sit back on your heels and fold forward, resting your forehead and chest on the floor, while keeping your arms extended in front of you or alongside your body.



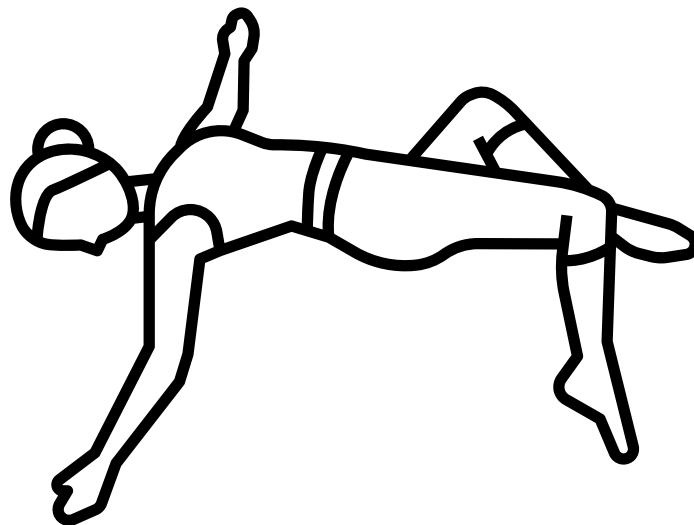
ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

Close one nostril with your finger and inhale through the other, then switch fingers and exhale through the opposite nostril. Repeat for several cycles.



SUPINE TWIST

Lie on your back, hug your knees to your chest, and then lower them to one side while turning your head in the opposite direction, allowing for a gentle spinal twist.



VAGUS NERVE MASSAGE

This stimulation helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system and promotes a state of relaxation and calm. It can help reduce stress, anxiety, and tension, and has been shown to have positive effects on overall health and well-being.

Gently apply firm pressure to the area behind your ears, at the base of your skull, and along your jawline.



SELF-HOLDING

There are various self-holding techniques you can explore, such as self-hugging, placing your hands on your heart or stomach, or cupping your face with your hands.

Apply pressure or touch gently: Once you have chosen a self-holding technique, gently apply pressure or touch to the chosen area or areas. The pressure should be firm enough to feel a sense of holding or support but should not cause any pain or discomfort.

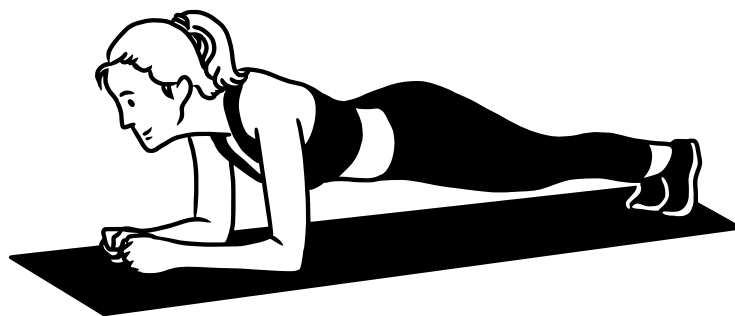


ROCK ON FOREARMS

Rest your forearms on a flat, supportive surface, such as a table or desk.

Relax your shoulders: Let your shoulders drop away from your ears and allow your arms to rest naturally on the surface in front of you.

Begin rocking motion: Slowly start moving your forearms back and forth in a rocking motion. The movement should be gentle and controlled, and feel free to adjust the speed and range of motion to what feels comfortable to you.



COLD PLUNGES

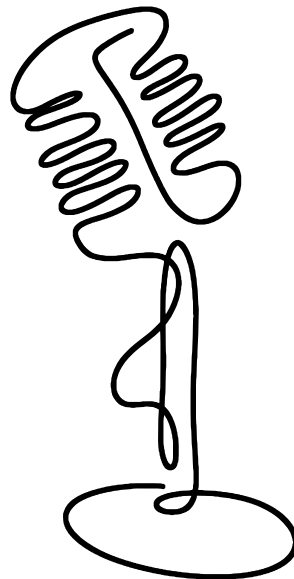
Cold plunges, also known as cold baths or cold therapy, can be an effective practice for somatic therapy. Here's a general guide on how to practice cold plunges:

1. Find a suitable cold plunge setup: This can include an ice bath, a cold shower, or even a natural body of cold water like a lake or ocean.
2. Gradually acclimate your body:
3. Begin with brief exposures:
4. Focus on the sensations:
5. Breathe and relax:



SINGING

Singing can be a powerful expressive outlet for emotions. It allows us to release emotions, stress, and tension, promoting a sense of catharsis and emotional well-being. This emotional release can further stimulate the relaxation response mediated by the vagus nerve.



DANCE IT OUT

Dancing can be a wonderful way to calm the vagus nerve due to its unique combination of physical movement, rhythm, and mindful presence.

Dancing encourages the mind-body connection by requiring focused attention and mindfulness. When we are fully immersed in the present moment through dance, it can reduce anxiety and increase relaxation, activating the calming response of the vagus nerve.

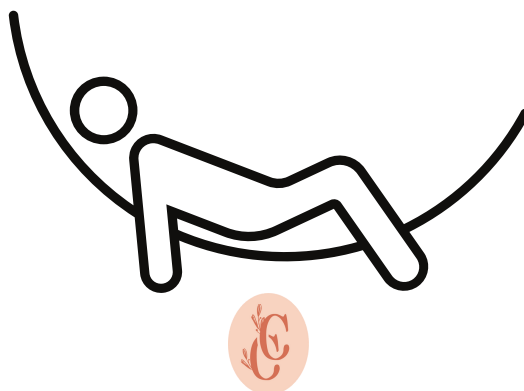


PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Find a comfortable position, sitting or lying down, and close your eyes gently. Take a few deep, slow breaths, allowing yourself to relax and fully release any tension you may be carrying.

Start by focusing on your breath. Inhale deeply, feel your lungs expand, and exhale slowly, releasing any stress or tension as you breathe.

Now, gradually tense and relax different muscle groups in your body.



GUIDED IMAGERY

Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a calm and soothing environment, such as a peaceful meadow or a beach, paying attention to the sights, sounds, and sensations.

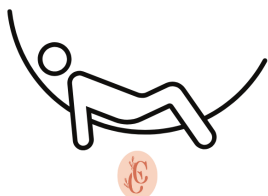


PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Find a comfortable position, sitting or lying down, and close your eyes gently. Take a few deep, slow breaths, allowing yourself to relax and fully release any tension you may be carrying.

Start by focusing on your breath. Inhale deeply, feel your lungs expand, and exhale slowly, releasing any stress or tension as you breathe.

Now, gradually tense and relax different muscle groups in your body.



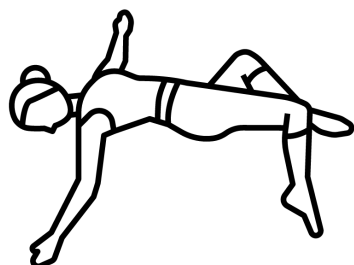
GUIDED IMAGERY

Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a calm and soothing environment, such as a peaceful meadow or a beach, paying attention to the sights, sounds, and sensations.



SUPINE TWIST

Lie on your back, hug your knees to your chest, and then lower them to one side while turning your head in the opposite direction, allowing for a gentle spinal twist.



ROCK ON FOREARMS

Rest your forearms on a flat, supportive surface, such as a table or desk.

Relax your shoulders: Let your shoulders drop away from your ears and allow your arms to rest naturally on the surface in front of you.

Begin rocking motion: Slowly start moving your forearms back and forth in a rocking motion. The movement should be gentle and controlled, and feel free to adjust the speed and range of motion to what feels comfortable to you.



VAGUS NERVE MASSAGE

This stimulation helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system and promotes a state of relaxation and calm. It can help reduce stress, anxiety, and tension, and has been shown to have positive effects on overall health and well-being.

Gently apply firm pressure to the area behind your ears, at the base of your skull, and along your jawline.



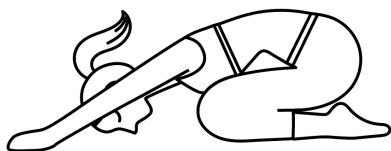
ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

Close one nostril with your finger and inhale through the other, then switch fingers and exhale through the opposite nostril. Repeat for several cycles.



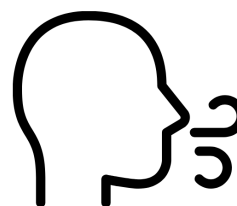
CHILD'S POSE

Sit back on your heels and fold forward, resting your forehead and chest on the floor, while keeping your arms extended in front of you or alongside your body.



COOLING BREATH

Cool and calm the body with this tongue-based breathing exercise



- Roll your tongue and stick it out of your mouth
- Inhale deeply through your mouth like you're drinking from a straw
- Focus on the cooling sensation of the breath on your tongue and into the body
- Pull your tongue back, close your mouth and exhale through the nose
- Repeat for a few minutes



4 7 8 BREATHING

Slow, deep breathing to reduce anxiety, get to sleep, manage cravings and triggers.

Inhale through your nose for a count of four seconds.

Exhale through your mouth slowly for a count of eight seconds.

Hold for a count of seven seconds.



YAWNING

Yawns and sighs stretch the vagus nerve (which controls relaxation) and relax your muscles.

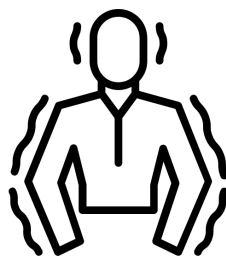


- Give a big yawn. Go for it like you're gonna win the lottery if you yawn big enough
- Lift hands above your head and stretch outwards and upwards
- Sigh on the exhale, being quite noisy about it
- Maybe shake a bit, letting go of any tension
- Repeat!



SHAKE IT OFF

Animals often shake themselves to release the excess energy produced from the stress response. Allowing your body to connect with the trembling sensation produced by a stressful event can enable your system to settle.

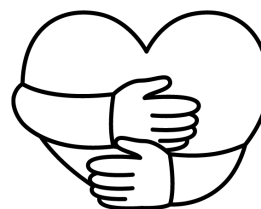


Spend five minutes shaking and moving your body around. you can choose to shake one body part at a time or shake your whole body all at once.



HUG HUG HUG

Hugs create a sense of trust and safety, relieves stress, and blood pressure, relaxes the body, and strengthens the immune system, among a million other benefits. Get hugging!

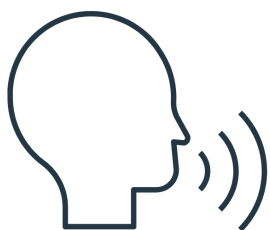


- Grab someone (whom you know!) and give them a proper squeeze
- Hold and breathe! Feel them!
- Hold for 20 seconds or longer to allow the bonding hormone oxytocin to get in on the action!



THE 'VOO' SOUND

The 'Voo' sound is a deep, resonant sound made by softly vibrating the vocal cords while saying "voo" in a relaxed and prolonged manner.



Take a deep breath, then imitate a foghorn, making a sound as low as possible. See if you can feel the vibrations of the sound all the way down to your pelvic floor.



HUMMING

Using voice and vibrations to reduce stress and anxiety.



- Find a comfortable spot, sitting or lying.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths
- Put your fingers in your ears!
- Start humming: either spontaneously or a favorite tune
- Keep your focus on the sound of humming and bring your attention back if you get distracted
- Hum for 10-15 minutes



YIN YOGA

A slow, restorative style of yoga with postures that are held for longer periods of time

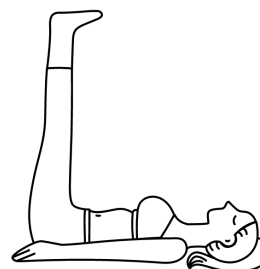


The point is not to 'stretch' your muscles per se but to foster harmony in body and mind by slowing down and paying attention to your body, your breath, and your emotions.



LEGS ON WALL POSE

Viparita Karani (Legs-up-the-Wall pose): Lie on your back with your legs raised against a wall, allowing your body to relax and blood to flow back to your heart.



SELF-HOLDING

There are various self-holding techniques you can explore, such as self-hugging, placing your hands on your heart or stomach, or cupping your face with your hands.

Apply pressure or touch gently: Once you have chosen a self-holding technique, gently apply pressure or touch to the chosen area or areas. The pressure should be firm enough to feel a sense of holding or support but should not cause any pain or discomfort.



DANCE IT OUT

Dancing can be a wonderful way to calm the vagus nerve due to its unique combination of physical movement, rhythm, and mindful presence.

Dancing encourages the mind-body connection by requiring focused attention and mindfulness. When we are fully immersed in the present moment through dance, it can reduce anxiety and increase relaxation, activating the calming response of the vagus nerve.



COLD PLUNGES

Cold plunges, also known as cold baths or cold therapy, can be an effective practice for somatic therapy. Here's a general guide on how to practice cold plunges:

1. Find a suitable cold plunge setup: This can include an ice bath, a cold shower, or even a natural body of cold water like a lake or ocean.
2. Gradually acclimate your body:
3. Begin with brief exposures:
4. Focus on the sensations:
5. Breathe and relax:



SINGING

Singing can be a powerful expressive outlet for emotions. It allows us to release emotions, stress, and tension, promoting a sense of catharsis and emotional well-being. This emotional release can further stimulate the relaxation response mediated by the vagus nerve.

