

How To Feel Your Body: a guide to reconnect with yourself

If you're here, you already know that your body matters and that it's an important part of who you are and how you experience life. And at the same time, you might not know how to access it in a way that feels clear or doable. Perhaps you've spent years being disconnected from your body? You're not alone.

You might feel like you live mostly in your head, thinking, analyzing, planning, trying to figure things out. You might try to "check in" with your body and feel very little or nothing at all. Or you might notice that when you do start to feel something, it becomes overwhelming or uncomfortable and you get distracted without really understanding why.

All of that is completely normal and you're not doing anything wrong.

I created this guide so that rather than trying to "get it right" or push yourself into feeling more, you begin to learn how to build a relationship with your body and get to know your nervous system's language at your own pace.

Why this matters in a practical sense

Learning to feel your body isn't just a nice idea or a wellness trend. It has very real, very practical effects on your day-to-day life.

When you begin to notice and stay with your internal experience, even in small ways, you may find that:

- anxiety becomes easier to catch before it escalates,
- decisions feel clearer and less mentally overwhelming,
- and your sense of what you want or don't want becomes more immediate and trustworthy.

Many people also notice that their creativity begins to open up again. When you are connected to your body, you're no longer trying to create only from your mind. There is more texture, more access to emotion and more aliveness in what moves through you. Over time, this work also supports boundaries, energy regulation and a deeper sense of being present in your own life rather than watching it from a distance.

What it actually means to “feel your body”

There is a common misconception that feeling your body means having intense sensations or emotional releases. In reality, it's simpler than that.

You might notice:

- warmth or coolness
- tension or softness
- heaviness or lightness
- the subtle movement of your breath
- almost nothing at all or a kind of blank or numb feeling

That last one is especially important to name: not feeling much is not a failure but often the starting point. Numbness is still a form of awareness and very often it reflects a nervous system that has learned to protect itself from too much, too fast.

A Couple Important Shifts

It can feel productive to approach your body by trying harder, focusing more intensely or making something happen. But in my work we take a different approach.

Instead of asking, “How do I feel more?” begin with: “What is already here that I can notice?”

Your role is not to force sensation or create an experience, rather it is to notice and to stay with what's there just a little longer than you normally would.

Begin to practice these suggested practices when you are calm or even bored, not when you are activated and dealing with a high emotional state or stressful circumstances. You want to learn while you have more capacity instead of trying to force this while you're stressed. It's the consistency that count and over time, your body will learn to lean into these practices automatically without you even having to direct it.

Practice 1: Start With Contact

This is the simplest, most reliable and accessible place to begin. Sit somewhere that's comfortable and where you can support your head. This might be your couch, bed or a chair with a head rest.

1. Notice where you feel the contact of the surface underneath you. This might be the floor under your feet, the couch or pillow under your thighs, your bottom, your back or your head. It might be your hands resting somewhere.
2. Choose one point of contact and allow your attention to settle there for a few moments.
3. You are not looking for anything special or dramatic. You are simply noticing what is already there: pressure, weight, temperature or even the absence of clear sensation.

Why This Works: Contact is inherently stabilizing, especially when you have your head supported. It allows your body to be held without it holding itself up. It gives your nervous system something concrete to orient to, which makes it easier to begin sensing without becoming overwhelmed.

You can do this practice anywhere you are; anywhere you can sit down and be supported.

Deeper Practice: When You Feel More Activated or Emotional:

1. Do the steps above.
2. Allow the surface that's holding your body *to hold you as you hold the emotion / stress / sensation.*

Remember, it's ok to feel difficult emotions; they are not wrong or bad, but they do feel different and more often uncomfortable than the positive ones. If difficult sensations arise, see if you can stay with them even a couple of minutes. Allow your body to feel their sensations as you focus on the contact of the surface beneath you. Your mind will try to make meaning out of the sensations and emotions, this is ok, try to put the voice of the mind aside even for a few moments and focus on the physical sensations.

Also remember that *you don't have to like or accept* any of the sensations or emotions that you're feeling. These have been stuck in your body since the very first time this stress or trauma happened, and your body is now bringing them up to be resolved. Allow them to be present even for a few seconds at a time.

Practice 2: Orienting to the Present Moment

Have you noticed that when you are stressed or anxious you are often thinking about the past or the future? Your mind is focused on experiences that already happened or that you are worried might happen. This is normal especially if you learned early on that being hypervigilant and hyper aware is what kept you relatively safe and surviving your life.

1. Sit or lay comfortably and notice the contact of the surface beneath you.
2. Open your eyes and take in the room around you, then allow your eyes to land on something that delights you or pleases you. Notice where in your body you feel that item, person or pet. Again, you are not looking for anything dramatic nor just the thought about the thing. You are looking for the physical sensation of the item, person or pet.
Do your shoulders or your belly soften?
Do you feel a warmth somewhere?
Does your breath deepen?
3. Simply notice the location of that sensation, put your hand on it if you can reach it and stay with it for a few minutes.

Why This Works: Unless you are actually under threat in the present moment, thinking about the past or future puts your body in a state of perceived threat. Your cellular memory is holding the past stress or trauma as if it's still happening now, or your body is bracing against thoughts of a future that hasn't happened yet, and this is causing your body to mobilize a stress response even though nothing is happening in your immediate surroundings.

Orienting to your surroundings in the present moment shows your mammal body in a physical way that there is an absence of threat right now. This helps to quiet the mind and interrupt meaning making.

Important Things to Remember

More Is Not Better: One of the most important principles in somatic work is that more is not better. If anything, going too quickly or too intensely can cause your system to shut down or pull away. So as you begin to notice sensations, see if you can stay at about ten percent of what you think you should be feeling; just enough to be aware and without tipping into overwhelm or effort.

If something starts to feel like too much, simply gently shift your attention to your surroundings and notice what delights you, or feel your feet on the floor or the contact of the surface you're sitting on. You're not distracting yourself. Rather, you're going back and forth between sensation and orientation to the present moment and this actually helps your system build trust and capacity over time.

It's Ok If Nothing Happens: This is one of the places where people often get discouraged, so I want to speak to it directly. You may feel numb, blank, bored, or like you are doing it wrong. *But this does not mean you are failing.*

Very often, it means your system is pacing itself and it is allowing only what feels manageable, and no more than that. If this happens, you can return to something simple, like Practice 1 above and let that be enough for now.

Consistency matters much more than intensity here. We cannot force our mammal body to go at the pace that our mind thinks it should follow. You wouldn't force your dog or cat to hurry up and stop being afraid. You would sit with them calmly and help them take their time feeling safe. Your body is a mammal and it takes the time it takes to feel safe. Be patient and kind with yourself.

A Few Minutes Is Enough: You don't need a long or complex practice. Once or twice a day, for even thirty to sixty seconds, you might pause and notice your feet on the floor or your body in a chair. This is enough. Over time, these small moments begin to add up, and your relationship with your body starts to shift in a way that feels natural and sustainable.

You are allowed to go slowly. There is no benefit to pushing yourself into intense sensations or trying to force a breakthrough. In fact, the opposite is usually true. The kind of change most people are looking for comes from learning how to stay with themselves in a steady, respectful way. Because this is not about fixing yourself, it is about beginning to listen.

Follow The Impulses: As your awareness grows, you may begin to notice small, almost subtle impulses in your body, such as an urge to shift your position, to stretch, to take a deeper breath, or to move in some way. If it feels comfortable, you can allow these movements to happen slowly and without forcing them. Your body is constantly working to regulate and complete or metabolize stress responses. When you follow these small impulses, you are supporting that process rather than overriding it.

Move Between Comfort and Discomfort: The more you practice feeling your body, the more easily you will notice both the sensations that feel uncomfortable (tension, bracing, or activation) and that feel comfortable (softness, warmth, spaciousness). When uncomfortable sensations (and the corresponding emotions) rise up, you don't have to like it or force yourself to stay with them.

Instead, you can begin to move your attention back and forth between something that feels neutral or steady and something that feels more challenging in your body. For example, you might notice the steadiness of your hands, then briefly bring awareness to a tight area in your chest, and then return again to your hands.

This process helps your nervous system learn that it can touch into discomfort and come back to something that feels safe. Over time, this builds resilience in a way that does not rely on force or endurance.

You Can Use Your Words: As you begin to notice more sensations, it can help to put simple words to your experience. You might internally name sensations like tight, warm, heavy, buzzing, or even just blank. There is no need to analyze or interpret what you feel. The naming is not about understanding, *it is about helping your mind and body stay connected* to the experience in a gentle, organized way.

How this begins to change your life

As you continue consistent practice, you may begin to notice shifts that feel both subtle and significant.

- You might catch anxiety earlier, before it builds into something overwhelming.
- You might find that decisions feel less mental and more clear, as if your body is giving you direct feedback.
- You may notice a greater sense of ease in knowing when to rest and when to act.

For many people, there is also a return of creativity; not as something forced, but as something that emerges when there is more space, more feeling and more connection. And perhaps most importantly, there is a growing sense of being more fully present here in your own life.

Work with me

If this way of approaching your body resonates with you, and you would like support going deeper, I offer one-on-one sessions in Kelowna and online worldwide, where we work at your pace to build this kind of awareness in a way that feels safe and grounded. You don't need any prior experience with somatic work, just a willingness to begin where you are.

You can learn more or book a session here:

<https://www.kasiarachfall.com/services/>