

BODY-PSYCHOTHERAPY WORKSHOP HANDOUT

THE BODY THAT BROUGHT ME HERE

Guided meditation: How did your body respond to some of these life experiences of yours? You carry memories of all of these in your body, and all of these helped to shape your body - and your spirit. Over the next 15-20 minutes, try to allow your body to remember these events:

Pregnancy & Birth: Inter-uterine experiences (you had them, try to allow your body to remember them); or your birth: was it natural or Caesarian? Easy or difficult? Any birth traumas? Who was there? Was there post-natal isolation? What was your welcome into and your position in the family like? What do you know of/remember of your early family atmosphere & feelings?

First Movement Memories: What do you remember of being in the womb; being held, rocked, carried, cuddled, bounced; of being in the pram or buggy; of crawling, then walking; of any early journeys; of falling, being dropped, out of bed; etc. Or restrictions to movement:- reins, cots, prams, playpens, etc.

Environment: What do you remember of being in fields; mountains; woods; by the sea; in urban; or suburban environments; streets, where you played, parks, etc. What was the climate? What of the environment: friendly or hostile; safe or not? What were your first impressions of your home, your locality, your school?

Trainings: What do you remember of potty training; learning to read or ride a bike; starting to swim; horse riding; tree climbing; playing a musical instrument; dance/ballet; gymnastics and athletics? Was this sort of learning – through doing – easy, or hard? What happened?

Messages: What do you remember of the ‘messages’ you received: the sexist ones: boys “don’t cry”; girls “are pretty”; “you are” ... (what?) - clumsy, intelligent, etc; “my body is” ... nice/nasty; what messages were there about posture; safety; self-esteem; shame; race; class; family fears; or internally from recurrent dreams or nightmares?

Sexuality: What do you remember about nakedness; bathrooms; sensuality? What whispers of incest; what types of touch did you experience? What did you glean about yourself from film images; teenage images/role models; one’s 1st sexual (or non-sexual) affair; different lovers; different experiences of sex; or even impotence/lack of fertility?

Health: What do you remember about being suckled; types of food you ate; your body weight; strength; flexibility; games and athletics; illnesses; disability; eyesight; allergies; additions (cigarettes, alcohol, etc.); chronic issues; hospitalizations; or operations?

Traumas & Accidents: What do you remember of family deaths, car accidents, abuse, fractures, hospital operations, natural disasters; near misses; ecstatic experiences; peaceful moments in between?

Maturation: What have you experienced during the growth of and the changes to your body; your progression through childhood; the menârche; puberty & adolescence; becoming an adult; getting married; childbirth; middle-age; family predispositions; menopause; retirement; aging; nearing death; parts of your body ‘not working’ so well; etc? What do you remember about the body that brought you here?

What is your Best Body Memory? (Pause)
What is your Worst Body Memory? (Pause)

