

SELF TOUCH GUIDE



Incorporating self touch can be a very therapeutic addition to any trauma informed yoga class. For most people, especially when baked in choice, it is extremely regulating and since we advise against teachers giving physical touch in our trauma informed classes, it is a great way to bring in the calming practice.

You may want to start by inviting folks to feel into the touch they are already receiving as they drop into the support of the floor or mat or chair or wall. What does it feel like where the body and the surface are interacting? Are there ways in which they could allow that relationship to deepen?

Next you might invite a hand to the heart and a hand to the belly. Invite your students to tune into how it feels. What sensations do they notice both at the sites of contact and throughout the body? Has anything shifted? What is the temperature? If it feels good and they would like to, you can invite them to relax more fully into the feeling of the contact and allow the body to start to soften as much as it feels comfortable or able. You might remind them that pendulation between open expansiveness and closing off/tightening/narrowing is normal and healthy for our bodies.

If the sensations feel too much, they are always in charge and can release the hands or try feeling into the body's desire to close off and give it what it wants. Notice what it feels like to be close to sensation. How much can they control that? What does it feel like at the spot of contact and in other areas of the body? Allow them to play with opening and closing to take in the feeling of hands on heart and belly using their own will. What do they discover?

You may want to switch hands and try this on the other side.

Next you might want to play with some other hand positions on the body using the same prompts.

On the recording I show some options most people enjoy.

Script

Rub your hands together as fast as you can to make a strong friction. Really feel yourself heating up. Now cup your hands gently over the eyes. You may imagine for a couple breaths that you are breathing in the warm air with your eyes.