

Transcript:

Self Touch

[00:00:00] Hi, everyone. I'm excited to bring you in another series of teaching today. This one on incorporating touch and self touch into your trauma-informed classes. I know that we don't touch students as a rule in our classes and touch is very healing. So giving students an opportunity to use their own body for touch, is a way that we can incorporate this healing modality, safely and in choice.

Usually students will really enjoy this. Self touch can be very relaxing, very soothing and very self-regulating. And so you might want to start by inviting folks to feel into the places that they're already engaged in touch. So the parts of their body that are touching the ground, or the chair, and to see if they can feel into the support of those surfaces, you might even ask them to feel the temperature, the texture, feel the way that those surfaces are holding their body and allow gravity to really work on them and you might work with some touch of the hands as well.

And so, I'll just shift here so you can see arm position, you might invite, students to bring their fingertips to the ground. Along the sides, here we go. You can ask them to bring their fingertips onto the ground, maybe two or three fingers to really feel the earth all fingertips, if you like, they can play with what feels right and really feeling into this grounding aspect of the earth. So that's, that's a great one and then you might start to bring in self touch on the body. And so maybe inviting students to bring hand to the heart and to the belly and I'm feeling the regulation right, right away. As I just moved into that, we might ask them, what do they notice the sites of contact and how is it affecting the rest of their body? So they're noticing the sensations right at the hands, but how is that impacting the legs, the arms, the jaw, the breath. So walking them through where that position might be felt.

And is this field regulating, does it feel, do they like this feeling and how do they know? How do you know if it's softening? If it's regulating, just noticing how, you know, if it's not then make another choice, right. Then we want to take the hands off.

And if it feels like it's too much relaxation, it's too intense. It's too much self care, self love reminding them that they can shift the Kimberleys that's too much. And then they can decide to come back at any time and feel into that self care. And this might feel like some care that they haven't received before that no one gave them, it's going to be intense.

And then you might invite them to switch sides. And of course, this hand on the heart hand, on the belly can be done in all different positions, sitting in the chair, lying on the ground, in lots of different postures, you can take a wide legged straddle. They

sometimes call like a goddess posture and bring the hands here and it's going to feel different. Right? So trying to envision where you could incorporate bringing the hands onto the body in different postures, and this is really a good one. And you might also, bring hands together in front of the heart. And when you invite this kind of prayer hands, inviting the students to really feel the pressing of the hands against each other and play with what kind of pressure do they like? Do you like a hard pressure or a light pressure fingertips or the full hand, right? So what are the differences?

This is what we're working on. It could be very subtle. What I like. And don't like, and how do I know you might invite the thumbs to press right into the sternum?

Just noticing how that feels. And again, playing with pressure, how much pressure feels right now are self-regulating position of the hands is bringing one or both hands under the armpits can be very self-regulating may even enjoy tapping, tapping the thumbs.

We'll be taking some breaths here.

Can try one, try the other tribal.

Same. I can have my hands outside.

Kind of like a butterfly across the chest can play with tapping.

Do I like a fast top?

I mean like some people shake their leg.

So when someone's shaking their leg, I saw this recently, the other day they were releasing tension. I saw this person shaking. They're like, we don't want to say stop shaking it. Right. Can we really feel it, feel into it? And even maybe exaggerate or slow down the motion becomes conscious and it becomes self-regulating.

So I invite folks into tapping.

You can try up and down, tapping on the body, waking us up, even adding some soda, getting it out, getting it out So you can play with these. You can go much slower, introducing low, medium, and high residents and movements, right? This is, uh, this is, touch. This is touch. You may also invite Maybe moving the hands together to friction, getting up some heat And just feeling that heat, perhaps imagining a ball of heat between the hands cupping the hands in front of the eyes years.

And you might invite cupping the back of the I'm sorry, coming in the front of the head and the back of the neck, this can feel great for many people. They might also feel strange for some. So as with all these lessons, giving other options, inviting folks to notice, does this feel self-regulating or does it actually feel triggering or uncomfortable?

So you can spend a lot of time with us and taking through these exercises quite fast. There's quite a number of them. And I'm trusting that you're bringing in all that

trauma-sensitive language, the slowness, the care and the options. And you wouldn't bring these all exercises in at once on one day, but maybe working with one or two easier ones, and then moving more into more self touch. You can also bring in self massage. I'll often invite folks to just scratch on their head. You know, sometimes you don't want to use the word massage or self touch because that might make people feel a strange seems. They scratch the head, squeeze the ears, maybe rubbing the hands together, massaging along the jaw, shoulders and down the arms, all the way to the fingertips, squeezing any tensions. I mean, these are great ways to bring themselves touch and other kind of sneaky way to bring in self touch is by doing Eagle arms modified. So it could bring the arms really wide. I crossed them over the chest into a hug, big squeeze, but these are my Eagle arms. But then I might invite kind of squeezing hug, even a self massage under the shoulder blades in the back. I just did this recently in one of my classes. If folks want to, they can unfold right into your kind of classic ego arms reaching the elbows away and up, but they can just stay right here. Might even want to rock side to side rocking, being very, very self-regulating.

So we know that. So we look for places we can incorporate rocking consciously, always make sure of course that you switch arms and give equal time on both sides. So these are a lot of good ways to bring in self touch. I think I don't want to overwhelm you and maybe I'll do a whole another lesson on soft touch. I'll just add one final line, which is, if you do have the benefit of having props and you have a kind of a false stor or a bullying get, you might invite folks, at the end, when they're resting to rest their head on a bolster, a blanket on their lap, if they're in the chair or even on the ground, I can thank my head on bolster. I can hug the bolster and this gives me that great healing of self touch and containment and it's as if I'm receiving touch.

So it has those great benefits. You might even use this in a child's pose, a bolster or, a bunch of blankets where you put it under the belly and you squeeze, or you made invite folks to enjoy a fetal position where they're able to hug the prop. And of course, I know we don't always have access to props. This could also be a rolled up sweatshirt or a towel. So bringing in, you know, you, you probably heard about weighted blankets, where I set up bringing weighted blankets and all our causes, but that idea of containment of wheat, of holding or being held is very relaxing for most people.

So ways that we can, can bring that in. We want to invite into class. So I hope you found that helpful, and I'm looking forward to seeing how you're incorporating some of the sense of touch, into your classes, into your poses. And remember a lot of these, most of these I shared with you can be added to almost any, any Asana, including like rocking in a warrior, right? So instead of just taking a static warrior, we can add rocking, can add rocking, which is very soothing. We can add tapping, we can add self massage.

So think about where can I add those three things, maybe rocking, tapping self massage, into different postures or where can I add some element of touch or even just bringing the mind right into the feet, into the floor, into the chair, into support, into warmth. That's a way of adding touch into your classroom. I rarely seen where someone doesn't like to include some kind of self touch. But if someone's uncomfortable, they're always in choice. You may want to just offer hands palms down on the lap rate or palms up if that feels too much, that could be the, started it or cupping the fist in the hand, I've taught some of you this just feeling what it feels like to

hold this fist in the hand, with support, with care, with love, with appreciation, for the way that it's holding everything together for us, right? All that trauma response, keeping us safe, protecting us. Can we just hold it? And we often find when we create a light and when we hold it that it just sort of naturally starts to, to let go, okay, try both hands.

And finally, I'll leave you with this one exercise that I do with lots of my students. <inaudible> where we touch SA TA NA ma the fingers to the thumb SA TA NA ma SA TA NA ma. And then you can take the arms out with the palms face up and taking that like how we sometimes see in a Lotus hand.

SA TA NA NA and into a whisper.

And finally they can repeat that in their mind, just doing the movement without speaking, SA TA NA ma. I leave you with that. And it feels so reg regulated, uh, just by sharing this time with you, I hope you enjoy.