

# Relieve Pain & Suffering

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## Feel Better by Comforting the Body and Mind

These emotional regulation and distress tolerance strategies will increase your capacity to be resilient in the face of strong emotions instead of fighting them, being self-critical, and/ or trying to escape from yourself. Reacting to and/or trying to get rid of your feelings backfires, and ironically is what causes emotions to escalate, persist, and feel unbearable.

**Learning to tolerate feelings will allow you to use the wisdom that your body holds, be more in control, stronger, and whole.**

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## OPTION 1: Identify the Feeling and the Message

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Identify the feeling: Be specific (Use the Feelings List in Tools) ([click here](#))
- If the feeling could speak with words, what would it be saying?
- What is it telling me?

### WHY THIS WORKS

Putting a feeling into words

- Engages the prefrontal cortex
- Reduces intense emotions
- Reminds us that feelings are a signal that there is something we need to understand.
- Encourages increased tolerance of feelings and internal states.
- Allows feelings to be understood, processed, digested and integrated.

## **OPTION 2: Softening Physical Pain by Breathing into It**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **1) Notice the Feeling/Sensation in Your Body**

- Locate the feeling in your body. Where is it?
- What does it feel like?

#### **2) Breathe Into the Feeling**

- Breathe into the place where the feeling is in your body. Don't fight it. Let the breath in.
  - Allow the breath to flow into that area. This will open up space, relieve the tightness, and make the feeling less painful
  - Invite the pain to soften at the edges while gently rubbing and massaging that area
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## **Option 3: Three Simple Body Positions to Comfort and Ease Pain (Somatic techniques)**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

*Sit in a chair with feet on the ground. Notice the feel of the floor underneath your feet.*

#### **1) Hand over heart and belly**

Place your left hand over your heart and right hand over your belly. Feel your center of gravity. Hold this position gently and comfortably .

#### **2) Self-Hug**

Put your arms around yourself and hold yourself.

#### **3) Hand over heart and forehead**

Place your left hand over your heart and your right hand on your forehead (palm down). Hold this position gently and comfortably.

## **Why this works:**

Somatic techniques calm the body, quiet the brain's threat system and restore emotional regulation. By focusing on posture and physical sensation, these body positions:

- Help release stuck feelings
- Bypass mental overthinking
- Stimulate the vagus nerve activating the parasympathetic nervous system (calming)
- Build tolerance for intense emotions—allowing the nervous system to reset.

*Body Positions Adapted from Levine (2008).*

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## **Reference:**

Levine, P. A. (2008). *Healing trauma: A pioneering program for restoring the wisdom of your body.*

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*This content is adapted for educational purposes only. It summarizes and interprets publicly available educational material.*