

Your Body's Story

Workbook Part III

Companion Guide to

NAKED

My Body's Story

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Part III chapter 7 - 9



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Chapter Seven: Getting to Know Little Me

Before you begin

Notice where you are right now. Now get even more comfortable. Is your clothing too tight? Unbutton the top button of your pants. Even better, put on a pair of bottoms that feel cozy. If you're already in a pair of bottoms that feels cozy, let yourself feel grateful for this coziness. Notice the sensation of the material on your skin. Now give yourself a hug. Take a few breaths here. Switch your arms and give yourself another hug. Take a few breaths and let the hug in.

As you read

As you read, try to notice any changes in how you feel in your body, obvious or subtle. Pause and bring your awareness to your breath any time you notice your body tightening, getting numb, or your breath becoming shallow. Bring your awareness into your feet or your backside again and let the pelvis release.

Paying attention

What did you notice in your body as you read (sensations- heat, cold, numbness, pain, contraction, ease, release, relief)? What parts of your body were communicating to you? What images or memories surfaced?

Jot down a few things you noticed.

Journal It

What stood out to you in this chapter? Did any sections speak to you personally? If so, which ones?



Chapter Seven: Study questions

The tough truth is that when we become adults, we need to become the parents to ourselves that we needed. Are you familiar with a younger part of yourself that carries anger, sadness or hurt? Do you have a relationship with her?

Have you attended any workshops or worked with a skilled therapist to explore early life sexual abuse or trauma?

What healing containers have you put into place to hold and protect you as old memories surface?

What sensations are you experiencing in your body as you explore these questions? Where are they located? What might they be telling you?

Practice: Create an Energy Bubble

Survivors of sexual trauma often don't realize they are allowed to create boundaries. Our energetic fields are often either wide open or way shut down, depending on the situation. Creating an energetic bubble around yourself can help. Watch your next ten breaths. If you forget and get distracted, just come back and notice the next breath. Count them as you go. When you get to ten, visualize an energetic egg around you. Stay with it for a while until you can really perceive it (You may need to do this a few times before you can feel it- that's normal!). How far out is the boundary of this egg? What color is it? Stretch your arms out to the side and around you inside of this egg. This is a permeable bubble. Only what serves you can enter. Inside, protected, you can let down your guard. Do this exercise before going out in the world or visiting family. Do it before inviting people into your home or your personal space. Notice what happens.

Chapter Eight: No Idea What I'm Doing

Before you begin

Take a moment to get settled. Bring your attention to your breath. As you focus on your breath, notice any thoughts that come up. Is your mind very busy? Continue to bring your attention to your breath. Allow thoughts to arise. Notice how some thoughts will arise and quickly move on. Notice how other thoughts will arise and stay. Some thoughts will pull you in so that you “become the thought” and forget that you are practicing noticing your thoughts. When you realize this, simply say to yourself, “thinking,” and come back to noticing your breath.

As you read

As you read, try to notice any changes in how you feel in your body, obvious or subtle. Pause and bring your awareness to your breath any time you notice your body tightening, getting numb, or your breath becoming shallow. Bring your awareness to your feet or your backside again and invite the pelvis release.

Paying attention

What did you notice in your body as you read (sensations- heat, cold, numbness, pain, contraction, ease, release, relief)? What parts of your body were communicating to you? What images or memories surfaced?

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Chapter Eight: Study questions

Do you ever expect or wish that those you are closest to could take care of you in some way? Do you ever get mad at or blame those you are close to for not just knowing what you need?

Have you ever intentionally tried to get to know or spend time with a younger part of yourself? If so, what was it like?

What part of yourself could use some nurturing right now?

What sensations are you experiencing in your body as you explore these questions? Where are they located? What might they be telling you?

Practice: Working with Yourself

Every one of us has younger versions of ourselves within that need care. Persistent, recurring thoughts are usually signals that some younger part of us needs something. Take a moment to get quiet. Notice the flow of your breath for several breaths until you feel relaxed. Now ask yourself “How do I feel about my younger self?” Notice what comes up. It is very natural to not like this younger, more defenseless part of yourself at first. Being vulnerable and relying on others may have felt dangerous in the past. You may have learned to defend yourself around this vulnerability. Invite a younger version of yourself in. Spend a little time with this younger part of yourself each day. Put a hand on the heart and a hand on the belly and tell her she’s safe. Tell her you love her. Tell her you’re here for her.

Chapter Nine: Zain

Before you begin

Take a comfortable seat. Bring your awareness to the breath. Begin to notice the movement of your thoughts. See each thought as a wave in the ocean. A thought arises, stays a while, then dissolves back into the ocean from which thought originates. Now notice the breath again. Notice that with each inhalation, the breath arises, is sustained, and then dissolves on the exhale. Stay with this for several breaths.

As you read

As you read, try to notice any changes in how you feel in your body, obvious or subtle. Pause and bring your awareness to your breath any time you notice your body tightening, getting numb, or your breath becoming shallow. Feel your feet or your backside again and invite the pelvis to release.

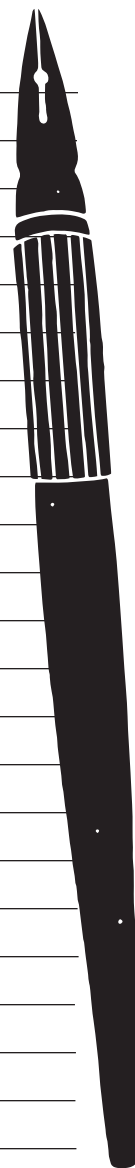
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Chapter Nine: Study questions

Are there certain thoughts, feelings, or emotions that you systematically turn away from or shut out? Feelings that, if you felt them, you think might actually kill you?

Do you avoid contact with certain people? Who, when and why?

What sensations are you experiencing in your body as you explore these questions? Where are they located? What might they be telling you?

Practice: Staying Connected

While an important part of healing sexual trauma is creating the boundaries we need, sometimes the walls we erected to protect ourselves from feelings that were overwhelming when we were much smaller are ready to come down. It is human nature to move away from pain, but often, that which is uncomfortable originates in a part of ourselves we need access to feel more fully alive.

Wherever you are right now, notice your feet. If you are sitting, notice the sensation of your body in contact with what it is you are sitting on. Bring awareness to the breath. Tune into sensations in your body. Notice where in the body you feel numb, tight, or contracted. Bring your awareness there. Bring your breath there. What happens? Now imagine a person you typically avoid. Notice what sensations arise in the body. Come back to your feet. Feel the contact with what you're sitting on as you remember your last interaction with this person. Notice your breath. Bring your breath to any place you are feeling numb, disconnected, or uncomfortable. Try bringing a hand to rest there. Notice what happens.