

The cover features several delicate line art illustrations. In the top left, there are stylized leaves. In the top right, a branch with small, oval-shaped leaves extends across the frame. On the left side, a vertical stem with several pointed leaves is shown. On the right side, a profile of a human face is depicted with closed eyes and a slight smile, with a plant sprouting from the forehead area. The bottom of the cover is a solid dark green band.

# Embodiment Journal



"Embodiment is reclaiming the body as the essential place where we experience life."  
-- Dr. Hillary McBride

[emileekrupa.com](http://emileekrupa.com)

Welcome to your Embodiment Journal!

This journal was created specifically for  
you.

Yes, just for you.

It is meant to guide you to the greatest gift in  
the world: yourself. Move through this  
journal at your own pace—there's no hurry.

Happy healing!



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# The Importance of the Somatic Self

Many of us are familiar with the feeling of listlessness, hopelessness, exhaustion, or a state of being that feels flat and joyless. When we experience these emotions, we tend to focus on how we feel in our heads. But the body has its own unique response and far too often taken for granted. When left unaddressed, it can hinder our ability to fully heal from trauma.

For better or worse, our bodies operate on a layer below our day-to-day consciousness. The result of countless generations of adaptation, our subconscious will engage the nervous system to automatically react—triggering the (hopefully) appropriate fight, flight, or freeze response. It's a good system that operates faster than we can process stimuli in our conscious mind, and has kept our species alive for many thousands of years.

Ideally when the threat passes so does our physical response. You successfully ran away from a pack of wolves, and are now safe. You can relax; your heart rate slows, and you feel a euphoric rush because you survived. But what if you never escape the threat? In an effort to keep us alive, our bodies will keep us juiced up on hormones until we either succeed or die. Trade literal wolves for an unresolved trauma, and our bodies are suddenly ill-adapted for the chronic, persistent presence of danger.



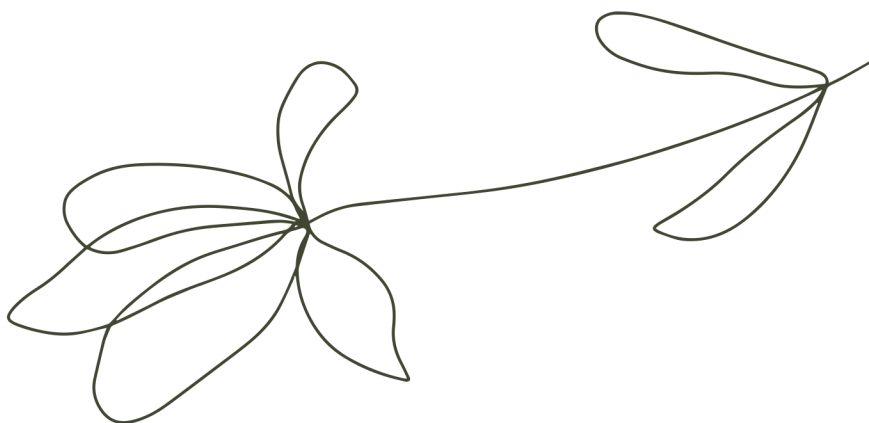
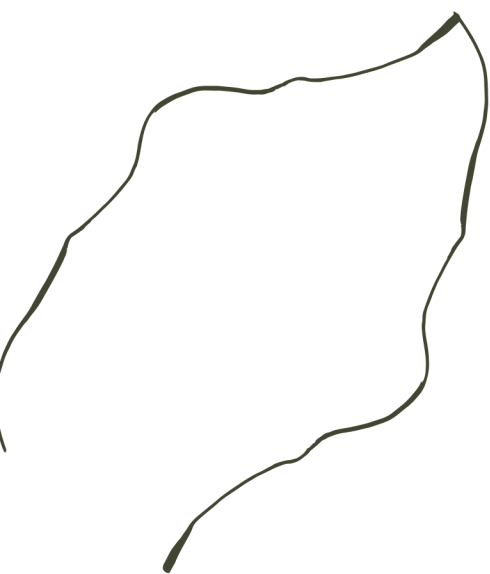
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We're adaptive creatures. Life goes on; subsequently, we manage to find ways to continue normal life the best we can. The conscious mind, given the space to do so, will continuously try to mitigate the effects of our traumas. Some ways we might do that are by downplaying the seriousness of the event, or convincing ourselves it happened a different way, or that it wasn't our fault, and so on. Or it might be suppressed through substance use, or by distractions like sex or partying that provide a powerful counteractive emotion to the ones felt. However, our body is rarely given the priority and space it needs to heal, despite being a critical part of our initial responses. Even when we can logically reconcile a past experience we can still keep a negative physical response, prompting our nervous system to react as if the threat was still present. In this situation, our nervous system is unregulated, and we can begin to feel physical manifestations of emotional triggers, making us physically unwell.

Thankfully, there is a way to fix this: somatic experiencing. These therapies create the space and attention necessary to re-regulate our bodies' response, just how we can correct our emotional ones. These are specifically intended to create a stronger mind-body connection by tuning into how it feels, and allowing us to return to healthy self-regulation. If you are struggling with chronic negative feelings, consider this: our bodies are amazing, and they have deep wisdom. They can tell us how to heal, if we choose to listen.

I hope you find this journal meaningful in your journey to healing and returning to your body. As you work through the journal prompts and exercises I encourage you to complete them outdoors where you can connect to the earth and in a quiet place.



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# Inviting Your Body To The Table

We cannot reach our goal of embodiment without slowing down and actually listening to what our body is telling us. Find a quiet, peaceful place, take a few long deep breaths, and fill out the prompts below. See what your body is trying to tell you.

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What does it feel like to pause and try to “listen in” to your body?

What sensations in your body do you notice?

Can you identify a place where you feel the sensation?

If your body could tell you how it feels right now, what would you hear?



# Safety

*\*An important note about safety in your body if you have experienced sexual abuse.* Finding emotional safety within your body after experiencing sexual abuse is a process that requires time, patience, and self-compassion. One aspect that survivors often grapple with is finding emotional safety within their own bodies. The trauma endured can fracture the connection between mind and body, leaving individuals feeling disconnected, anxious, or overwhelmed. It is important to work with a professional that is trained in helping survivors to process the trauma that comes with abuse. I encourage you to tune into what you need in the moment and if at any time this journal becomes too overwhelming to stop and seek support.

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How would you describe what it's like to feel safe?

What other emotions come up for you when you feel safe?

How does your body feel when you feel safe?

What does your gut or your intuition tell you when you feel safe?

# Compassion

As you connect to your body, it is important to notice how you are responding/speaking back. While kindness may be difficult, it is important to establish a safe relationship with the body. This starts with an open space to express free from judgment.

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When you are listening to your body, what is the message you're sending back to it?

Focus on the area you feel the sensations in your body, and try using this phrase: "I am here, and I am listening".

\*Hint: check what tone of voice you are using, this makes a big difference!

Practice staying and focusing on that area, while breathing deeply into your belly. What do you notice when you do this?

Try voicing out loud what you see/sense in the body.



# Staying Present

One of the big areas that traditional talk therapy misses is body integration. It is imperative that we allow ourselves to feel in our bodies the depth and range an experience brings up in us. While it is scary to feel big feelings, see if you can use these prompts to help you stay present with your body.

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First, make some gentle contact with your body. You can place your hand on your heart, wrap yourself in a hug, or simply rest your hands on your legs. This contact helps your body know you are here with it.

Second, use your breath to create more room for the feeling. Imagine the feeling is filling your space, and by adding in breath, you create more room. Focus on breathing into your belly, and making your exhale just a few seconds longer than your inhale.

Repeat as necessary, and try at least 7 deep breaths before moving onto the next activity.

Third, validate and stay. Even though a big feeling might ignite your fight/flight response, it is okay to feel whatever you're feeling. Staying with it, and reminding your body "It's okay to feel this, I'm here with you" will create a sense of validation and allow the feeling to settle.

# Self-Soothing

After we experience a big emotion, it's important to take the time to soothe and regulate your nervous system. Try any of the below exercises to bring yourself back to a regulated state.

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- Gently rock from side to side.
- Engage in some gentle stretching, using your whole body.
- Create a resourceful image around yourself that acts as a safe and protective energy, and breathe deeply.
- Place your hands on your belly, breathe into the belly, and count the seconds of your breath.
- Find a comfortable place to sit and set a timer for one minute. When you start the timer, place one hand on your heart and one hand on your belly, close your eyes and repeat the following phrase *"Thank you for being with me"*.

Write here what this experience was like for you.



# What Do you Need Next?

As you reach the end of this journal, remember that the path towards our true self never stops, because life doesn't stop. That can feel overwhelming, and it can also feel exciting. You are allowed to take a break, and take this moment to check in with yourself.

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What do you need now?

How can you get your needs met?

# Self compassion exercise

Well done! You finished this journal. As a final exercise I encourage you to repeat the below self-compassion exercise to honor the experience you just completed. Take a moment to think about the experience with this journal as a whole and notice what that feels like in your body. Then repeat the below template with your own experience.

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Say to yourself:

1. **I am:** (Name the feeling)

- Ex. calm, excited, suffering, struggling, sad

2. **All humans:**

- (can be calm, excited, suffer, struggle, get sad)

3. Now put your hands over your heart, feel the warmth of your hands and the gentle touch of your hands on your chest.

- **May I:**

- May I be kind to myself.
- May I get my own back
- May I give myself the compassion that I need
- May I learn to accept myself as I am
- May I forgive myself
- May I be strong.
- May I be patient

Use this practice anytime you need to practice self-compassion. I hope this journal was useful for you.