



Somatic Exercises to Improve Mental Health

Grounding Exercises

Exercises to help you stay present, especially when dealing with flashbacks, anxiety, or trauma-related symptoms.

- Move your body: Stretch, dance, or jump up and down—anything that feels comfortable and natural for you. As you move, notice how each part of your body feels, starting with your toes and working up to your head.
- Run water over your hands: Begin with cold water, then switch to warm water after a minute or two. Pay attention to the temperature on your fingertips, palms, and the backs of your hands. Notice how the sensations change when you switch temperatures.
- Take a walk: It doesn't have to be long. The key is to focus on your steps. Think about the rhythm of your footsteps and how it feels to place one foot in front of the other.

Body Scans

This is meant to raise awareness of what's happening in your body and where you're carrying tension or pain.

- Find a comfortable position. This can be sitting, standing, or lying down.
- Think about how each part of your body feels.
- Start with your feet and work your way up, taking as long as you need.

Breathwork

Somatic breathwork brings awareness to your throat, diaphragm, jaw, and shoulders as you inhale and exhale.

- Find a comfortable seated position. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Follow your body's movements as you breathe. Notice how your breath feels in your nostrils, chest, or stomach.
- Take note of how it feels to experience the movement of breath in your body.

Posture Exercises

Exercises to improve muscle alignment and promote a balanced and upright posture.

- **Shoulder blade squeezes:** Sit or stand with your back straight. Squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold for a few seconds, then release.
- **Chin tucks:** Sit or stand with a straight spine. Gently tuck your chin toward your chest. Hold for a few seconds, then return to a neutral position.
- **Cat-cow stretch:** Start on your hands and knees. Arch your back upward (cat), then lower it down and lift your head (cow).

Yoga

Physical postures, deep breathing, and relaxation techniques to help improve overall well-being.

- **Hatha Yoga:** Focuses on physical postures (asanas) and breath control to achieve mind-body balance through gentle movements.
- **Kundalini Yoga:** Incorporates dynamic movements, breathwork, and meditation to awaken spiritual energy and promote awareness.
- **Vinyasa Yoga:** Emphasizes the synchronization of breath with continuous, flowing movements, creating a dynamic practice that enhances flexibility and strength.