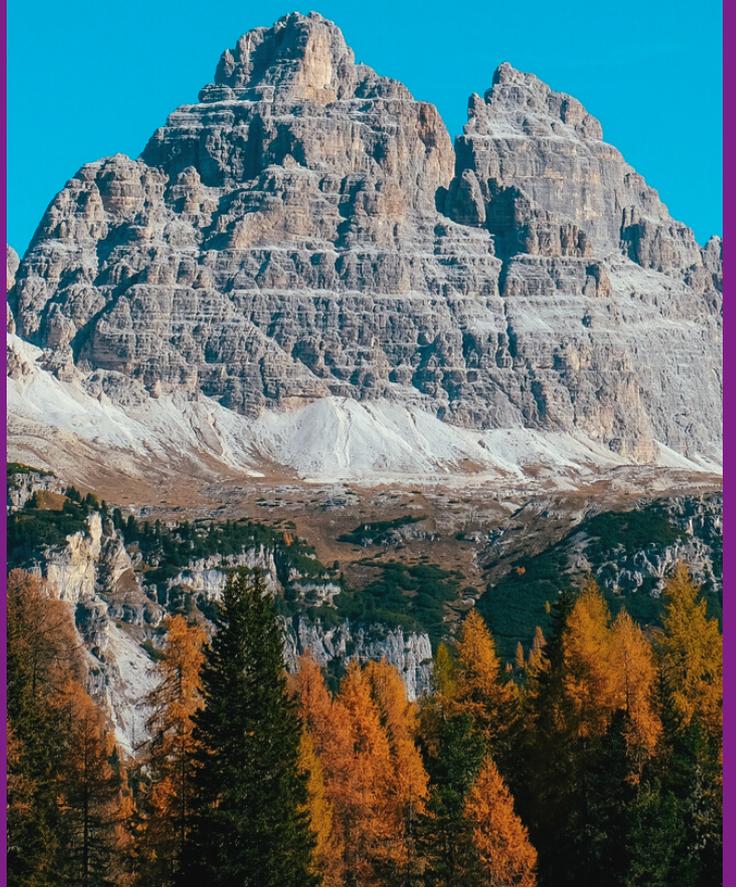


INSPIRING HOPE, CHANGING LIVES



MENHEALING

WWW.MENHEALING.ORG



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MENHEALING

WHO WE ARE

MenHealing is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to providing hope and healing to men who are survivors of sexual assault.

For many years we have held recovery events for men all over the US, but more recently we have made a commitment to make the messages of healing more accessible to anyone who is interested.

When we discovered that prisons in the US were providing tablets to inmates, we knew we had an opportunity to reach out to *you*.

We know that it is possible to heal from the impacts of sexual assault.

We understand the healing power of relationships and community.

We believe in the importance of taking care of yourself.

We hope that you will make use of the resources we have provided. We plan to continue updating and adding to those resources on a regular basis.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions and you can contact us at:

MenHealing
1445 South Hoytsville Rd
Coalville, UT 84017

contact@menhealing.org

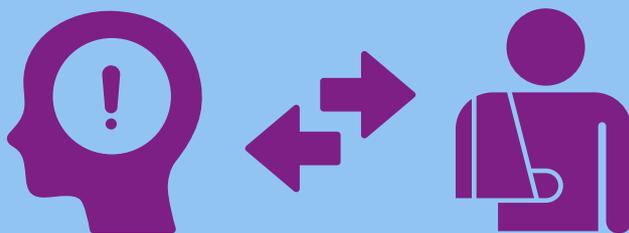
Please be aware that at the present time we do not have the ability to respond to every suggestion or inquiry, but be assured that we are listening!

ABOUT US

THE MENHEALING ORGANIZATION IS COMMITTED TO CHANGING THE IDEA THAT THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA BECOMES A PERMANENT “DISORDER.”

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE DIAGNOSIS PTSD, OR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER? PERHAPS YOU HAVE EVEN BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH PTSD.

HOW WOULD THAT DIAGNOSIS FEEL DIFFERENT TO YOU IF WE CHANGED THE WORD “DISORDER” TO “INJURY” ?



IN OTHER WORDS:

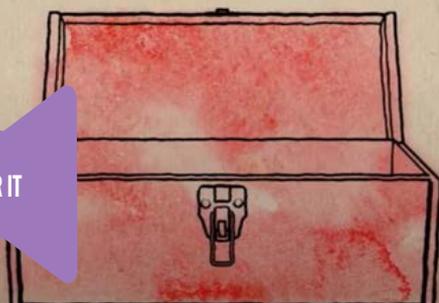
POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY

A **DISORDER** IS SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE STUCK WITH. AN **INJURY** IS SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN HEAL FROM.

THIS VIDEO MIGHT HELP YOU TO SEE THIS AS A REAL POSSIBILITY.

BEYOND SURVIVAL
SKILLS FOR HEALING
Reframing Trauma

THERE SHOULD BE A VIDEO FILE AVAILABLE TO YOU CALLED *REFRAMING TRAUMA*; LOOK FOR IT IN THE FOLDER OF MATERIALS INCLUDED WITH THIS RELEASE



TRUE FACTS AND COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

PART 1

Here is a sample of what **IS** true and what is **NOT** true about boys and men who have experienced sexual assault in their lifetimes.

TRUE

Boys are as vulnerable to sexual victimization as girls. And no matter how old a man or a woman is perpetrators can be bigger, stronger or in positions of greater power than the person they seek out.

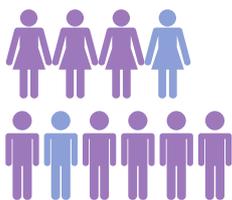


NOT TRUE

Boys and men can't be victims of sexual assault because males can protect themselves.

TRUE

The current understanding is that 1 in every 4 girls and 1 in every 6 boys experience sexual victimization before the age of 18.



NOT TRUE

Boys and men can not be sexually assaulted by girls or women.

TRUE

There is no evidence that boys or men who have been sexually assaulted by a male are at risk of becoming homosexual ("gay").



NOT TRUE

Boys or men who have sexually victimized will become homosexual.

TRUE

Sexual victimization of boys by an older female is never a rite of passage regardless of how the culture may portray it. It is the responsibility of all adults to protect children from harm.



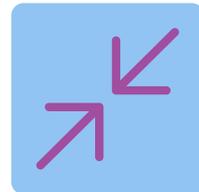
NOT TRUE

Sexual acts forced upon a boy by an older girl or an adult woman is "just a rite of passage."

If you were a victim of sexual assault as a child or as an adult, you may find yourself in some or all of these reactions. These are common responses that get created in an effort to protect yourself from the emotional pain of sexual victimization. As time goes on, these responses begin to hurt you, instead. We want to assure you that it is possible to change these habits of responding and replace them with something that will help you heal.

MINIMIZATION

Minimization is a way to cope the event or events of sexual assault by telling yourself that it is “no big deal” and therefore a less important thing that it really is.



EXAGGERATE THE MASCULINE!

Many male victims of sexual assault work hard at creating “macho” attitudes and behaviors to prove to the themselves and the world that they are tough.

FEAR OF CLOSENESS WITH OTHER MALES

Boys and men tend to hide the fact of their sexual victimization history from other boys or men, for fear that they will be seen as weak or as homosexual. Sadly, this keeps shame fixed in place and adds to isolation.



ISOLATION

Many boys or men who have experienced sexual abuse are so certain that they are “the only ones this has ever happened to” and so overcome with shame or feeling that they aren’t worth anything that they keep themselves away from other people, fearing that others would reject them if they knew of their past.



WHAT ARE SOME COMMON WAYS THAT BOYS AND MEN REACT TO SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION?

VIDEO SERIES



THE FIRST VIDEO WE WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU IS FROM ZEKE THOMAS, SON OF THE NBA HALL OF FAMER, ISIAH THOMAS. ZEKE HAS BECOME AN OUTSPOKEN ACTIVIST FOR RECOVERY AND WE HOPE THAT HIS STORY INSPIRES YOU.

MEN WHO HAVE A HISTORY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OFTEN THINK THEY ARE THE ONLY ONE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED TO.



MANY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE TARGETED BY AN OFFENDER. OUT OF FEAR AND SHAME, THEY STAY SILENT AND FIND UNHEALTHY AND SOMETIMES DANGEROUS WAYS TO NUMB THEIR FEELINGS.

FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS, THE *MENHEALING* TEAM HAS WITNESSED THE HEALING EFFECTS OF MEN SHARING THEIR STORIES WITH EACH OTHER. JUST KNOWING THAT THERE ARE OTHER MEN WHO FEEL THE UNIQUE PAIN OF SEXUAL ASSAULT CHANGES MANY OF THE IDEAS THAT THEY KEEP HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN THEMSELVES.

IT IS
HEALING TO
SIMPLY KNOW
THAT YOU ARE

NOT ALONE!

BECAUSE OF THIS, *MENHEALING* HAS CREATED A VIDEO LIBRARY OF SURVIVORS TELLING THEIR TRUE STORIES, WITH MESSAGES OF HOPE, HEALING, AND RECOVERY.



THERE SHOULD BE A VIDEO FILE AVAILABLE TO YOU CALLED *VOICES OF HEALING*; LOOK FOR IT IN THE FOLDER OF MATERIALS INCLUDED WITH THIS RELEASE

FEBRUARY 2022

VOLUME 01
ISSUE 02

TRUE FACTS AND COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

PART 2 *(please refer to Vol.01, Issue 01 for Part 1)*

For a long time, it was generally thought that boys and men couldn't possibly be the victims of sexual assault. Today we know better, and MenHealing works hard to get the truth out to victims so that healing can begin.

TRUE Sexual arousal is a reality of the body, even in situations of trauma or when sex is not consensual; arousal can be mistaken as an indicator of pleasure and create considerable confusion for male victims.



NOT TRUE Boys or men getting aroused or having an orgasm during sexual victimization means he was a willing partner or that he enjoyed the experience.

TRUE Boys and men CAN be sexually assaulted by girls or women. For boys this may be disguised as care giving or personal hygiene, and older boys and adult men can be emotionally or physically pressured into unwanted sex.



NOT TRUE It is not possible for boys or men to be sexually assaulted by girls or women.

TRUE Current research shows that most men who offend boys actually identify as heterosexual ("straight").



NOT TRUE Most sexual victimization of boys or men is done by homosexuals.

TRUE While it is often true that males who are sexual offenders often have a history of having been a victim of sexual assault themselves, most male victims do NOT become sexual offenders.



NOT TRUE It is NOT true that a boy or man who has been sexually victimized will become sex offenders.

VIDEO SERIES



Michael Guinn (he/him/his) is a content creator, poet, actor, community leader, and event organizer located in Texas. He is 57 years old and shares his life with his dog Abby and his cat Tucky. His story centers around his assault and witnessing his younger sibling's abuse also. This is a powerful statement about his journey from helplessness to healing!

TRAUMA AND THE BODY: healing approaches

We all know that our minds hold our memories. We can use our minds to recall and even replay recent events. Some trauma survivors have vivid recall of childhood trauma, but some may have trouble remembering the events that created their feelings of deep hurt. Our brains have an amazing ability to create protective walls around the painful things we may remember.

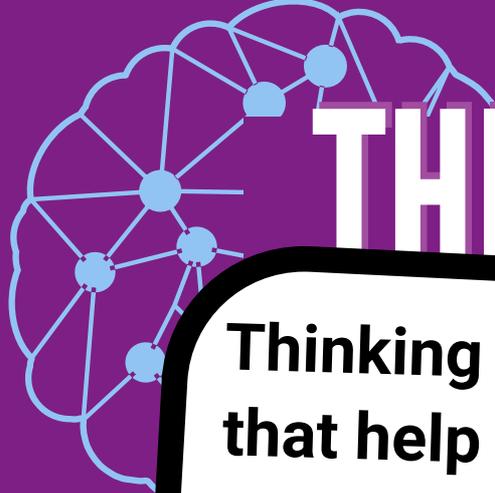
But there's another player in our journey of healing that most of us were never taught to use: your body. Like your brain, your body remembers. These body memories speak through your nervous system, your muscles, your gut and even the ways you breathe. Just like your brain, your body not only remembers but also holds many powerful tools of healing.

Men Healing would like to introduce you to practices that will help you to reclaim your true self from your trauma in a series of instructional videos over the next year. Please watch for them in future releases.

Remember, the truth is, you are not the pain you feel. You are whole, strong and beautiful.

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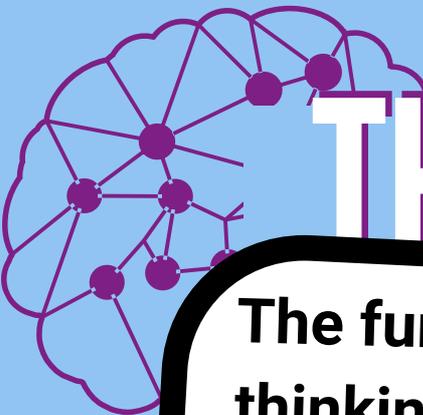
THINKING TRAPS

Thinking traps are ways of thinking that help us tell stories about ourselves or the situation we are in.

We all use thinking traps without knowing it.

They allow us to avoid painful feelings, and we hope they'll keep us out of trouble.

The problem is, this kind of thinking is often not true or one-sided. It can be really hard to 'tell it like it is.' Thinking traps can keep you stuck and can harm your relationships.



THINKING TRAPS

The funny thing about thinking traps is that it isn't just your thinking that is involved. Feelings and emotions come along for the ride, too.

But that's not all!!

You may be surprised to find that your body also plays a big part in making the thinking traps **FEEL TRUE!**

Even more surprising is that by learning how to *use your body and mind together* you can *change the way you feel* about something and even be able to recognize and decide if things **REALLY ARE TRUE!**

Try paying attention to what you 'do' in your body when you find yourself using thinking traps.

For example: the actions you might 'do' include...



Squeezing your hands into a fist



Tightening your jaw, your belly, your shoulders or your back



Holding your breath



**Or the opposite!
Maybe you're sagging your head and shoulders.**

Learning about thinking traps can help you spot them. Once you spot them you can empower yourself to make mental, emotional and physical choices, to:

- Use them or not
- To be more honest with yourself and others
- Change what you are 'doing' in your body so that your feeling and thinking will change along with it.

**As you learn how to do this,
your wisdom and maturity
will help you to:**

- **Understand yourself better**
- **Manage other people and situations better**
- **Decide what YOU would like to 'do' in your body**

BE CURIOUS!

**If you want, and can,
keep a journal.**

**Track how you're
using thinking traps
and any feelings or
body reactions that
go with them.**

**Try
writing
these down
and looking back
on them from
time to time.**

BLAMING

Blaming is when you blame other people or circumstances for your behavior or problems.

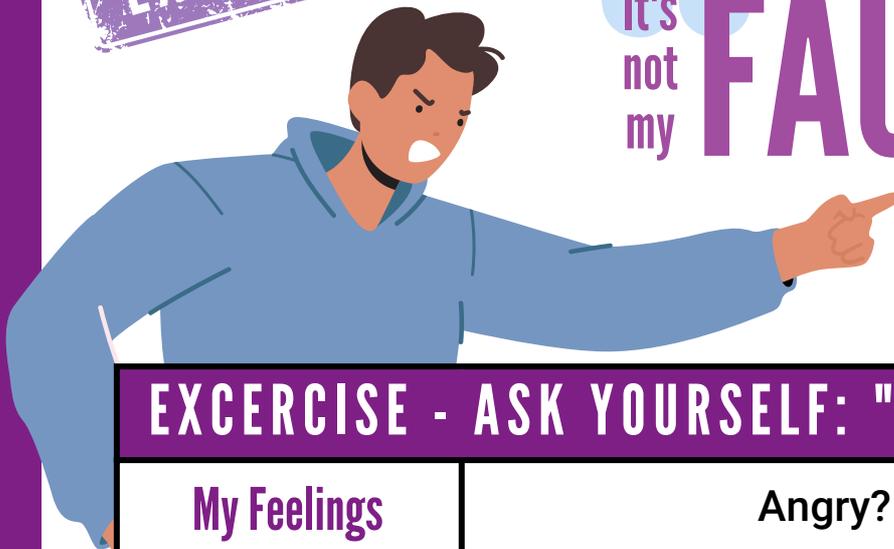
EXAMPLE:

You might think...

It's not my

FAULT!

He threw the first punch.



EXERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

My Feelings	Angry? Sad?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Have I tightened my belly? Has my breathing changed? Is my jaw tight? Or loose?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Do I feel weak? Do I feel safe? Grounded? Do I feel in control of myself?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel...	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

What happens to your emotions and to your body if you *think* about the situation in a different way?

What happens to your emotions and how you feel about situation if you change what you're 'doing' in your body?

SELF-BLAME

Self-blame is when you blame yourself for someone else's behavior.

EXAMPLE:

Feeling like it's your fault that your mom or dad, your brother or sister or your partner...

...doesn't control their

ANGER



EXERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

My Feelings	Sad? Guilty? Powerless? Angry at myself?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Do I look away? Has my breathing changed? Is my jaw tight? Or loose? What am I doing with my forehead? My eyebrows?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Do I feel weak? Do I feel safe? Grounded? Do I feel in control of myself?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel...	<i>(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)</i>

What would happen to your feelings and what would happen to what you're 'doing' in your body if you really knew that the other person's anger wasn't your fault?

What If you change something you're 'doing' in your body? Remember that your body can affect your mind and your mind can affect your body!

ALL OR NOTHING THINKING

When you think of someone or something as ALL GOOD or ALL BAD. The truth is, most people and things in life are a combination of good and bad.

EXAMPLE:

When thinking about a friend, you may say to yourself...

They are so **PERFECT**
(or cool or smart).

They NEVER make a mistake.



EXERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

My Feelings	Sure of myself? powerful? scared? anxious?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Are my teeth clenched? Is my belly or my back tight? Am I frowning? Is my face blank? worried? Are my shoulders high and tight? Is my head hanging?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel relaxed? Weak? Strong? Confident? Off balance? Ready for a fight?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel...	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

Think of a time when you used this thinking trap. If you look at it now, is there really a little bit of both good and bad in everyone.

If you change something about what you are 'doing' in your body, does this help change the ALL OR NOTHING thinking?

USING ABSOLUTE WORDS

Absolute words are words like *ALWAYS*, *NEVER*, *HAVE TO* & *SHOULD*. This is a lot like *All or Nothing* thinking. Absolute words leave no room for anything else.

EXAMPLE:

If you tell yourself...

I ALWAYS DO THE WRONG THING



EXERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"	
My Feelings	Beaten down? Worthless? Powerless? Angry?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	When I tell myself or when someone else tells me that I always do the wrong thing: Do I pull back? Tighten up? Go limp? Does my stomach feel uneasy?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel worse? Do I feel in control of myself? Do I feel good about myself? Do I feel bad about myself?
When I change what I "do" in my body, I feel...	How does my body feel when I don't use absolute words?

Words have power!

The words we use and how we use them can change the way we feel about ourselves and others. They can also affect how we move and what we can achieve!

Don't let the words you use or hear defeat you before you begin! Remain flexible and powerful in your mind and your body.

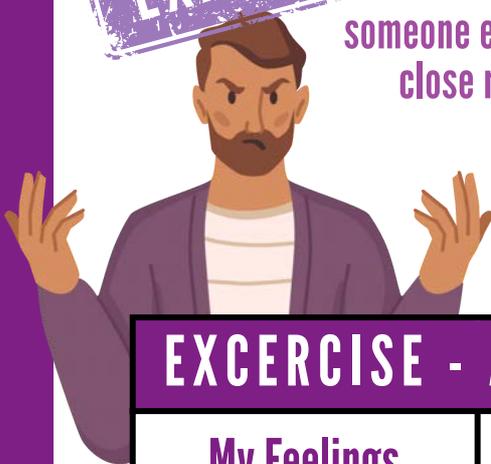
DENIAL

When you aren't honest with yourself or others about your choices or behavior. You may even lie to avoid getting called out or caught. You may use denial simply to avoid the emotional pain of telling the truth.

EXAMPLE:

After my dad or someone else I have a close relationship with

PUNCHES ME



I tell myself, "It didn't hurt at all."

EXERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

My Feelings	I'm tough! "I can take it!" Angry? Afraid? Defiant?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Do I avoid eye contact? Stare down my attacker? Change my breathing? Does my heart beat faster? Do I clench my fists? Do my hands sweat?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Angry? Sad? Powerful? Safe? In charge of myself?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel...	<i>(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)</i>

REMEMBER

How you think can affect how you feel.
But you're also discovering that your body plays a role as well.
The goal is to discover that by using your mind and body together you can make changes and heal.

VIDEO SERIES



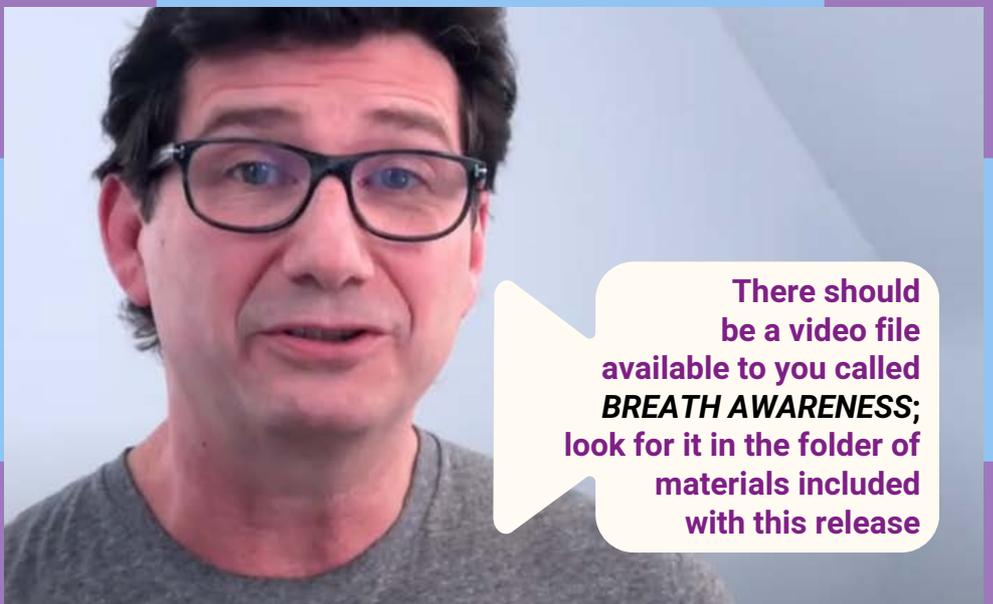
SOMATIC SKILLS FOR HEALING: **BREATH AWARENESS**

Somatic is a word that means "related to the body." Somatic skills are body based. They help you understand yourself. They also teach useful ways to work with your emotions and feelings. You use your body to collect information. You do this by seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. These experiences can seem like they happen only in your body, separately from your mind. But you can learn to use your body and mind together, to help you feel and act in better ways.

The *Somatic Skills for Healing* videos teach how to do this so you can create an open, caring, relaxed, and powerful "BodyMind" state.

The videos teach different ways of using your body and mind together, so you feel better. With practice you will become able to respond to stress, instead of blindly reacting when things happen.

In the "*Breath Awareness*" video, you can take the first steps. You can learn to become aware of what you "do" in your body and mind. You learn how the things you "do" affect who you are and how you interact with the world.



There should be a video file available to you called **BREATH AWARENESS**; look for it in the folder of materials included with this release