

Somatic Experiencing Informed Consent

(HM/2018)

Client Full Legal Name: _____

Preferred Name: _____

E-mail (where copy can be sent): _____

Please read and sign at the bottom of this page.

I, Heather Macmillan, am an Intermediate Somatic Experiencing® (SE™) Practitioner. I anticipate completing SE advanced training in June 2018. Additionally, I am a Registered Counselling Therapist (candidate).

SE is a mind/body approach to the resolution of trauma and stress-related conditions developed by Dr. Peter A. Levine, resulting from his multidisciplinary study of stress physiology, psychology, ethology, biology, neuroscience, indigenous healing practices, and medical biophysics, together with over 45 years of successful clinical application.

SE is based upon the observation that wild prey animals, though threatened routinely, are rarely traumatized. Animals in the wild utilize innate mechanisms to regulate and discharge the high levels of energy arousal associated with defensive survival behaviors. These mechanisms provide animals with a built-in “immunity” to trauma that enables them to return to normal in the aftermath of highly “charged” life-threatening experiences.

- SE employs mindful awareness of body sensation to help clients connect to their innate healing wisdom and enabling them to "renegotiate," discharge and complete stuck survival based impulses of fight, flight, freeze and collapse from the body.
- SE's guidance of the bodily "felt sense," allows the highly aroused survival energies to be safely experienced and gradually discharged while minimizing overwhelm and reenactment.
- SE may employ gentle touch in support of the renegotiation process.
- SE “titrates” experience (breaks down into small, incremental steps), rather than evoking catharsis - which can overwhelm the regulatory mechanisms of the organism.

SE References:

- Levine, P. and Frederick, A. (1997). *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma: The Innate Capacity to Transform Overwhelming Experiences*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Payne, Peter, Peter A. Levine, and Mardi A. Crane-Godreau. "Somatic Experiencing: Using Interoception and Proprioception as Core Elements of Trauma Therapy." *Frontiers in Psychology* (2011): Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00093. Web. 4 Feb. 2015.
<http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00093/full#>
- For further information about SE see: <http://www.traumahealing.org>

Though the theoretical foundation of SE techniques are supported by current neuro-scientific research, SE is not yet considered an “evidence-based” modality due to an absence of controlled, double-blind research validating its efficacy. In the province of nova Scotia, Somatic Experiencing does not require a professional license and is not regulated by any state regulatory/licensing body or professional association.

SE is a somatic education and awareness practice that is utilized by practitioners of all disciplines. I am a licensed mental health professional. I am not a medical professional and I am not trained to diagnose or treat medical conditions. SE is not a replacement for medical or psychological treatment and, in signing this informed consent, you certify that you are responsible for seeking and obtaining appropriate care under the guidance of licensed medical/mental health professionals for treatment of any medical/psychological health conditions.

Somatic Experiencing can compliment and support, not replace, qualified medical/ mental health treatment with a licensed professional. By employing SE, my goal is not to diagnose, treat, or cure illness or disorders but rather to provide education, mindful awareness, supportive touch, and gentle movement practices to connect you to your nervous system’s innate self-regulatory and healing mechanisms.

SE can result in a number of benefits to you, such as relief of traumatic stress symptoms, increased resiliency, and resourcefulness. Like any other mind/body practice (e.g. Feldenkrais, yoga, etc), it may also have side effects, such as sleep disturbances, frightening memories, or unfamiliar and uncomfortable body sensations. Such reactions are usually temporary and can be attended to in the course of our work together.

It is important that you are aware that there are other forms of body-oriented and somatic psychotherapy modalities that may also be helpful to you, such as EMDR, Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction or Biodynamics. Obviously, there are also many non-somatic focused forms of psychotherapy and counselling that you can choose from such as Cognitive Behavior Therapy.

It is your responsibility to tell me when you are uncomfortable with any parts of the session. If you have any questions about SE or other modalities, please ask and I will do my best to answer your questions in full.

You have the right to refuse or terminate the session at all times, or to refuse touch, SE techniques, or any other modality I may propose or employ.

Practitioner Information:

Heather Macmillan (Legal name "Heather Ann Macmillan")
(902) 220-0146; heathermacmillan.ccc@gmail.com; <http://www.halifaxcounsellingtherapy.ca>

By signing this document, I acknowledge the have read, understood and agree to the above conditions and release the Practitioner from all liability related to any claims or litigation arising directly or indirectly from my participation in her Somatic Experiencing® services.

Client Signature: _____
Today's Date (Month/Day/Year): _____