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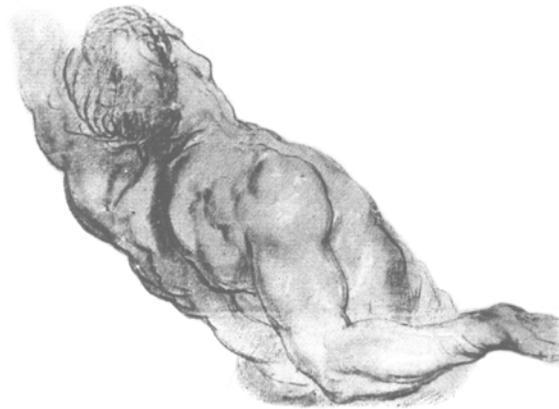
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USABP Mission Statement

The USABP believes that integration of the body and the mind is essential to effective psychotherapy, and to that end its mission is to develop and advance the art, science, and practice of body psychotherapy in a professional, ethical, and caring manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity.

Teaching the Whole Student: Experiential Activities in an Online, Undergraduate Course in Somatic Psychology

Leslie Ann Costello

Abstract

An undergraduate course in somatic psychology introduced students to the implicit and explicit inclusion of the body in psychotherapy. As part of the course work, students participated in weekly exercises and wrote in a journal about their experiences. The final product of this experiential part of the course was a reflective paper, using their journal entries as the source material. Student responses to the activities indicated that most were willing and able to engage in these experiences on their own, deepen their experiences via journaling, and share their learning with the instructor through a final paper. Although some students did not see completely how their experiences were in fact affected by some of the aspects of the course, through reading over their submitted papers and an optional survey, it was clear that most of the students enjoyed and appreciated the experiences.

Keywords

Somatic psychology – undergraduate teaching – experiential learning

Undergraduate psychology provides students with a traditional approach to psychological science: it is typically seen as a social science that deals with mental or cognitive processes and behavior. The body is, in essence, the vehicle for behavior and cognition; a perspective to which students hold firmly and texts do not discourage. I have found that the human body makes only a brief appearance in the typical introductory psychology course, even though it is actually the housing for the nervous system, which generates the mind; the place where psychological stuff happens. The important stuff, that is. Of course this traditional, “mind over matter” approach does not reflect our current reality, particularly for those of us who are clinically involved in body-focused therapies. In fact, contemporary research indicates that any approach separating body and mind is an incomplete one at best. Thankfully, a change is happening even within undergraduate text materials: newer influences, such as research on stress and health, now routinely appear in textbooks written for the introductory course (See, for example, Myers, 2009.) Now may in fact be the right time to increase the focus on the somatic aspects of the self, of development, and of psychopathology in undergraduate education.

One way to do this is to offer a course specifically about body based therapies to educate students currently at the undergraduate level. With this in mind, we decided to invite twenty-two students to embark on the study of somatic approaches in psychotherapy. These students were from various majors and had varied backgrounds. What they had in common, though, were that none of them had ever heard of “somatic psychology.”

As a psychologist, an assistant professor at a small teaching-focused university, and a bioenergetic trainee in the clinical supervision phase of my training, I allowed my interests in teaching and in body psychotherapy to converge into the development of this new course in somatic psychology; one that was designed to specifically be directed towards upper level undergraduates. The purpose of this course was to provide a way to share with students what I had been learning in my own bioenergetic training. What I had learned in my training, though, was widely discrepant from my own graduate education as a developmental psychologist, so I was aware that a body-based approach would likely be a new, unconventional perspective to students as well.

I encountered some significant challenges in preparing the course. For example, as an undergraduate course, it would be *about* body psychotherapy, not a therapy training course in body psychotherapy. However, I had a strong feeling about making it an actual experience rather than just an academic exercise. As Peter Fernald has said, in discussing teaching bioenergetics in the college classroom, “A strictly conceptual or theoretical approach to teaching and learning Bioenergetics would be woefully inaccurate...similar to teaching tennis...without ever having the learner swing a racquet and hit a ball (2008, pg. 94).” To me, a purely didactic course about working with the whole person in therapy seemed apparently contradictory, or at the very least, inappropriate to the way therapy should be learned and applied. Thus, I wanted to include body activities that would require participation and reflection, and encourage people to attend to their own experiences of being a person in a body.

A second challenge came from the unfortunate requirement to offer the course online, due to the needs of the university. How could I engage students in experiential work and the necessary self-reflection that should, I thought, be intrinsic to a study of somatic psychology, when I didn't meet with them in person? I considered the needs for safety, intimacy, and one-on-one encouragement I had found that exercise group participants required, and I wondered how I could create that atmosphere online.

A third challenge had to do with others perceiving and accepting the course as a valid academic endeavor. While I anticipated this concern, the reality of it was reflected in the comment made by a student as she decided whether to take the course. In her journal, she wrote about her process of decision-making: “Here's one [course], Somatic Psychology. Reading the description, sounds kinda...fruity and fluffy, probably won't be too difficult. Maybe I'll learn something, although my first impression is one of a touchy-feely indoctrination that I will endure, not necessarily incorporate.” Therefore, my task, as I saw it, was to make a course that included direct experience in an environment of safety and support, as well as didactic learning that avoided being a “fruity and fluffy” indoctrination by a “true believer of body therapy” type of lecturer. And to do this online, in what is often referred to as “asynchronous learning,” was ever more difficult, which meant that the learning would not happen in the same place or at the same chronological time as the teaching.

The Course

I designed the semester-long course to begin with six weeks of study of background material which included an instructor-generated overview of basic neural anatomy and learning theory, as well as Damasio's much-read work, *The Feeling of What Happens* (Damasio, 1999), to enable students to understand the scientific foundations of somatic therapy. This was followed by eight weeks of study of different body psychotherapy modalities, utilizing Caldwell's *Getting in Touch* (Caldwell, 1997) to launch further exploration via the internet. In addition to typical exams, quizzes, and presentations, students participated in online discussion forums. They also were responsible for engaging independently in nine experiential activities, keeping a journal of their experiences, and ultimately writing a paper reflecting on these processes. The interactive and experiential elements were important in part because students perceived the readings, particularly Damasio, as very challenging. I wanted to provide them with opportunities to link their personal experiences with the information they were reading and struggling to understand, thus helping them to ground their new knowledge. The balance of this paper is devoted to the students' reflections on their experiences doing those activities.

The Experiential Activities

In somatic psychology, students have a personal laboratory for direct experience immediately available. This means that opportunities for experiencing were potentially limitless. As with all experiential education, it was important for the instructor to help students structure their experience and to reflect on it in order to make it most useful. I also knew that we would be learning from our studies of Damasio about ways in which the mind can hide aspects of experience from consciousness, and I knew that it was likely that some of the students in the course would have their own personal trauma histories. Being aware of this, I felt my own struggle between wanting to maintain safety for individuals and while also giving them an opportunity to experience the power of body awareness. Holding both issues in mind, I chose activities that were varied in intensity and I frequently reminded students that bodywork can bring up emotional material, which they should self monitor for. In addition, I offered the experiential activities as an open field or space for people to simply try things and see what they might discover, without there being any need to meet some expectation. The final reflective paper was a graded assignment, but grading was based on completion of the activities rather than on any depth of self-discovery or disclosure.

My hopes for the course were that these students would accomplish the following:

1. Connect the readings with their own experience of living in a body.
2. Increase awareness of body states and body experiences, including background emotion, mood, and categorical emotion. That is, to experience emotion and mood as body experiences, rather than experiences of the mind.
3. Develop a compassionate, gentle, and friendly interest in their own embodied experience.
4. Be able to articulate how body experiences relate to life (behavioral) experiences.

The list of the weekly experiential activities was as follows:

1. Free writing in the journal. The five minute freewrite procedure is to be used after each subsequent activity, thus providing material for the final paper. The directions are to put pen to paper and write until the time is up, without internally editing, judging or saying anything negative to yourself.
2. Body scan. Repeat all week. This was a self-directed body scan.
3. Repeat the body scan and add attention to skin sensations, particularly in the shower.
4. Balancing on one foot; noticing balance in the rest of your life. What do you have to do to stay balanced?
5. Progressive relaxation. Practice daily and find an everyday signal to remind you to relax.
6. Getting to know the back body: sitting on "sitz" bones and imagining a silver thread connecting the spine to the sky.
7. Look at your body in a mirror and notice your thoughts as you see your whole body. Lie on a bed and kick and hit, and then look again at your body. What do you notice?
8. Clearing a space using focusing (Gendlin, 1998), to open up space in the body. When one moves a worry onto an imagined shelf, tension eases in the body, generating a sensation of more internal space. What do you notice?
9. Identify an environmental signal and use it to become present. Notice the noise in your world. Turn down the noise and notice what happens in your mind and body.

Each activity had a page of instruction with supportive comments. Students were instructed to allow themselves to experience and then write freely about the experience. I encouraged students to explore how their experience doing the activities related to their everyday life experiences using the freewriting process.

At the end of the semester, students created a reflective paper based on their journal entries. In addition, students completed an anonymous survey that asked about their experiences with the materials and assignments for the course. Using a five point Likert-type scale, I asked specific questions about the compliance with and utility of the experiential exercises. The combination of the reflective papers and the survey results provided qualitative and quantitative information about students' work with the experiential activities.

Results:
Selected Student Responses

Here I have chosen to report on a few of the activities. Student papers were diverse and creative, and I was greatly gratified by the variety of their approaches and their willingness to risk submitting something that didn't necessarily need to look like an academic report.

Activity #1: Journal Writing

Several students reported feeling skeptical and annoyed by the journaling assignment. One student wrote, apparently encouraged by an online discussion of how our bodies respond to cognitive activities, "...out of all of the assignments the thought of having to keep a journal made me sick to my stomach and my head ache." Despite this negative impression, all of the students who referenced these initial thoughts and feelings about journaling later indicated that the activity turned out to be less onerous than expected. One student's final assessment was merely that she "finds herself not so annoyed." The content displayed in her paper suggested strongly that she found some aspects of herself in the experiential process. It was clear, at least, that students did not feel constrained to comment positively about the experiences.

Activity #2: The Body Scan

"Upon lying on the floor, the first emotion was strong relief and gratefulness. A feeling of sudden joy was strong, as I lay flat on the floor, doing nothing, yet working on schoolwork by doing nothing. It was a lovely respite from constant activity."

"Lying down is also associated with thought of suicide. The passive feeling of nothingness is so delightful that I do not want it to stop. It feels very supported and safe. I don't want to stop doing nothing. I know I will not commit suicide, but am almost sorry that I am too responsible for such an irresponsible act."

"I completed the body scan several times the following week...Surprisingly, my mind did not get too distracted during the exercises, but I could not get the upper half to relax in the same way as the lower half. Each felt foreign to the other like I was disconnected at the hip. My lower body stiff; felt numb and tingly as if there was no blood flowing through my lower extremities. In contrast, certain spots on my upper body ... felt very warm...I concluded that the lower portion of my body carried all of my physical weight, while the upper portion carried all of my mental weight."

Activity #6: Getting To Know the Back Body

This activity asked students to sit comfortably on their "sitz" bones and adopt a slight forward tilt to the pelvis so that they could become aware of their backs. Considering the back, they were asked to imagine a silver thread extending from tailbone up the spine, out of the head and into the sky. Next, they were asked to imagine that the thread is becoming slightly taut; ever so gently, subtly lengthening the spine. They were instructed to notice the effect that this slight shift and image had on their experience, in order to take the experience out into their week, giving attention to their backs, their spines, and what they might think or believe about their backs as they wrote in the journal.

"When I was doing this exercise I kept thinking about having a strong backbone and not feeling any pain while thinking about sticking up for myself. I think that this exercise really helped me figure out how strong my back really is while relieving muscles at the same time. Even though my mind was going in all different directions about my back muscles and people walking all over me like a doormat. I think this really helped me figure out how I want to go on in life. I don't think that I have a strong backbone when it comes to sticking up for myself. I have always had a problem telling people how I feel about some things because I worry that I'm going to hurt their feelings. This exercise helped me stretch out my back and thinking about things that I should tell people instead of keeping things trapped inside."

One student chose to write his entire journal and paper in the form of poetry. His reflection on the back body is below. This extensive excerpt is included by permission of the author.

The Silver Thread

Oh, the joy of the Silver Thread.
I was raised without a spine,
After all they had no backbone
I was so wonderful, being
Spineless. They were proud, but never said.
When I met Love for
The first time, I learned about
A Spine, she had such a Lovely One.

Before she left, she exposed my
 Spine to me. It flourished, for a while.
 Had its setbacks, as my self-esteem grew, my
 Spine began to stand tall(er) at times, but
 Mostly short times. Then the 3 years of physical therapy, chiropractors, and pain.
 Said it was going to break my back, but it didn't, Thank you
 God.
 Now as I walk I sometimes remind myself to walk upright,
 This gives me pleasure. As I laid in bed,
 For my weekly meditation, I remove my pillow beneath me
 And feel the pleasure of extending my back even more.
 When I walked this morning, I was accompanied by
 Geppetto, Pinocchio's creator, but this time I played the role of pulling the strings to the puppeteer, also being played by me.
 Yes, as we walked this morning, I pulled
 The One Silver Thread that gently
 And loving stretched my back to a very comfortable
 Place of self-esteem.
 God, thank you for the ability to Love myself
 To allow that Silver Thread to
 Stretch me to new heights. AMEN.

“The more I thought about how my back felt as I was sitting on the firm foundation of the floor, the more I realized how much weight I take on as a mother, sister, daughter, girlfriend, and friend. What I wrote in my journal was that I am not a person with a strong backbone, even with everything I have overcome in my life. I am terrified on the inside but somehow I am able to fool everyone on the outside. And although I am not a pushover, I know I am easily walked on.”

“After this exercise I was able to focus on my upper thoracic region, between my shoulder blades. The tension here increases during stressful events, I think that this is where I put my stress and issues that I don't have time or want to deal with, this appears to build up and when my stress level is elevated the pain is more prominent in this location. In reflecting on this pain, I realized that it is my nature to pile on more and more commitments and duties. The thoracic region serves as my filing cabinet, my natural backpack. Like a backpack it is filled with everything and anything and all goes along with me throughout the day.”

Activity #7: “Look at your body in a mirror and notice your thoughts as you see your whole body. Lie on a bed and kick and hit, and then look again at your body. What do you notice?”

Two women students found it too difficult to actually kick and hit on the bed, but each of them described lying on a bed and *imagining* themselves doing the activity, and found even that to be a different kind of experience. One woman drew from the text materials to support her decision to imagine the experience rather than to actually do the assignment. She pointed out that an imagined experience is interpreted by the brain similarly to actual experience. Both women reported emotion and ultimately relief from their imagined hitting and kicking. Other students, who actually did the activity, referenced the struggle to observe their bodies without generating negative judgments, and some talked about how some parts of their bodies get all of the attention, while other parts are left unnoticed.

“It was not easy to look at myself completely exposed in that way and not judge or criticize what I saw. What I noticed the most was how exhausted and sad my face and body looked, like all my energy had been drained. My eyes kept going back and forth between my mouth and my shoulders, which shared the same downward turn of defeat. ...I felt unworthy of praise and detached from the person who was standing there looking back at me....Although I felt somewhat foolish, I proceeded to do the hitting and kicking exercises. I noticed some resistance at first, but then found myself making the most of it. Doing this got mentally and physically tiring after a while but I also found it energizing. It was a great way to release some of those suppressed emotions and get the juices flowing again. When I looked in the mirror again, I noticed a more relaxed and accepting person.”

Unexpected Outcomes

I did not particularly want people to access old material, or process wounds or wounding, but this happened regardless. One woman, in imagining herself kicking and hitting and protesting on her bed, recalled being raped twenty-five years before as she noticed that her screams were inside her head at that time, too. Her writing about this event in her life reflected gentleness with herself and clarity about what happened when there was no indication that she had been re-traumatized. However, it was a striking example of what can come up during the activities.

Several students had significant health problems, present or past, that were reflected importantly in their work. One student wrote movingly about her relationship with her body as they worked together to beat cervical cancer. She chose to see her body and herself as separate, yet working together to heal. Another student who has multiple sclerosis wrote about her experience: "I felt my legs and was so thankful that they were able to carry me from place to place. They are the part of my body I like the least, but since I have M.S. I know what it is like when they don't work. It felt so empowering to appreciate the power they held. I began to cry when I realized that I had allowed myself to disengage from these wonderful instruments." Although no student indicated distress that was unmanageable.

From other assignments in the course and direct email contact with students, I learned that many were very interested in what might actually happen within a body psychotherapy session and were unable to imagine it from their reading and study. Their reading about particular modalities tended to whet their appetites for details. It was not clear to them that the experiential activities had any relationship to the types of activities that might happen in a therapy session.

Two papers, though, were vague and lacked convincing detail. This suggested to me that the students did not complete the activities or the journaling. As we will see, there is further support for this idea in the student survey data.

Student Survey

Twelve of the twenty-two students completed the optional survey. Two responses to the question about compliance with the experiential activities indicated non-compliance, and two responses identified the activities as a waste of time (I assume that the same students gave these responses). Ten of the twelve respondents indicated that they did the activities and that they were useful. However, only half of the responding students thought that the activities helped them to connect to the text materials, which was one of the anticipated outcomes. Students also indicated an interest in sharing information with one another about their experiences in a discussion forum online.

Four students chose to comment on the experiential activities:

"I enjoyed the experiential exercises and was pleasantly surprised with all I learned and with the changes I made"

"The experiential exercises were wonderful: I was able to tap into sources of energy I wasn't expecting,"

"The experiential exercises were not helpful to me."

"I liked the experiential exercises. They helped me tie everything together and things made more sense to me after I tried some of them."

Discussion

Earlier in this paper when I had articulated certain desired outcomes for the upcoming activities, they were contemplated in retrospect. I wondered initially about whether students would actually complete the activities and journaling, whether they would find anything out about themselves, and whether they would choose to report that new understanding in a paper to an instructor who was only an online presence. I was most happy with the result of the activities and the paper. The majority of students wrote thoughtful reflections of their experiences, including details that made it clear that they were doing the work and that they had, in fact, learned some insightful things about themselves.

The survey results, although limited in number of respondents, are useful in the sense that they can provide direction for modification of the course. There were problems in motivation for a small number, and problems in connecting the experiential activities to the other aspects of the course for many, though they found the activities useful for other reasons. There are a number of ways to address these two educational concerns. For most students, participation in any course activity is enhanced when the grade depends on it. While the reflective papers got full credit regardless of the depth of participation, for the future I have chosen to emphasize more strongly the experiential activities as relevant to the learning. To address the concern about connecting the activities to the didactic learning, I will add a discussion forum where students can explore those connections. I will also offer some video examples of body psychotherapy in action so that students can see how body awareness is relevant in session. These additional learning opportunities may enhance the connections between personal experience and didactic learning.

In the midst of this, I have learned some important things about my students, despite the fact that all of our interaction occurred over the Internet. First, students were just as detached from bodily experience as any other group of people I have met. For these people to allow themselves an opportunity to relax into the body and to feel their feelings was a rare experience, as it is for so many in the therapy room. In addition, as students, they were particularly vulnerable to wanting to do these activities "right." Also, as students who are adult learners, they were over scheduled and overworked, and it was both difficult and a great effort to take time to allow themselves to feel anything of themselves. Several of them were explicit in saying how hard this was. In particular, the "Clearing a Space" activity was difficult for people, perhaps as one student said, because they *didn't want* to put the worries on the shelf. Or as another student said, maybe I have had to shelve so many important things that I just don't want to look at what is already on my shelf.

Conclusion

“I have found through all these exercises that my body is more my own now.”

Teaching online about body psychotherapy can be enhanced by the inclusion of experiential activities and a structured reflective process. Students are able to connect immediate body experience with everyday behavior and concerns. They are willing to share their experiences in a setting that is inviting and positive; they are even interested in sharing their experiences with other students. However, the course lacked explicit structure to connect the body experiences to the didactic learning; many students did not create these connections independently. More emphasis needs to be put on how the experiential work relates to other aspects of the course.

As I think deeply about the work that the students and I did together, I feel gratitude for their trust and openness. As I complete this paper in an effort to open my experience up to colleagues, I feel a bit shy and anxious. I want very much to do it “right” and be found acceptable, much as my students felt in doing their work. It is a good reminder for me, perhaps for any of us who are lucky enough to teach, of the struggles of being a student. As therapists, we invite our clients to allow themselves to be present to whatever comes up. Students don’t often allow themselves this opportunity, and it has been an honor and a privilege for me to offer it within the structure of an academic course.

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Appendix

University of Maine at Augusta Course Syllabus

PSY 356E Somatic Psychology: Body and mind in psychotherapy

Instructor: Leslie Ann Costello, Ph.D.
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 University College of Bangor
 65 Texas Avenue
 Bangor, ME 04401
 207 262 7985

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Course description:

The course is an introduction to the theoretical and empirical bases for the explicit use of the body in psychotherapy. Starting with a brief history of the somatic approach, the course surveys bioenergetic analysis, somatic experiencing, EMDR, and other contemporary applications. There is an experiential component and journaling requirement for the course. Three credits. Prerequisites: PSY 308 or equivalent.

Course objectives:

At the completion of this course, students will:

1. Describe the history of the somatic psychology movement
2. Explain the evolution of the concept of the “unconscious”
3. Identify the major historical influences on contemporary somatic psychology
4. Discriminate and describe five major treatment approaches
5. Explain and formally present theoretical, empirical, and clinical aspects of a selected approach
6. Reflect on and write about personal experiences with somatic psychology activities

A note about this course:

Online courses are tough because YOU have to structure your worktime yourself. Please plan to be online TWICE a week in this course. You will have weekly work to complete, and you will have discussions that go over a few weeks. It is very hard to catch up when you get behind. It also takes a couple of weeks to develop a pattern that works.

Each week’s folder will open on Monday morning and will stay open for a full week. During this time you will read material, do your experiential exercises and write your journal entry, respond to my questions and take quizzes as needed. Please PRINT out materials that you will need. Folders CLOSE after we have used them.

You can reach me by email. If you send me an email you can reasonably expect a reply within 48 hours. Sometimes on the weekend I am busy with other responsibilities and I am not necessarily checking email continuously. However, during the week you can probably reach me more readily.

I make every effort to grade work efficiently. However, if you submit your work LATE, you should not expect me to be right on top of grading it. I try to stagger my grading load, so if you send your work in late, it is on top of work from my other classes and it is not a priority item.

I will usually post an announcement when I think I have graded all the submissions. If I post this note and you don't have a grade, PLEASE LET ME KNOW! Things DO get lost and misplaced in cyberspace, and I would MUCH rather have you ask me twice if needed than you have your work missing.

A note on what the course is NOT:

This is a course about psychotherapy, but it is NOT psychotherapy. It is also NOT therapist training. You are not going to work through your personal issues or learn to do therapy with other people in this course. This is an undergraduate course about somatic approaches in therapy. Please be aware that there is no part of this course that will train you to work therapeutically with other people. That kind of work requires graduate level training and supervised experience. If you find you have an interest in working with people therapeutically, I would be happy to advise you around getting graduate training and obtaining licensure. In the meantime, do not attempt to use techniques you learn about on your friends, family or others.

Readings:

Caldwell, C. (1997). *Getting in Touch: The guide to new body-centered therapies*. Wheaton, IL. Quest Books.

Damasio, A. (1999). *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and emotion in the making of consciousness*. New York; Harcourt.

Other readings as assigned, including web sites and articles.

Quizzes and Exams:

In the first six weeks of class, there will be five weekly quizzes over the reading material. Quizzes MUST be taken within the designated time frame. The reading for the beginning of the semester is pretty dense and frequent quizzes is a strategy that is designed to make the work more manageable than if you just had a midterm. (Reading in the second part of the semester gets a lot easier.)

You will also have a midterm and a final exam. The exams will cover material from your reading, from the class notes you will find in the course, from your web searches and from our discussions. Exams will be essay format and you will have one week to complete each of them. Exams are due ON TIME as indicated in the calendar.

Late exams or quizzes are penalized by the loss of ten points. That is, if you take the exam late or submit it late, your grade will be docked by ten points. This is to compensate for the additional time you had to prepare to take the exam or quiz. This policy will be maintained regardless of your reason for taking or submitting your late exam. Please keep this in mind.

Research paper with group input:

I want students to explore the applications of some of the body-based therapies. Because our focus is psychology, we will be connecting to the body-based therapies that have an evidence base to support their use with clients. You will do this work in collaboration from classmates.

For your paper, you will select a problem or disorder or issue that may be addressed using body psychotherapy. You will find some research support for the use of this somatic therapy in treatment of the disorder or problem. You'll write a paper that gives some background about the disorder, some background about the therapy, and tells in detail about the research support for using the therapy with the disorder. This paper will be about 8-10 pages in length. The grading rubric will be posted in the course site.

For example: You decide that you are interested in treatment of stress-related illnesses. You are also interested in Hakomi. You look for research to support the use of Hakomi in stress-related illness. You don't find any, so you have to regroup. So you decide to look at mindfulness-based stress reduction to treat stress related illness. You find quite a few articles demonstrating the efficacy of this treatment for this disorder. In other words, the treatment matches the problem. Bingo! You've got a good paper topic.

What to do: Gather your information on your disorder (make sure you use good references, such as the DSM-IV-TR for disorders) and your treatment. Share your information in the small group on your type of disorder. Check out other people's resources, too, and see what might be useful to your paper as well. (Post your materials by October 15th) Write your paper and revise it. (Have your draft constructed by November 2.) Find TWO members of your small group who agree to critique your paper. Send it to them, get their critiques, and REVISE again. Also, you will need to be a helper and critique TWO other papers from within your group. (Finish your critiques by November 9th). Be helpful and be thoughtful and also be honest. This will help everyone's papers to be better than they would be otherwise.

After you have received your feedback and revised, you can submit to your colleagues again if everyone has time or submit directly to me for a grade. Papers are DUE to me on November 16th. Late papers are penalized. Send your paper via email as an attachment. Make sure it has a title page, page numbers, and complete references in APA style.

You must submit your paper for critique to colleagues. You MUST critique two other papers. Your grade will reflect these items as well as the quality of your own paper. Each member of the group will be rating every other member on their level of participation.

Discussion:

There will be five discussion forums throughout the semester. You are responsible to participate in all of them. Participation means that you will craft an original response to my questions. Make sure that your response is thoughtful and considers the reading as well as your personal knowledge about the subject. After you have made your original post, read your colleagues' posts and respond substantively to at least THREE of them. To get full credit, you need to write an original post AND respond to at least three of your classmates. Be watchful of the DATES of the discussion forums. Posts made after the closing date of the discussion will NOT count toward your grade.

Experiential reflective journal and reflective paper:

Every week you will have an exercise to do that is designed to enhance your own experience of the interaction of your mind with your body. After completing the exercise, write about the experience in your journal. At the end of the semester you will write a reflective paper that uses the content of your journal as material. Thus you will complete a minimum of eight journal entries and use those entries as material for your paper.

Your paper may take any form that you wish. You can include your journal entries or simply use them as information sources. Please remember that I will have only your paper to convince me that you did, in fact, do the activities and write the journal entries. I am looking to hear about your OWN experience in doing the activities, and that might include your resistance, your thoughts, your feelings, and your overall mood before, during and after. There is no RIGHT way to do the activities; there are many RIGHT ways to write the paper. Please be comprehensive and thoughtful and honest.

Grading:

Quizzes		15%
Midterm exam		15%
Final exam		15%
Research paper		20%
Discussion		15%
Experiential journal and reflective paper		20%

Topic Calendar:

Week	Topic	Reading and Assignments	Discussions	Quiz	Journal writing
Week 1	Introductions		Discussion #1		Begin journal process
Week 2	What is somatic about psychology?	Caldwell, introduction and chapter 1	Continue Discussion #1	Quiz 1	Experiential activity #1
Week 3	Where has the body been in psychology? Review of some concepts in physiological psychology	Damasio, chapter 1 & appendix (notes on mind and brain)		Quiz 2	Experiential activity #2
Week 4	Emotional information processing	Damasio: Chapter 2 and notes	Disc. #2:	Quiz 3	Experiential activity #3
Week 5	How the body experience creates consciousness	Damasio, Chapter 3, 4 & 5 and notes		Quiz 4	Experiential activity #4
Week 6	Body and emotion; using consciousness	Damasio, Ch. 8 & 9	Disc. #3	Quiz 5	Experiential activity #5
Week 7	Brain, mind and body: Psychoneuroimmunology	Article as assigned Caldwell, Chapter 12 Post your research sources for your paper to your small group by October 15th			Experiential activity #6
Week 8	Exam	Midterm exam is due March 8th	Disc. #4	<i>EXAM</i>	
Week 9	Overview of clinical applications of somatic psychology	Caldwell, Ch. 2, 3, 4 Focusing article			Experiential activity #7
Week 10	Applications of body-mind approaches	Caldwell, Ch. 5, 6, 7 Complete your draft and submit paper to peers for critique by Nov. 2.	Disc. #5		Experiential activity #8
Week 11	Treatments for stress and other "health" diagnoses	Articles on EMDR, mindfulness, ACT, and MBCT. Submit your critiques to your colleagues by Nov. 9			Experiential activity #9
Week 12	Treatments for personality change	RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE ON November 16th Articles on bioenergetics, somatic experiencing			
Thanks giving	No additional class work this week				
Week 13	Treatments for trauma				
Week 14	More on methods	REFLECTIVE PAPERS are due on Dec. 9th			
Week 15	Final examination	Exam must be completed by May 6 th		<i>EXAM</i>	

Note about experiential exercises:

This course asks you to reflect on your own experiences in present time. You will be asked to repeat a body scan, in which you take time to relax and notice your body responses. You will practice some expressive exercises, and you will likely experience some of your thoughts and feelings in a different or

surprising way. The exercises are designed for self exploration and discovery but there are many other exercises and practices you might find on the Internet that tap more deeply than expected in this course. I recommend that you proceed carefully with bodywork, and limit your explorations to the activities in the course. You need to be self aware and attend to your responses to the activities, keeping your journal and developing your observing self. If you find a place in yourself that you want to explore more deeply, I strongly suggest that you locate and work with a therapist who is experienced with somatic approaches.

Biography

Leslie Ann Costello, Ph.D. teaches at the University of Maine at Augusta. She is a Bioenergetic trainee and a member of the Atlantic Canada Bioenergetic Society as well as a licensed psychologist. She can be reached at Leslie.costello@maine.edu

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CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

How does material in this manuscript inform the field and add to the body of knowledge? If it is a description of what we already know, is there some unique nugget or gem the reader can store away or hold onto? If it is a case study, is there a balance among the elements, i.e. back ground information, description of prescribed interventions and how they work, outcomes that add to our body of knowledge? If this is a reflective piece, does it tie together elements in the field to create a new perspective? Given that the field does not easily lend itself to controlled studies and statistics, if the manuscript submitted presents such, is the analysis forced or is it something other than it purports to be?

PURPOSE

This peer-reviewed journal seeks to support, promote and stimulate the exchange of ideas, scholarship and research within the field of body psychotherapy as well as an inter-disciplinary exchange with related fields of clinical practice and inquiry.

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Initial submission should be e-mailed to jacarletonphd@gmail.com as an attachment in Microsoft Word.

Manuscript should be double-spaced in 10pt. type, with at least a one inch margin on all four sides-please include page numbers, otherwise manuscript should be free of other formatting.

Title, full authorship, **abstract of about 100 words and 3-5 key words precede the text**. Please include an endnote with author's degrees, training, mailing address, e-mail fax, acknowledgement of research support, etc.

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