"If the elements of the trauma are replayed again and again, the accompanying stress hormones engrave these memories more deeply into the mind. Ordinary day-to-day events become less compelling. It becomes harder and harder to feel the joys in every day life, harder to concentrate on the tasks at hand. Not being fully alive in the present keeps us more firmly imprisoned in the past."

(van der Kolk, 2014, p. 67)
Guided 4 Points Mindfulness Meditation

For the next few minutes let's give ourselves the opportunity to be fully present in this moment. Allow yourself to get as comfortable as you can in the chair you are sitting in and if you wish you can close your eyes…. If this is not comfortable then find a point of focus during this time and allow your eyes to remain open.

And as your sitting here allow yourself to be aware of your breath and notice as you breath in through your nose and then allow the breath to come out through your mouth.

This is not to be a task or a chore…you are not trying to breathe in any longer, deeper, harder or heavier than you normally would…. you're simply allowing the breath to come in through your nose and to escape between your lips with absolute ease and effortlessness…

and if you find that exhaling through the lips is not comfortable…… just exhale through your nose…whatever feels right for you….

And while your doing this you want your mind to focus in and notice all of that breath coming in and all of that breath as it leaves your body… your mind may wander and that is perfectly fine…just recognize what it does and bring it back to noticing all the breath coming in and all the breath going out…..

And this is where I would like your mind to be at for the next few moments or this is where I'd like you to be focused for the next few moments…. 
Pause……..

And now as you continue to breathe at this rhythm that is comfortable for you I'd like you to imagine taking all your awareness and all of your energy and allow it to be focused on your feet……. Just notice that part of the body and be aware of any comfort, sensation or energy as you maintain this focus…. and all the time allowing the breath to come in and all of the breath to leave the body as you exhale…. just notice all of that.....

And now imagine if all of that energy that is focused on your feet could begin to slowly move up your ankles and legs and eventually land in your hips… that center of gravity as you notice this part of your body as it supports you in your chair. ..just notice this energy as it centers in that part of your body as you continue to breath in and out at your own pace.....

And now imagine that all of that energy in your hips begins to move up your torso, up across your shoulders, neck and eventually lands in your face…. As you continue to breath in and out just notice this part of the body…. notice and release and tension you may have in your brow, your jaw.. as you continue to breath both in and out in the way that is most right for you…
And now imagine that all of this energy in your face begins to move down across your neck and shoulders and down each arm and eventually lands in your hands…. As you continue breathing notice which way your hands feel most comfortable… palms up or down…… In your lap or down by your side… just notice as you continue to breath……

And now very gently allow your awareness to connect with the 4 walls of this room and begin to notice any sounds you may hear……. and as you notice the sounds make contact with your back against the chair and when you are ready gently open your eyes and be fully here ……

Points to remember:

Notice the language used of permissiveness …this is an important element in being trauma sensitive when doing mindfulness or yoga…. To allow the client to have choice…. Use phrases like:

"whatever feels right for you..."
"allow this at your own pace"
"you may close your eyes if you wish but if this is not comfortable that is fine...."

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Sensorimotor Practice Exercises

Sample Sensorimotor and Body Based Activities (Ogden, 2006)

1. Have clients practice body postures while sitting and note differences paying attention to the 5 core organizers:
   A. leaning forward
   B. collapsed posture
   C. spine erect and shoulders back
   D. standing head down
   E. Standing looking up
   F. Standing arms up in V

2. When merged with a strong feeling…. notice the sensation and where it is in your body...
   A. Repeat the phrase "I feel ________________ ."
   B. Change the statement to "something in me feels ________________ ."
   C. Next say "I am noticing that something in me feels ________________ ."

Make note of the differences in feels, sensations as you alter the statements.
3. Pendulation
   A. Identify an unpleasant emotion, where it is in your body, how it feels and rate the emotion on a scale of 0-10 with 10 being the worst.
   B. Now find a place in your body that is neutral or calm (end of nose, top of head, navel, earlobe, small toe.
   C. Focus all of your energy on the calm or neutral place using diaphragmatic breathing.....
   D. Now go back to the unpleasant sensation, then back to the calm or neutral place..repeat a total of 3 times. Levine, P. (1997
   E. Now assign a number to the unpleasant sensation........
   * In most cases the sensation will lessen as this tool is practiced

4. Body awareness practice for clients who struggle with "dropping inside" and noticing body sensations. Give 2 or 3 each week as "body awareness practice". As you go through the week, notice a time when you felt relaxed. Write down the setting, what you were doing, the emotion and body sensation (how does your body tell you that you are relaxed)? Clients may practice "noticing" any of the following"
   A. excited D. energized G. relieved J. peaceful M. worried
   B. irritated E. focused H. tense K. frustrated N. free
   C. impatient F. hopeful I. hurried L. worried O. connected

5. Teach clients one or two energizing yoga postures and ask them to practice and note changes Ex. bellows breath, warrior pose, power hara

6. Have clients bring up an image they associate with peace or serenity and have them notice where in the body they hold that sensation and have them describe the quality of it. Ex. When I am serene, I see myself at the ocean and I feel like my chest is open and my limbs are looser and I can breathe easier. Ogden (2006)

7. Teach clients to study their own somatic organization. "When you are angry… just notice where/how body tenses up...." Experiment with different ways of organizing/carrying the emotion.. "What happens when you..... hold shoulders back...take a breath.... Place your hand on your heart... just notice what changes...."

8. See Chapters 25 and 33 of the book by Ogden & Fisher (2016) for many practice activities you can do with your clients to develop body awareness.

Combating Shame Through the Body (Fisher, 2014)

What does the body do when it feels shame ..does it curl or pull in, collapse, turn away.... Shame can be altered by changing the body posture by doing a series of opposite movements. If the head is down, look up... if the body pulls in stretch your spine and move your arms to create space for yourself. Take all the time you need to play with new movements and notice what happens to shame. It is also helpful to "reframe" shame as an adapted part of the self. If the client can see the part that feels
shame and the part that judges than the part that "sees" is the observing ego. There may even be other parts that hold other views of who the client is.

**Boundaries Activity**

Materials: 8 ft piece of yarn, post it notes, markers

Have client pick a person they experience boundary issues with. As they describe the person, record what their body does and ask questions to get feelings, sensations in the body etc. Have client use the yarn to create a boundary between them and the person they have conflict with. Ask them what it is like to notice this boundary and having their "own space." Use an object (stuffed animal) to represent the person they have conflict with. Notice what happens as you move that object close to the boundary and further away. Next work on strengths they have and put those on post it notes. Have them place the strengths on their boy or on floor where they think it might help. Once strengths are all there ask them what it might be like to set boundaries with that person now? Strengths might be things like courage, have lots of friends, being intelligent, etc. Once this is complete you could install the strengths with EMDR for future template purposes.

**Trauma Sensitive Yoga Techniques (Emerson, 2011)**

The goal of teaching these techniques to trauma clients is to help them forge a better relationship with their bodies and improve affect regulation. First they must notice they have a body, then be able to befriend it and lastly be able to self-regulate in the midst of strong emotions.

**Seated Mountain Pose:**

The client is instructed to “find a comfortable way of sitting in their chair. Have client place feet on floor or cross legs…whatever is comfortable, move toes...just notice....

“Now, bring your focus to the breath and breathe in and out through the nose. If this is uncomfortable it is always ok to breathe through the mouth. Notice the rhythm and deepen.

Turn to your center of gravity...the abdomen...engage in some muscular activity..keep stability at core and notice the breath Keeping that stability at the core, right at the center, allow your shoulders to release. You may notice a letting go across the upper back, across the collarbone. Let the weight of the world drop off your shoulders - the weight of external concern, worry, anxiety and begin to trust and engage the deep stability at your center.

“Now, lift up through the top of your head - lift straight up through the crown of your head and...
notice your spine getting longer. Keeping this alignment gently bring your awareness back to the breath. Breathe in and out through your nose if you can. Think about adding a little breath both to the inhale and to the exhale. Notice as your breath gets a little longer and deeper. Allow the muscles in your face to be at ease. If you like, pause for a moment to experience the natural flow of your breath.... and when you are reading, come back into this space, feel your feet on the floor and gently open your eyes”. (Emerson, 2011)

Sun Breaths: Taking up Space and Opening the Heart

As you begin in seated mountain pose you may place your hands on your thighs. As you inhale, sweep the arms up in a wide arc; exhale, bring the palms together- continue at your own pace, synchronizing breath and movement...could also lift hands up as you inhale, exhale as you return hands to thighs.

Seated Leg Lifts: Feeling Core Power and Working With Sensation

Start with the seated mountain pose with the hands on the thighs, inhale and lift and straighten the right leg to whatever height is comfortable for you; exhale, bring the foot back to the floor. Inhale and lift and straighten the left leg to your degree; exhale back down. Try alternating back and forth 5-10 times each leg. Place hand on top of thigh for another set and notice the muscles as you move...keep the spine upright...notice the sensations.

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Energizing:

Bellows Breath: Sitting or standing

Make fists with your hands and place them close to your shoulders. Start by 1 normal breath in and out. As you inhale through your nose raise your hands up in the air with fingers spread. Exhale with great force through your nose as you bring your hands back down into the starting position.

Pulling Prana: Sitting or standing

Option 1: As you inhale through the nose, raise your arms over your head with palms towards the face. Exhale and pull the arms down towards your face or do horizontally....

Option 2: You do the same thing only sitting and putting your arms out horizontally in front of you on the inhale, on the exhale pulling towards your waist making a fist.

Power Hara:

In a standing position with feet wide apart place your arms on your shoulders like chicken wings. Inhale through the nose and twist left, inhale the rest of the way and twist right. Then extend right arm forcefully to the left and say “ha” through your mouth. Extend your left arm to the right as you finish exhaling saying the “ha” sound again. Practice 10 rounds.

*Do not do if you are pregnant or have had abdominal surgery

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Calming
Forward Fold - seated mountain pose, lean forward and let arms hang or place on ankles....

Heart Breathe (Maggie Phillips, 2008):
In seated mountain pose place one hand on your heart and drop into diaphragmatic breathing making sure the exhalation is slightly longer than the inhalation. Place the other hand slightly below the navel. As you continue to breathe allow your hands to exert just the right type of pressure that helps you feel like you are supportive and cared for. As you continue to breathe release any anxiety or fear or tension as you exhale....

Diaphragmatic breathing with a twist: In seated mountain pose twist to the left and look over your left shoulder head slightly up and notice the stretch. Repeat to the right...repeat for a total of 3 sets.

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Complex Trauma References

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