

**Andrea L. Bell, L.C.S.W.**

## **Somatic Experiencing® Informed Consent**

When appropriate, and according to my clinical judgment, I will (or may) propose the use of Somatic Experiencing (SE) in our work together. SE is a short-term naturalistic approach to the resolution and healing of trauma developed by Dr. Peter Levine and is supported by research. It 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 awareness of body sensation to help people "renegotiate" and heal rather than re-live or re-enact trauma.
- SE's guidance of the bodily "felt sense," allows the highly aroused survival energies to be safely experienced and gradually discharged.
- SE may employ 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.

### **For more information about SE please note the following references:**

Levine, P. and Frederick, A. (2010). In *An Unspoken Voice: How The Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Kline, M. and Levine, P. (2007). *Trauma Through A Child's Eyes: Awakening the Ordinary Miracle of Healing*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

For further references and information online about SE go to <http://www.traumahealing.org>

SE can result in a number of benefits to you, such as relief of traumatic stress symptoms, increased resiliency, and resourcefulness. Like any other treatment it may also have unintended negative side effects, such as sleep disturbances, frightening memories, or unfamiliar and uncomfortable body sensations. Such reactions are not uncommon 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 Hakomi, Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, or Bodydynamics. Obviously, there are also many non-somatic focused forms of psychotherapy and counseling that you can choose from. My own education and training in SE includes completion of the SE training modules, SEP certification, additional supplementary trainings I've attended and helped teach, and over ten years' clinical experience applying this modality with the clients in my psychotherapy practice.

It is your responsibility to tell me when you are uncomfortable with any parts of the treatment. If you have any questions about SE or other treatments, please ask and I will do my best to answer your questions in full. You have the right to refuse or terminate treatment at all times, or to refuse touch, SE techniques, or any other intervention I may propose or employ.

I have read the above informed consent, understand, and agree to it.

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Client name (print)

Date

Client Signature