



# Embodied Wellness

A Holistic Approach to Mental Health  
for Parents & Professionals

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# Workshop Objectives

- ✓ Increase insight about the ways the body communicates stress signals and benefits of listening to the body.
- ✓ Learn practical strategies to recognize stress signals and regulate their nervous system.
- ✓ Identify tools they can use daily to improve mental wellness, practice self compassion and deeper self-awareness.

# Welcome & Guided Practice

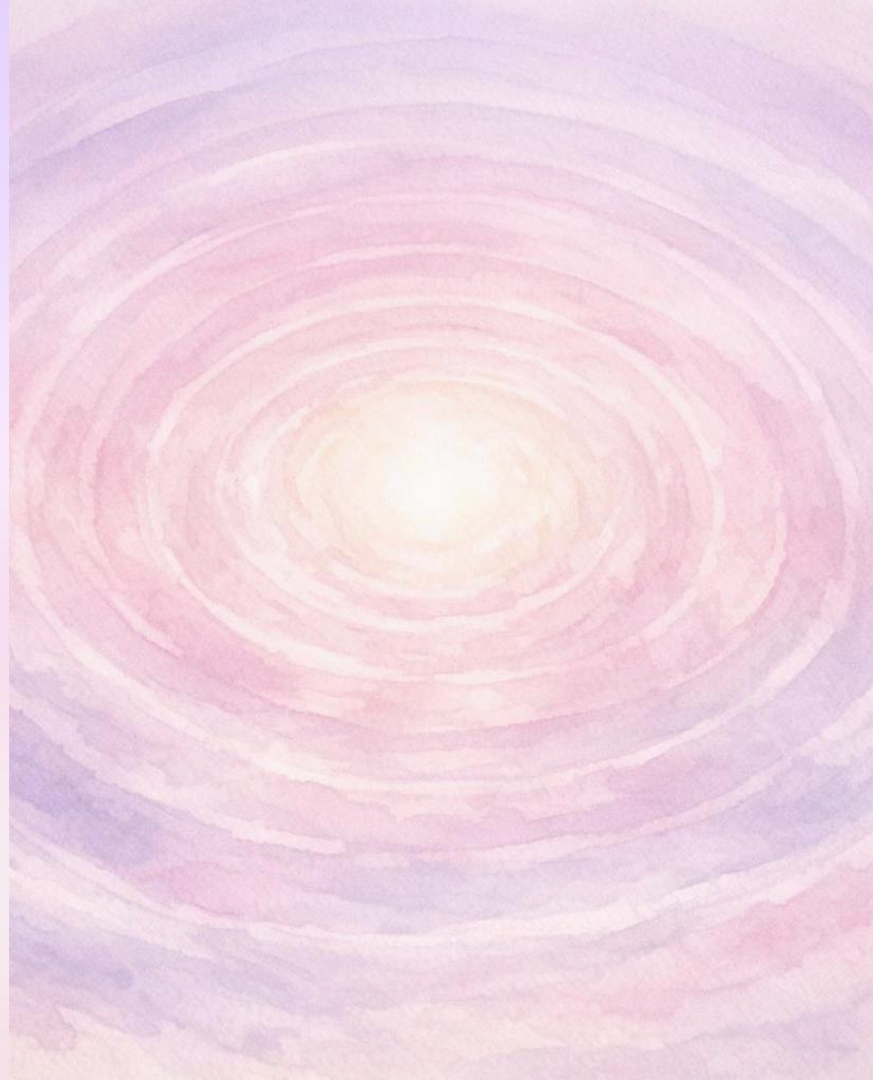
Please answer in the chat:

What helps you feel grounded?

How does Stress show up in your body?

**Group Practice:**

- Orienting and Grounding breath exercise
- Body Scan – Just notice



# What Is Embodied Wellness?

*An approach that integrates body awareness, emotional regulation, and cognitive understanding to support whole-person mental health.*



Mind

Cognitive patterns,  
thoughts, beliefs



Body

Sensations, tension,  
physical signals



# The Mind-Body Connection

- ✓ Emotions are felt and experienced in the body. They are stored as physical sensations — tension, tightness, pain, etc
- ✓ Chronic stress – due to real or perceived pressure can cause significant alterations in the body’s overall functioning especially if the body is in constant fight, freeze or flight mode.
- ✓ Trauma responses live in the nervous system, not just the mind/memory. What is in the body is in the brain and vice versa.
- ✓ Body awareness – noticing and listening to your body - is such a significant step in the process of embodying wellness and increasing emotional insight.

# Window of Tolerance – Dr. Dan Siegel

*The optimal zone where you can function without becoming overwhelmed or shutting down.*

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## *Understanding the Window of Tolerance*

*The window of tolerance is a concept that describes the range of emotional and physiological states in which an individual can effectively cope with stressors.*

*When you are within this window, you can think clearly, engage in social interactions, and maintain emotional balance.*

*However, when you step outside this window, you may experience hyperarousal (anxiety, panic) or hypoarousal (numbness, depression).*

# Window of Tolerance

When people are within their window of tolerance, they are in a psychological space that allows them to perform daily activities without their emotions and thoughts overwhelming or interfering with their functioning.



## HYPERAROUSAL

### FIGHT / FLIGHT RESPONSE

- Attacking or confronting
- Becoming angry or irritable
- Hurling insults
- Engaging in blame
- Difficulty in trusting other people
- Running away or hiding
- Quitting
- Being in denial
- Experiencing anxiety
- Sabotaging oneself



## HYPORAROUSAL

- Surrendering or becoming compliant
- Feeling empty or numb, like you are shutting down
- Experiencing detachment
- Rationalizing or justifying behaviors or situations

# Let's Discuss

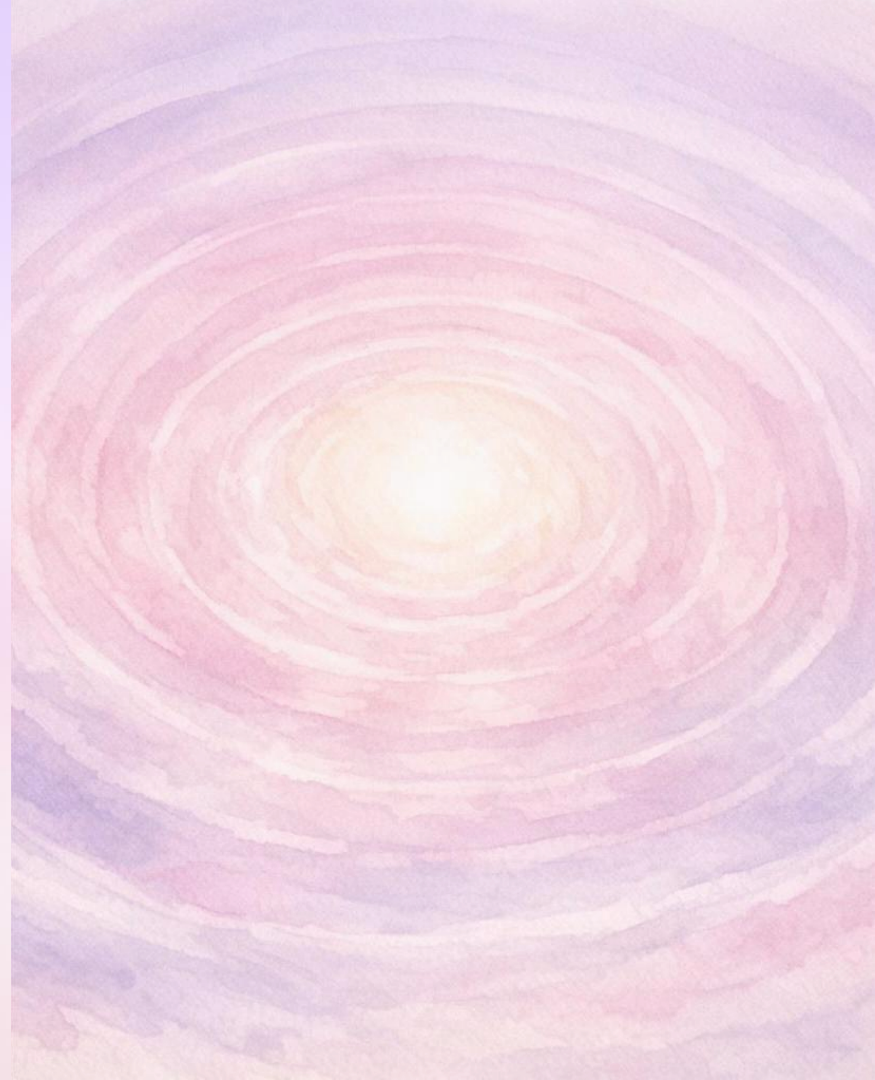
You may answer in the chat:

**Where do you most often hold stress:**

- Jaw
- Shoulders
- Back
- Chest
- Stomach
- Headaches
- Lower body
- Other?

**How do you notice stress affecting your relationships, work or parenting?**

**What situations tend to dysregulate you the most?**



# Breathwork practice

## Box Breathing

Inhale 4s → Hold 4s → Exhale 4s → Hold 4s

*Acute stress, anxiety, overwhelm*

## 4-7-8 Technique

Inhale 4s → Hold 7s → Exhale 8s

*Sleep, deep relaxation, nervous system reset*

## Physiological Sigh

Double inhale through nose → Long exhale

*Quick calm-down in real time*

# Somatic Practices

*Movement-based approaches that help process emotion through the body*

## Body Scanning

Systematic attention to physical sensations from head to toe, building interoceptive awareness

## Progressive Relaxation

Tensing and releasing muscle groups to release stored tension and teach the body safety

## Grounding Exercises

Using sensory input (5-4-3-2-1) to anchor the nervous system in the present moment

## Mindful Movement

Yoga, tai chi, and gentle stretching that integrate breath with intentional motion

# What the Research Shows

80%

of chronic pain patients report  
improvement with somatic  
therapies

47%

reduction in PTSD symptoms with  
body-based interventions

3x

faster recovery when movement  
is integrated with talk therapy

**Key Sources:** van der Kolk (2014), *The Body Keeps the Score*; Porges (2011), *Polyvagal Theory*; Levine (2010), *In an Unspoken Voice*

# Emotional Wellness Practices

- Practice Self - compassion
- Reflect on your Boundaries/Boundary Awareness
- Rest & Recovery
- Online/Social Media Overstimulation Awareness



# For Parents

*Bringing embodied wellness into family life*

## Co-Regulate First

Your calm nervous system teaches your child's nervous system safety

## Name the Body

Help children identify where they feel emotions physically

## Move Together

Family walks, dance breaks, and stretching create shared regulation

## Model Repair

Show children that returning to calm is a skill, not perfection



# For Professionals



## Integrate Body Awareness

Begin sessions with a brief body check-in to orient clients to present-moment experience



## Track Somatic Markers

Notice shifts in breathing, posture, and facial expression as clinical data



## Scaffold Safety


Use grounding techniques to keep clients within their window of tolerance



## Ongoing Education

Pursue training in somatic healing practices to deepen your toolkit

# Your Daily Practice Toolkit



Morning	3-minute body scan	<i>Set your baseline for the day</i>
Midday	Box breathing (4 cycles)	<i>Reset after morning demands</i>
Transition	Grounding (5-4-3-2-1)	<i>Shift between roles (work → home)</i>
Evening	Progressive relaxation	<i>Signal safety to the nervous system</i>
As Needed	Physiological sigh	<i>In-the-moment stress response</i>

**Start with one practice – 2 minutes a day. Build consistency before adding more.**



# Building a Sustainable Practice



Start small — 2 minutes is enough to build a habit



Anchor practices to existing routines (after coffee, before bed)



Track your window of tolerance — notice what expands it



Practice when calm, not only in crisis



Find community — co-regulation accelerates growth

# Reflections:

★ What is one wellness practice your body may be asking for more of right now?

## Helpful daily prompts to Embody Wellness:

★ One thing I want to release today

★ One thing I want to prioritize today

★ One wellness practice I will commit to doing this week

# Thank You

*Meet yourself where you are. Use what you have.*

*Focus on one small consistent practice.*

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