

## Felt-Sense Somatic Experiencing Exercise (Levine, 2010)

**Objective:** Develop the ability to be in tune with and describe your “felt sense” (the sensations occurring on subtle and overt levels in all areas of the body) with the help of a safe guide.

**Instructions:** Before beginning this exercise, read the list, *Qualities of the Felt Sense* below. Ask a trusted person to guide you through this exercise while you sit or lie down in a quiet location where you can comfortably focus. You will need your guide to ask you to describe the sensations you notice in your body.

**Guide’s Script:** Pay attention to the more subtle sensations in your body and use as many descriptive words as possible. I will guide you to put your attention on different parts of your body to help you notice what you are feeling there.

Wrists	Feet
Hands	Hair
Chest	Skin
Waist	Eyes
Stomach	Nose
Hips	Mouth
Buttocks	Teeth
Thighs	Chin
Calves	Neck
Ankles	Shoulders
	Upper arms

**Guide:** Use your intuition to guide your friend. This should be light, slow (long pauses are good), gentle and explorative, and last for 10 – 15 minutes. You may try picking a handful of body parts, say 5, and ask either/or questions using the list below for ideas. For example, *Does it feel more rough or more smooth? Is it slow or fast? Does it feel heavy or light?*

To finish, guide your friend to relax and notice the breath for 2 – 3 more minutes before gently rolling onto the side, and pushing up. Invite your friend to share their experience, and then trade roles.

### Examples of Qualities of the Felt Sense:

- 1) feeling/sensation
  - a. pressure – even, uneven, supportive feeling, crushed feeling, cutting off circulation

- b. air current – gentle, cool, warm, from right/left, stimulating, rush, like a feather, like mist
  - c. tension – solid, dense, warm, cold, inflamed, protective, constricting, angry, sad
  - d. pain – ache, sharp, twinge, slight, stabbing
  - e. tingling – pricks, vibration, tickling, numb
  - f. itch – mild itch, angry itch, irritating itch, moving itch, subtle itch, small/large itch
- 2) temperature – warm, hot, burning, cool, cold, clammy, chills, icy, frozen, like: hearth, oven, fire, sunshine, baked bread, snow, stone, shade
  - 3) size – small, large
  - 4) shape – flat, circle, blob, like a mountain
  - 5) weight – light, heavy
  - 6) motion – circular, erratic, straight line
  - 7) speed – fast, slow, still
  - 8) texture – rough, wood, stone, sandpaper, smooth, silk
  - 9) element – fire, air, earth, water, wood
  - 10) color – gray, blue, orange etc.
  - 11) mood/emotion – sinking, pulling in, open, closed, uplifting, sunny day, dark cloud, roiling
  - 12) sound – buzzing, singing
  - 13) taste – sour, bitter, sweet
  - 14) smell – pungent, sweet, like rain, like leaves
  - 15) absence/nothingness – blank, empty