SomaYoga Therapy to Reverse the Stress Response & Feel Better with Vasculitis Led by Molly McManus
Session Description
SomaYoga Therapy to Reverse the Stress Response & Feel Better with Vasculitis led by Molly McManus
Living with a complex medical diagnosis can bring on stress in mind, body, and spirit. Join Molly in a session designed to support feeling better in the bodies we have right now!

Learn to recognize the effects of the stress response and discover your body’s hidden reactions to stress that can cause pain, dysfunction, and lack of freedom in our life.

Discover how to release some of the physical habits that lead to the cumulative effects of stress and gain simple practices that can be used daily.
- Learn about the body’s reaction to stress and the main stress reflexes/responses.
- Understand the concepts of Sensory Motor Amnesia & Sensory Motor Competence and how this new work is the key to sustained freedom and function in the body even with a complex health diagnosis.
- Tap into the tools of proprioception, exteroception, and interoception to strengthen a positive relationship with your body.
- Participate in SomaYoga Therapy practices and take-home tangible tools to feel better today!

Combination of education, discussion and chair-based practices that will build awareness, better function and more ease in the body and mind.
WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Who Am I?
Molly McManus – Certified Yoga Therapist and Somatic Educator living with EGPA Diagnosed in 2020

Hope for Today:
Support others with Vasculitis or complex conditions to feel better in the bodies and minds we have right now.

Thanks so much for joining this workshop!
How:
Introduce some concepts and share some practices from SomaYoga Therapy that can soften our stress response, increase our awareness, and change how we feel.
What is SomaYoga

Soma: Your perception of yourself from within.
The integrated experience of body, mind, sense, emotions, & spirit.
The nervous system is constantly working to adapt and respond to conditions of our environment.

Sensory-motor systems continually respond to daily stresses and traumas with specific muscular reflexes.

These reflexes, repeatedly triggered, create habitual muscular contractions, which we cannot voluntarily relax.

EVERY EXPERIENCE IS A BODILY EXPERIENCE
GREEN LIGHT - LANDAU REFLEX
The tightening of the extensor muscles of the spine and back body in preparation to move forward. An action response.

Possible Posture Characteristics
Anteriorly tilted pelvis
Low back arched
Abdominal muscles lengthened
Shoulders back with lifted chest
Externally rotated at arms & legs
Hyper extension of knee joints
Bow legged
Head moving forward to counterbalance
Dysfunctional breath pattern
RED LIGHT - STARTLE REFLEX
The tightening of the forward flexors of the trunk.
A withdrawal response.

Possible Posture Characteristics
Posterior rotation of pelvis
Forward flexed through the torso
Tight abdominal muscles
Contracted diaphragm with held breath
Tight adductors of the thigh
Pelvic floor dysfunction
Raised shoulders
Broad rounded back & depressed chest
Internally rotated at knees & shoulders
Tense face and jaw
Clenching and fists
CRINGE - TRAUMA REFLEX
The cringing of the muscles on a side of the body.
A protective response.

Possible Posture Characteristics
Rotated or Twisted
Uneven Hips
• one hip hiked higher than the other
• one hip twisted forward or back
Uneven Shoulders
• one shoulder higher than the other
• One shoulder more forward or back
Scoliosis
C- curve
Head Tilted
Lateral Flexion of Spine
The contractions become so deeply involuntary and unconscious that eventually we no longer remember how to move about freely.

This is the source of much chronic pain & diseases of stress.
The loss of awareness of muscles and a resulting loss of ability to control them.

- SMA does not have to do with age
- SMA can happen from sudden trauma
- SMA can happen from day-to-day habits creating small insults
- SMA is often a learned adaptive response or habit
- SMA can be unlearned or reeducated
- SMA can look like limited range of motion, pain or dysfunction
The Good News

The way back from SMA and the stress responses is simple practices with internal focus.
Learning Sensory Motor Competence:
It is not a matter of simply trying to relax tension/contraction; one must provide new input to the sensory motor system.

**Pandiculation:** A voluntary contraction of a muscle followed by a slow release of that muscle.
- Reeducation of the muscle
- Entices the cortex back into being in control of the muscle
SomaYoga Therapy Suggested Practice

**Soma Scan & Awareness**
- Sitting Well
- Diaphragmatic Breath Awareness
- Polyvagal Stress Reset with Neck & Eyes
- Proprioception & Interoception with Lower Limbs

**Releasing Somatic Stress Responses**

**Chair Spinal Spiffy:**
- Extension & Flexion of the Spine (Green & Red Light)
- 6 Directions of Shoulder Mobility (All)
- Lateral Bending (Cringe)
- Twisting (All)

3 Planes of movement standing/seated
- Guided Relaxation

*What is the same or different with your Soma?*
**Signs of SMA**

**Sensory Motor Amnesia (SMA):** When a muscle has lost conscious control, the soma can have many different symptoms show up when it is recovering cortical control.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Reactions</th>
<th>Mental Reactions</th>
<th>Breath Reactions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Pain</td>
<td>Anger/Agitation</td>
<td>Breath Bracing/Retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ticklish</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td>Disturbed Inhale</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Falling Asleep</td>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>Disturbed Exhale</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Inability to Repeat the Movement</td>
<td>“Checking Out”</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No Re-call of How to Execute the Practice</td>
<td>Relief</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Unsteadiness of Limbs</td>
<td>Tears</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Shaking/quaking in movements</td>
<td>Elation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Drop or Rapid Release of the Movement (loss of control)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exhaustion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness (DOMS)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hungry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dizzy</td>
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**Feeling Sick**

- Nausea
- Headache
Signs of SMC or Gaining Motor Competence:

- Increased Range of Motion (ROM)
- Decreased Pain & Increased Comfort in Body
- Increased Energy
- Increased Functional Movement
- More Ease in Daily Living
- Less Need for Health Interventions
- Better Sleep
- Better Sex Life
- Improved Athletic Performance, ease in dancing, desire to move!!
- Relief & Joy!
**Signs/Symptoms of Sensory Motor Amnesia:**

- **Headaches, nausea & emotional responses** (anger, frustration, joy) are all signs that you are getting into muscles that have been unconsciously tense & contracting. Even though these symptoms may not feel good, it is actually a good sign that you’re getting into areas of long-held tension and potentially finding more freedom.

- **Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness (DOMS)** – this can show up 24-48 hours after and shouldn’t last more than a few days. It is caused by lactic acid build up being released into the blood stream.

- **Fatigue** – muscles might be tired; brain might be tired. Remember: this is brain work!

- **Swollen glands** – moving our body in new ways means moving lymphatic fluid that cleanses toxins. Lymph glands can be swollen and may even create cold-like symptoms

- **Increased Range of Movement**
- **Less pain & stress**
- **Freedom in movement!**

*This is not a complete list of what can show up when doing SomaYoga. If you are experiencing something and have questions, please contact us: info@yoganorthduluth.com*

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**Care for yourself to get the most from the session:**

- **Drink plenty of water**

- **Do slow, mindful movement** that is easy on your body, such as going for a slow walk

- **Avoid doing movements that are big, fast or “high load”**. This includes heavy lifting, big workouts, and fast/spontaneous movements such as going for a run. It is amazing what you can notice about your body when you slow down and doing too much too fast can put us right back into our habit that causes pain/tension.

- **Any other practices you would normally do for inflammation** or sore muscles: Epsom salt bath, ice, heat, anti-inflammatory regimen

- **Pay attention** to how you feel & notice how you move

- **Revisit your home practices before going to bed** while they are still relatively fresh in your mind.

**Avoid movements that aggravate pain and tension.** If/when you do return to these activities, see if you can go slow and pay attention to notice what postural habits might be contributing to your pain.
Pain comes in many forms

Scan for more information on Classes, Private Sessions & Free Resources

Thank you for Attending!!