



Body Psychotherapy Works with Pre-Verbal Trauma

Body psychotherapy is part of a wider movement in terms of therapeutic care and research, that recognises and values embodied experience and especially how the body's non-linguistic /unspoken intelligence can be accessed for healing and helping improve relationships with oneself and others.

Much of what happened to us happened pre-verbally, i.e. before we developed speech. This means that if it was traumatic it can only be accessed by working with the body. We do not develop in isolation. How we experienced early life, our childhood, shaped our bodies, our minds, and helped set up the patterns of early year 'defence systems', which are ways we coped with how we experienced life at that time. As adults, the coping strategies, which involved holding our bodies in certain patterns, may no longer serve us and yet we still retain them, usually unconsciously.

Methods of Working in Body Psychotherapy

There are various ways of working, and each way will be right for one individual and not others. Some of these include:

Physical work: e.g. Biodynamic Massage (a way of working with the body that can help bring it into balance), talking; creativity such as art/poetry, where you would draw or write a poem/ piece of writing which we would discuss. Movement and bioenergetics may be used to help unblock energy. Gestalt methods are another option, e.g. objects or empty chairs may be used to represent people in your life, as you are guided into exploring more about your relationship to various people.

Wild therapy/Working with Nature as Part of the Therapeutic Journey

If you wish, some of our sessions could explore your connection to Nature. This connection/disconnection/response to Nature can shed light on many things in your life. You may be invited to spend some time outdoors by yourself in a wood/other place in Nature, and whatever happens or whatever you discover about yourself can be brought back into the therapy room for discussion and processing. Many people are reviewing their connection with Nature, and this is an opportunity to discuss many other related things, e.g. Climate emergency/sustainability/ animal welfare/food security/de-forestation/living in community with others.

The Natural World can also be a useful doorway to help begin to find the answer to many questions, including those related to spirituality or connectedness.

Please note: the above is not obligatory and may not appeal or be right for everyone.

Body psychotherapy does not use *techniques*. It is both relational and embodied. Each person is treated as an individual, and each session begins where you are, right at that moment in time, taking into consideration how you are feeling in the body and mind, together with how I am experiencing you.

Jennifer James

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