

‘Touch yourself, hold yourself’- self- practices to nourish, soothe and enliven



Touch is important in so many ways: it can comfort & assure us, make us feel seen, appreciated, loved, desired, held, at home, alive.

When touch from another human isn't available for whatever reason, here are some ideas for self-touch, self-soothing, nourishment and pleasure.

It's empowering if we can resource ourselves and are able to give ourselves nourishment, soothing and pleasure via self-touch no matter who else is in our lives.

I believe conscious self touch can support us to be a well resourced and sovereign being. And btw, these practices can also be beautiful when touch IS available from others!

Here are some things you might want to consider before starting:

WELCOME YOURSELF. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO FEEL WHATEVER YOU ARE FEELING. EXTEND KINDNESS & COMPASSION TO YOURSELF

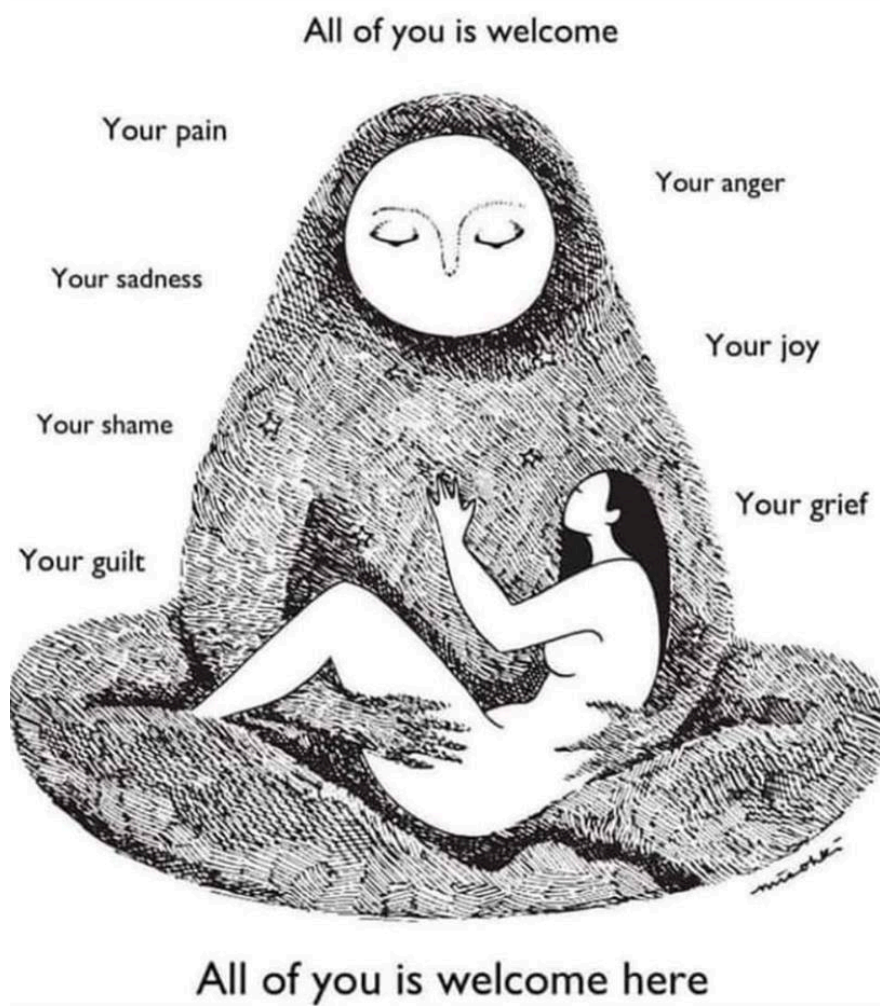
Whatever you are feeling is valid.

When you touch yourself, see whether you can do it with a sense of respect, self-appreciation and love. We can assure ourselves that we are safe, loved & wanted. We can express love for ourselves through our hands and give ourselves touch that feels good.

ACKNOWLEDGE ANY RESISTANCE TO GIVING YOURSELF TOUCH, NOURISHMENT & PLEASURE.

If you have resistance to touching yourself, you are not alone!

Even though we might crave touch, many of us have resistance to giving ourselves touch. It might be to do with feelings of shame or guilt, the idea that it is 'second best' and touch from another is much more valuable, or we might fear that strong emotions like sadness, anger or grief might come up when we touch ourselves. Resistance can appear with any touch: nourishing, soothing touch, sensual touch, invigorating or arousing touch or touch for masturbation/self-pleasure. Try and be compassionate with yourself, acknowledge the resistance and if possible, do anyway!



BREATHE!

The more we breathe, the more we feel. If we want to feel more grounded and embodied, it's good to breathe more deeply and slowly. You can experiment with breath, taking fuller, deeper breaths and see how that changes things.

GROUNDING & PRESENCE

Self-touch can support us to feel more grounded and present in our bodies. Again, I want to acknowledge that for many reasons like mental and physical pain, dysphoria, trauma, body-shame etc. it might not always feel good or safe being fully present in ones body. Be gentle with yourself!

SLOWING DOWN

The more we slow down, the more we feel and the more present we can become. We might have resistance to slowing down and feeling more, but you might want to experiment with it and see how it feels.

HONOUR YOUR BOUNDARIES, FEELINGS & PACE

Know that you are in charge of your body and pleasure. Go at your own pace. Some exercises and suggestions might speak to you, others not so much or not at all.

SAVOURING

Most of us have not learned to savour things- food, touch, an orgasm, an experience. Most often we quickly move on, ready for the next thing. See what happens when you slow down and savour an experience. Let it linger.... It can help us to drop more deeply into our bodies, our whole being and have fuller, more satisfying experiences.

When we speak about **TOUCH**, it can mean many things: hugging, holding and being held, cuddling, stroking, caressing and erotic touch. And it can have many different qualities: tender, sensual, invigorating, arousing, comforting and much more. We can also be touched emotionally and mentally.

Self-touch for comfort, self-soothing, holding,

*** FEELING HELD- Self-hugging, self holding: What can help us feeling held & grounded?**

- * You can wrap yourself in a soft blanket, fabric, shawl, or scarves and create a kind of cocoon for yourself. Then wrap your arms around yourself also, breathe slowly.
- * embrace yourself, hug yourself- see how it feels when you do it for several minutes. Really melt into your own embrace. Adjust the hug to make it even more delicious... Let the oxytocin release in your body.
- * imagine being held by a large being, creature, by the earth, a lover....
- * everything that envelops us can help, such as water- warm water, hot baths ;
- * being in nature, hugging trees, lying on the ground, leaning against trees;
- * hugging a big, soft cushion or a cuddly toy; do it for a while in the day or sleep with one;
- * HEART BREATH- put your hands over your heart-place (wherever you feel that is)- take some slow, deep breaths, count to six breathing in, and six breathing out. Imagine filling this heart-place with a beautiful colour.
- * Stay in a nourishing yoga poses, like child's or hare pose. Or rest longer in shivasana (corpse pose) with a blindfold or weighted blindfold;
- * Watch my self-hugging meditation while holding/ embracing yourself: Hug yourself, hold yourself- a visual meditation by Eva Weaver
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T19IMLmXxb4>



SELF-TOUCH- nourishing, sensual, invigorating touch & Self Massage

- * Take some time after the shower or a bath and slowly and consciously rub some lotion or oil into your body. This can actually be an exquisitely nourishing experience. Experiment with slowing down, greeting every part of you, expressing appreciation.
- * Be conscious in what qualities you would like to bring into your touch and then touch yourself in this way for a few minutes: sensual, nurturing, comforting invigorating, arousing etc;
- * Inspired by Betty Martin's 'Waking up the hands' : <https://bettymartin.org/hands/>
This is a meditative self practice.
Decide which hand gives and which receives first. The receiving hand lies in your lap or on a cushion. With your active, giving hand, explore the other hand- put your attention to your active hand- how does it feel to touch the other hand, what shapes, consistency etc do you notice? Then switch your attention to the receiving hand: what is it like to receive touch?



***Try out different qualities of touch:** touch yourself very lightly, with your fingertips only, then with your whole palm; how is it different?

*what is it like to stroke with the whole palm?
How to stroke with the back of the hand?

*You might want to experiment with deep pressing touch: pressing into the body with the flat of hand with the out-breath. Squeeze your arm, thigh, different places. Do this slowly and with deep breaths.

***slow your touch down- if you feel you are already touching slowly, go even slower;**

* **You could kiss yourself!** You might want to kiss your shoulder, wrists, back of hands etc; Try out different kisses!

* while you are touching yourself, you could **speak affirming words to yourself, of appreciation, comfort, love: 'you are gorgeous, beautiful, lovely...'**

* **You could do all this in front of a MIRROR and see how this changes things! You could smile at yourself.**

* **Self -Massage:**

* self massage can give a sense of re-assuring, connecting, grounding.
You can massage with or without oil.

* Create a warm, nourishing space for yourself where you are undisturbed.

* You could set an intention for self love, self appreciation or self-worship while you touch and massage your body.
You can play with strong and light touch, and touch wherever you can reach:);

* You could be **naked or clothed or partly clothed**. You can massage your whole body or just one part or some parts.

* **Foot massage**: our feet are very sensitive and the soles hold reflexology points that connect with all areas of the body. So when we attend to our feet, we indirectly attend to the whole body and can affect it. Pressing, massaging, going between the toes, bending foot, holding it in your hands....



*The same goes for **hands**: massage your hands: knead them, attend to all areas, also palms.

*the **ears** hold a lot of reflexology points. You can massage your ears, slowly, applying as much pressure as you like;

*You might want to touch and massage your **face**, paying attention to the jaw, where we often hold a lot of tension. Take time to stroke your face with different qualities: very light with fingertips, holding the face in your palms, hold your palm on your forehead for soothing, covering the eyes, etc.

* Massage your **scalp**! We often hold a lot of tension there. Use your fingertips and try out different pressure.

* **play with sensual touch- what kind of touch awakens you sensually?**

* Gather some **natural materials**- twigs, leaves, feathers, stones etc. and touch and stroke yourself with them. Or spend time outside on the ground, grass, earth.

* Play with different self touch with a **blindfold**! See how it changes the experience

* play with **invigorating touch**! Do you enjoy scratching, pinching, slapping? Play with different strength, and wake up the body this way.
This can also release endorphins .

* You could do a longer, 30-40 or even longer sensual **massage with warm oil**.

If you have **aromatherapy oils** you could make yourself a special mixture and give yourself a massage with;

About massaging with oil: In Sanskrit the word for oil is the same as for 'nurture'. You could experiment with different oil- warm coconut oil, sesame oil, olive oil.

Abhyanga in Ayurveda means massaging with oil ; in Ayurvedic practice the whole body is massaged.

Play with IMAGINATION, VISUAL STIMULI and FANTASY:



* To imagine something can create the same or similar effects in the body than doing it 'for real'. One example is when athletes are unable to exercise after an injury, they still 'exercise' mentally. This has proven to create a similar effect than actual physical exercise. So to imagine touch, can be felt as real touch and be nourishing .

*Imagine being held by someone or stroked;

*Imagine a touch on your shoulder, on your back;

* You could act out a memory of when you have been with someone such as a hug with a friend, a family member; or an erotic/sexual encounter;

*You might imagine a friend, massage therapist or lover is giving you the massage...while you touch or massage yourself.

- * Play with the idea of being your own lover- stroke yourself like you would like to be touched by a lover;
- * Watch a soothing, sensual or erotic film and touch yourself while you are watching;
- * You can use objects to touch yourself with, smooth, sensual, hard etc.
- * Read some erotica and touch yourself while reading;

Touch exercise with a partner via zoom/skype:

- * Both hug themselves- while hugging oneself, imagine hugging the other;
- * Breathing together, synchronising breath;
- * Eye-gazing together;
- * One suggests where to touch and then both touch at the same area. Then swap and the other suggest;
- * While both touch the same place, you could imagine that your hands turn into the other's hands;
- * One expresses in words where they would like to be touched; if the other agrees, one touches in the way they like to be touched and imagine's the other touch. The 'giver' could have their hand(s) face the screen and touch the contours of the other, or touch themselves. 'Would you please touch my right cheek with your palm?' 'Yes, I would like to'.

Then the one receiving is imagining that they are touched by the other while touching themselves.

* Massage yourself while connecting with someone online:
when we see someone massaging themselves it has an impact on us, as mirror neurons fire. Like when we observe someone yawning, we yawn too.

And then there is the whole area of SELF- PLEASURE/ MASTURBATION - touch for pleasure and arousal

You might not want to move into the area of self-pleasure but if you do, you can use many of the above ideas and take them further into self-pleasure.

You might move from sensual touch to more arousing touch and consciously include any areas that are pleasurable, including genitals and erogenous zones.

Add in more breath, movement, (pelvis particularly, but movement in general), sound, fantasy, experiment with different quality of touch, all of this moves and builds erotic and sexual energy.

ENJOY! I hope you have found this helpful!



painting by Jana Brike

'I only want to be touched by people who can touch me with the same glory as I touch myself'. Vanessa Rochelle Lewis on Explore More Summit

If you would like a guided self-touch session with me, please get in touch: evaweaver@talk21.com and check out my website: www.backtosex.com

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