

Recognizing and Relating with Trauma to Support Healthy, Creative Use of FV

PART 1 (Sunday 11am - 4:30pm)

PREFACE

1. **We're recording:** for internal use only. If you say anything you don't want shared, let us know and we'll erase it.
2. **Notes:** some of this talk is dense. No need to take notes if you're ok with having my detailed notes.
3. **Introductions:** anybody new to anyone else?
4. **Reality and Ideas:** this talk is one way of mapping reality, but it's not reality. It's a map that I, and many others who work with trauma, find to accurately represent a lot of people's experience and to be very useful. But it's not even remotely close to being a perfectly accurate mapping of human experience. It's also not a complete map. A complete map isn't possible, and this one is just a few pages of the many thousands that could be written even now.
5. **Asking for your help:** I've been studying and working with trauma in groups for a lot of years, primarily with groups made up of therapists. You are a very different group. When we're finished, I'd like to hear your reflections on what was valuable, and what might have made this a more valuable and, if possible, more enjoyable experience for you. What might have linked your understanding, your experience, and your sense of practical tools more directly? (My intention is to expand this material into an advanced training week-long workshop for tremas, and then to create a model two-track class for schools' performing arts programs: one track for students and another for teachers on *Stress, Resiliency, & Creativity*.)

PURPOSE OF THIS SESSION

1. **Why I give this talk:** for personal and professional reasons, it's been very important for me to learn how to work with trauma. When I was in my late thirties, after years of being an artist, and trying to become enlightened, my approach shifted to recognizing that I had some deep challenges, as well as opportunities, that I needed to address. In that process, I've come to realize that some of the challenges that students face as performing artists, and as public speakers—challenges that in creative and professional circles are often addressed solely through the lens of skill acquisition and learning to open and connect more deeply—arise out of undigested

trauma. I'll talk more about what that means as the talk goes on. I feel happy and honored to share my learning so far with you. I'm not a master at this material. I would say I'm a truly solid beginner. Please check in as I speak, or as you read this, to notice when it does and doesn't resonate with your experience.

2. **Purpose of this talk:** to review key concepts related to trauma in order to help you teach Fitzmaurice Voicework responsibly and help you create better learning environments for highly sensitized students. This will also hopefully support all of your students in doing creative, connected work.
3. **What this talk isn't about:** this talk is not about healing trauma or about direct physiological vocal trauma.

CENTRAL IDEAS FOR THIS TALK

1. Trauma is a fact of life. We might as well develop as good a relationship with it as possible, and learn from it.
2. When it's digested, or as part of its digestion, trauma can become an inspiration for art and learning, and it can also lead to extraordinary variety through adaptations, including in the voice.
3. When students do deep work, it increases the chances that their own undigested trauma will be activated. Teachers aren't often taught to recognize this, and sometimes they work with students in ways that unintentionally compound trauma.
4. Undigested trauma can lead to huge suffering and/or huge absence of connection in art or life.
5. In this program, we're not training you to be trauma therapists. But with some basic understanding, you can take basic care with yourself and with your students, and that matters because it helps your students do great work in sustainable ways, while also reducing the chances you will unknowingly harm your students.
6. Learning to apply this basic care can be challenging. As teachers, when we open to, get curious about, and learn from our own challenges in our work and in the rest of life, these challenges can become our greatest strengths as teachers.
7. When possible, prioritizing self care and seeking quality support from others enables us to engage with our challenges more readily.

SELF-CARE AND SUPPORT

1. **Prepare ourselves to enter potentially challenging terrain:** the following steps aren't only relevant for such a topic as this; they're also relevant for many other circumstances, including creative exploration and teaching. (There are many other ways than what's below to prepare for a deep exploration, and to finish with an exploration).
2. **Notice internal comfort:** are you comfortable in this moment? If so, great; can you get even more comfortable; if not, can you find some comfort, or an experience that's better than heinous...? What are the physical sensations that you are experiencing in this moment that you associate with comfort...? (we start with this exercise to prime our ability to connect with something comfortable. That is important when entering potentially challenging territory).
3. **Exercise - Sandwich:**
 - a. This exercise is a modified version of what I learned from Steven Hoskinson while I was in the Somatic Experiencing Practitioner Training with him. (We also did this exercise during the presence work in week one.)
 - i. Let your eyes look around and see something they like to see... What details do you see...?
 - ii. Notice if you feel comfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that comfort... Explore allowing yourself to breathe with your noticing... Your experience may not rise to the level of comfort, and that's ok; perhaps you get to better-than-heinous.
 - iii. Notice if you feel discomfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that discomfort. You don't need to get rid of the comfort. Explore allowing yourself to breathe. (this part of the exercise is contra-indicated for students who experience their internal experience as something like a war zone).
 - iv. Notice if you feel comfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that comfort. Explore allowing yourself to breathe.
 - v. Let your eyes look around again and see something they like to see.
 - b. Reflection on the structure of the exercise: the discomfort is sandwiched between two comforts *and* two orientations to the present via awareness of the environment. This can be an excellent exercise to practice often to support the process of gradually opening to a wide range of human experience (such as can happen in voice classes, performance training, and life...) in a self-regulating way.
 - c. It's also a valuable exercise in which to discern your own liking. (this step often gets skipped or erased in the process of growing up, and it's so relevant for performers, and others.)
4. **Brief frequent eye contact** in a spirit of mutual support. (this is to help us in experiencing directly a felt sense of mutual support, via Ray Castellino)

5. **Questions:** As I'm talking, if you have questions to clarify something I'm talking about, please ask. At the end, we'll have time for discussion and questions about any areas that you'd like to address.
6. **During this talk, listen to what you need for self care and support from others:**
 - a. For example, in this moment would contact with others, or having some space, feel better to you? Take the time to feel into this (take the time now to inconveniently move to the left or right side of room to follow your listening about what you want).
 - b. As the talk happens, keep listening for and following your own impulses for comfort.
 - c. If you begin to feel saturated, listen to what you need. For example, *ask for a pause or take a break.* (the pause comes via Ray Castellino)
7. **Asking for and giving support:** get a partner and choose who wants to be in the support role first (partner A).
 - a. Partner B, take a moment to notice if there is any support you would like from A (it can range from "I'd like some space" to "I'd like some touch" to "I'd like you to listen to me" to "I'd like you to take a walk with me"... etc.)
 - b. Partner A, after receiving the ask, listen inside and notice what you are willing to give that also feels supportive to you (respond with *yes*, or *no & yes*).
 - i. *No & Yes* means that the exact request doesn't feel good inside (that's the *No*), but there is a way to try to meet B's needs that does feel good inside (the *Yes*).
 - ii. This is an important listening for a teacher with students, so teachers don't abandon themselves even as they offer support to students.
 - iii. (Here I shared a silly story about someone asking for support in a way that a teacher may not want to give. The point is, you have options when it comes to giving support.)
 - c. B, if you've been offered a yes, does the offer work you? If so, A gives 5 minutes of support. If not, can the two of you come to something else that feels mutually supportive? If not, that's still a great version of the exercise.
 - a. It's not necessary to reach a yes. At its root, this is a boundary exercise. Again, when no is not an option, it's extremely hard to give a whole-hearted yes.
 - d. Switch
 - e. It's an important skill to recognize the desire for support and to learn to ask for support; and to learn what kinds of support feel good to give in the moment. If this is challenging for you, or interesting for you, you're not alone.

A CHALLENGE & AN OPPORTUNITY

1. **Some students have very challenging reactions to FV & other kinds of deep work:**

- a. Some students have very challenging psycho-physical reactions to this and other kinds of deep work that engage involuntary parts of the nervous system.
 - b. A student's challenge may also be challenging for other students and for you.
2. **Challenges are an opportunity for learning:** Sometimes the opportunity for learning happens within the familiar scope of Fitzmaurice Voicework. Sometimes the learning needs to happen in different ways.
- a. The challenges you have, if you face them in helpful ways, can transform into your biggest personal and creative strengths.
 - b. *They can also become your biggest strengths as a teacher.*
3. **Three examples of students experiencing significant challenges in my voice classes:** Over the years, many students have experienced big challenges in my classes. Here are three representative (though not the most extreme) examples:
- a. A student had a significant panic attack as he began to open to the intensity of his felt experience in a way that he hadn't done before.
 - b. A student, who hadn't told me he was a veteran, went into a painful flashback.
 - c. A student lost all affect and became spacey every time she worked on monologues in class.
 - d. How I related with these students was based in the nuances of each situation.
 - e. In the first two cases, the outcomes were good (meaning at the least that no apparent harm was done): from the students' perspectives who experienced the challenges, from the group's perspective, and from mine.
 - f. In the third case, at the time I was teaching her, I had no idea that she was going into freeze (which we'll talk about later). In this particular situation, while there didn't seem to be any apparent harm, I also failed to help her artistically in any way because I misunderstood what was happening.
 - g. Two of the students sought and found excellent outside help.
 - h. While it isn't our job to heal our students' trauma, how we relate with our students really matters. The way I related with the first two students helped them digest the difficult experience in the moment so that their difficulties didn't get compounded. If you don't have any sense of what you're working with, it's possible to compound already difficult situations.
 - i. Learning some basic information about trauma and the nervous system isn't a panacea, but it can make a real difference.
4. **As an FV teacher, you can learn to exercise basic care.**
- a. At the same time, the Fitzmaurice certification program does not train you to be an expert in addressing some of the challenges you might face teaching this and other deep work, and in working with people in general.
 - b. I'll address referrals to other professionals at the end of the session.

CORE INFORMATION

1. **The nervous system:** The nervous system receives and interprets stimuli, and based on those interpretations, manages our internal functions as well as our behavior (such as movement of the body, including speech). It consists of two main parts: the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system:
 - a. The central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) is responsible for all manner of basic and higher level functioning.
 - b. The peripheral nervous system includes the autonomic and somatic nervous systems:
 - i. The somatic nervous system's primary function is to regulate skeletal muscles. In other words, it regulates movement.
 - ii. The autonomic nervous system regulates involuntary activity. This is the part of the nervous system that we'll focus on because it's where the biggest challenges and opportunities are related to trauma and deep work.

2. **The autonomic nervous system:** regulates *involuntary* impulses/activity.
 - a. Traditionally, it is divided into two primary parts.
 - i. The parasympathetic nervous system regulates various calming, digesting, and recuperating responses. Think of it as a break pedal.
 - ii. The sympathetic nervous system regulates various excitation responses and prepares us to be mobile. Think of it as the gas pedal.
 - iii. But there is another aspect of the autonomic nervous system, argued for convincingly by Stephen Porges, known as the social engagement system (ventral vagal): it regulates involuntary impulses related to social engagement. (hint: this is significant for performers and for voice teachers!)
 - b. *When there's no perceived threat*, these different parts of our autonomic nervous system regulate our involuntary responses:
 - i. The social engagement system regulates involuntary aspects of social engagement related to the face, voice, and heart.
 - ii. The sympathetic nervous system regulates involuntary excitation impulses related to alertness, and normal challenges and activity.
 - iii. The parasympathetic nervous system regulates involuntary calming impulses related to resting and recuperating, calming the heart and breathing, and digestion.
 - c. *When there's a perceived threat*, these parts of the autonomic nervous system shift functions, and they respond to the threat in an hierarchical order (from newest to oldest in evolutionary development). If the first level of threat response doesn't work, the next kicks in. If that doesn't work, the last one kicks in:
 - i. The social engagement system regulates activity related to emergency communication and cooperation. If that isn't going to work, then:
 - ii. The sympathetic nervous system regulates involuntary excitatory impulses that mobilize us for fight or flight. If that isn't going to work, then:
 - iii. The parasympathetic nervous system regulates involuntary down-regulating impulses related to the freeze response.
 - d. These responses inhibit each other (but at times, because we are many-faceted human beings rich with significant imprints of personal and cultural history, these responses can also co-exist in complex ways).

3. Fight, flight, freeze.

- a. Fight, flight, and freeze: threat responses.
 - i. When we experience a threat that we can't handle with a combination of our voluntary and involuntary impulses toward cooperative social engagement, our sympathetic nervous system mobilizes us through the fight or flight response to deal with the threat.
 1. This includes increased heart rate and blood pressure (which help *mobilize* us), increased respiration, and increased muscle tone (or tension), and inhibition of social engagement reflexes.
 - ii. If fight or flight fails, our parasympathetic nervous system takes us into a freeze response.
 1. This *immobilization* response includes decreased heart rate and blood pressure, decreased respiration, decreased muscle tone, and inhibition of all unnecessary functions (including speech, the ability to feel, and the ability to connect with others). That means that there are nerve connections that are shut down. These include the gut, the larynx, and the face (*voice teachers, this is a huge opportunity for curiosity!*)
 2. Freeze is associated with higher levels of stimulation than fight or flight. We have to go beyond fight or flight levels of stimulation to reach freeze, which in turn inhibits receptors of that intensity.
 3. Some of the challenges that performers face are often dealt with by performance teachers through the lens of creativity, relaxation, and skill acquisition, but are related to dysregulated threat responses.
 4. **These challenges that teachers face can seem paradoxical.** For example:
 1. A teacher helps the student relax, and then after a while the student seems to get more stimulated. (meaning that as the student relaxes, the student moves from freeze into fight or flight).
 2. A teacher encourages more stimulation in a student, and the student then seems to go blank. (meaning the student bumps from fight or flight into freeze).
 5. I'll go over all of this in more detail later when we cover signs of trauma.
- b. These are completely normal human responses to various kinds of perceived threats.

4. Trauma, one definition: trauma is the overwhelming of the nervous system (often accompanied by fear, pain, helplessness, or blankness) as our capacity to maintain boundaries fails.

- a. Everyone has experienced some degree of trauma. It's a part of being human.
 - i. This is one of the reasons it's important for teachers to learn to develop clear boundaries. It helps reduce the opportunities for misattunement with students (we misattune all the time, so this only refers to a reduction not an elimination of misattunement).
- b. Traumatic experiences can happen in a specific moment, and they can occur over time.

- c. Sometimes people are able to digest these traumatic experiences, with or without help. Their nervous systems return to being well regulated.
- d. Sometimes people are not able to digest these experiences so readily:
 - i. This may leave their nervous systems constantly dysregulated, or this may leave their nervous systems dysregulated only in certain contexts, triggered by specific kinds or combinations of stimuli.
 - ii. Often dysregulation is so normalized, that it becomes invisible to the person whose nervous system is dysregulated.
 - iii. We'll look at what this dysregulation can look like in a little bit.

Break

5. **Partner discussion:** anything that you are curious about, liked, or disliked so far? Take notes if you want to flag something to bring up later. (10 mins).
6. **Characteristics of a well-regulated nervous system:**
 - a. Ability to experience a sense of internal safety. (this is not the same thing as an absence of discomfort).
 - b. Ability to experience a range of feelings.
 - c. Ability to feel an oscillation between comfortable and uncomfortable feelings.
 - d. Ability to experience a range of intensity of stimulation, having access to the whole range (not just high intensity or flatness).
 - e. Ability to orient to the outside world through the senses, to be able to experience the possibility of safety in the environment, and to be able to experience various aspects of social engagement.
 - f. Ability for the involuntary breathing to adapt to inner and outer circumstances.
 - g. Ability to voice in an integrated way (this you'll be exploring for years, so no definition is offered here).
 - h. Ability to contain or act on impulses.
 - i. Ability to recognize potential threats and respond appropriately.
 - j. How do people learn to develop this kind of self-regulation? Through co-regulation with others.
 - k. Take a moment to reinforce brief, frequent eye contact. This supports self-regulation, and supports a sense of group-regulation (the social nervous system).
7. **Privacy and hiding:** it's worth recognizing that even as we see each other, and experience whatever connection we may feel, we also have privacy.
 - a. This is important for teaching, and it's important for performers.
 - b. There is all kinds of stuff going on in each of us that is our own to experience—we can experience connection with others and still have privacy.
 - c. This is different from hiding (from ourselves or others).
8. **Characteristics of a dysregulated nervous system:**
 - a. In dysregulated nervous systems, there's a tendency to:
 - i. Get stuck in fight, flight, or freeze.
 - ii. Have these threat responses when they aren't so relevant.

- iii. Fail to have these responses when they are relevant
- iv. Have negative reactions to these responses themselves.
- b. In i, ii, and iv above, here are some typical patterns:
- c. A healthy oscillation between comfort and discomfort is rare. Instead, there's a hyper-focus on:
 - i. What's wrong or bad, what could go wrong, what could be fixed, or...
 - ii. What's good or what should be good.
 - iii. (This can show up in teaching (e.g., a hyper-focus on tension or what needs to be fixed, or on everything always being great))
- b. Associated with dysregulated Fight or Flight:
 - i. The primary internal experience is fear/anxiety, frustration/anger, pain, etc., or the urgent avoidance of these.
 - ii. Lack of ability to self-soothe.
 - iii. Lack of impulse control.
 - iv. Chronic muscle tension, including potentially of the throat, neck, tongue, jaw, etc.
 - v. Consistent Insomnia
- c. Associated with Freeze
 - i. The primary internal experience is blankness/numbness, confusion, spaciness, tiredness, helplessness, etc.
 - ii. A need for constant stimulation to self-soothe.
 - 1. Constant stimulation is a way of regulating the nervous system, to keep high enough levels of stimulation so that we go into a bit of freeze. That way, we don't have to experience the intensity of the stimulation.
 - 2. One way to understand screens (phones, computers, etc.) is that they can be a medium of self-regulation through powerful stimulation that helps keep some of us in freeze.
 - iii. Lack of richness, variety, and affect in voice and bodily/facial expressivity
 - iv. Extreme impulse control
 - v. Isolation (one way of thinking about the difference between isolation and taking space is that in the latter, we can experience it as nourishing. In the former, the best we may experience it is a lack of suffering).
 - vi. Disorientation
- VII. Disassociation
- d. Self-medication (often to inhibit or excite intensities of feeling)
- v. Consistent nightmares
- f. Illnesses of various kinds associated with stress, inflammation, etc.
- g. Involuntary threat responses themselves become threats.
- h. These are all adaptive behaviors that can have intrinsic value, are worth genuinely appreciating, even if they sometimes no longer have value in this moment in life.

LUNCH (1 hour - in this case from 2-3pm)

BASIC CONCEPTS FOR FV TEACHERS

1. The tremor is very cool.

- a. It is a healing response to perceived stress (or threat). By stress, I don't mean good or bad, I just mean stimulating.
- b. It's a *sympathetic* nervous system healing response: to make us warm when we are cold, to wake us up and release excess tension when we need to mobilize, etc.
- c. It's also a *parasympathetic* healing response: to down regulate the nervous system by releasing excess energy and relaxing muscle when we are overstimulated.
- d. It can excite our nervous system, and help it down-regulate, depending on the moment and depending on how it's approached.
- e. The tremor can come before, during, or after a stressful experience, depending on the need for homeostasis.
- f. If students are having a very challenging experience, and don't understand the tremor as it's happening, it can be perceived as a threat, and that can be unhelpful. For some students, threat responses and healing responses (like the tremor) are themselves perceived as a threat, and that's important to recongize.

2. Students can have many motivations for being artists and doing deep work, and more specifically, for gravitating to FV:

- a. Take a moment to consider your original inspiration for the arts, and for FV... Is it different now?
- b. In addition to developing their voice in a more traditional context, many students of Fitzmaurice voicework have a deep yearning to be in contact with their wholeness, aliveness, body and breathing, creativity, sense of play, sense of agency, desire to help others, etc. They may want to find their voice, to be seen or heard or felt, to experience collaboration, to experience intimacy, to experience healthy boundaries, to feel included, to feel accepted in their similarities and difference with others, to experience deep healing—etc.
- c. Sometimes these motivations are straightforward and sometimes they emerge from complex challenges (which may include undigested trauma).

3. Trauma and creative work: Many gifted artists have experienced significant trauma.

- a. Trauma needn't prevent great work. In fact, it can enable or enhance great art in so many ways. Trauma is often the impetus for extraordinary creativity.
- b. At the same time, undigested or ignored trauma can sometimes not only limit the quality of artists' work, it can also hinder their ability to work at all, to work safely, or to work in sustainable, healthy ways.
- c. In the arts, we sometimes celebrate the mythos of the constantly suffering artist. It's one thing to validate this as a reality, as an option, but it's another to make it aspirational. There are more life-affirming ways to live.

4. **As teachers, we have natural desires to be helpful. We also have limitations:** even though it may be difficult to face because of your desire to help, it's important to recognize the limitations you have in your role as a teacher.
 - a. You aren't a therapist or a healer (unless you have trained to be one). Your work may be therapeutic or healing, but this is not the explicit goal.
 - b. Generally, as a voice teacher, your explicit goal is to provide healthy, enjoyable contexts in which you support people in finding, developing, and using their voices in ways that are relevant for them.
 - c. Each of you may do different kinds of work, so it's important to know your specific *Scope of Practice* (i.e., what the specific field you are in does and doesn't address).
 - d. It's also important to clarify your specific *Scope of Expertise* (i.e., what you are competent to offer your students/clients within, and sometimes beyond, your scope of practice because of the training you have).
 - e. Given your experience and capabilities, and the contexts in which you work, it's natural that you will be able to help some students, and some students may need different (or additional) help from what you can offer them.

5. **Develop curiosity about what helping your students means:** As a teacher, your job is to help or support rather than to harm your students.
 - a. Early in my work with a therapist, I told him about how I had just deeply helped a student. He asked me a simple and profound question: how did I know...?
 - b. Even when this seems obvious, it's important to cultivate our curiosity *for a lifetime* about what helping or supporting really means.
 - c. There are many more unknowns than knowns in what's happening within your students at any moment and in their lives more generally. Knowing this hopefully engenders a sense of humility and curiosity about your role in supporting students and what could actually be supportive or unhelpful.

6. **Exercise - Sandwich** (see page 2)
 - a. This is a self-regulation exercise. We do it at the end of the work today as part of a practice to transition in a healthy way.

END OF PART 1

OPTIONAL EXERCISE:

1. **Exercise—Co-Enjoyment:** (from Somatic Experiencing)
 - a. Get a partner. Choose an A and a B.
 - b. A, *explore* enjoying yourself for a set amount of time (5 - 15 minutes). B witnesses, giving special attention to A's enjoyment (and keeps track of time).
 - c. This is a listening exercise for A and for B. We are often good at listening for what isn't enjoyable. This exerciser primes the attention to be curious about and recognize what is enjoyable. That's important for students and teachers.

- d. Follow your enjoyment so long as it doesn't impinge on anyone else's enjoyment or boundaries or subject you to any harm.
- e. Without talking about it, switch.
- f. Then talk about it.
- g. This exercise is part of the transition away from the specific intensity of the trauma work today.

PART 2 (11am - 5:30pm)

PREAMBLE

1. **I'd like your help.** Your real feedback is welcome. I am so happy to receive feedback, including problems. I've been touched that some of you have come to me, and I'm already changing the way I do things because what you've said has made me see or feel more clearly.
2. **How to introduce enough experiential material** around trauma to you so this doesn't feel only like theory (we're talking about the lives of real human beings), but also doesn't drag you down an unnecessarily difficult road?
3. **How to talk about trauma** in a way that helps you get curious about the real challenges associated with undigested trauma but doesn't further the tendency to hyper-focus on what's wrong?
4. **Notes:** No need to take notes if you're ok with having my detailed notes.
5. **Introductions:** anybody new to anyone else?
6. **Reality and Ideas:** this talk is one way of mapping reality, but it's not reality. It's a map that I, and many others who work with trauma, find to accurately represent a lot of people's experience and to be very useful. But it's not remotely close to a perfectly accurate map of human experience. It's also not a complete map. A complete map isn't possible, and this one is just a few pages of the many thousands that could be written now. So, if your experience doesn't fit the map I offer, take note of it, and together let's improve the map to include the rich diversity and similarity of experience...
7. **Same info, different context:** maybe half of the information will be review today. But it will appear in a different context. On some level, the presence work is trauma work. Let's see how that plays out.
8. **Why are we doing this in the cert when it can be frightening to see this material?** I remember when I got a new bike, an adult spent a bunch of time with me pointing out how cars were fast and potentially harmful, and taught me to get off the bike to cross the street. The point wasn't to make me scared to ride a bike. Or even frightened of cars. The point was to keep me and others safe by teaching me to take care. It would have been easier to avoid that talk about cars with me, but that would have been poor guidance.
9. **Exercise - Sandwich:**
 - a. (We also did this exercise during the presence work in week one.)

- i. Let your eyes look around and see something they like to see... What details do you see...?
- ii. Notice if you feel comfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that comfort... Explore allowing yourself to breathe with your noticing... Your experience may not rise to the level of comfort, and that's ok; perhaps you get to better-than-heinous.
- iii. Notice if you feel discomfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that discomfort. You don't need to get rid of the comfort. Explore allowing yourself to breathe. (this part of the exercise is contra-indicated for students who experience their internally felt experience as highly disturbing).
- iv. Notice if you feel comfort anywhere in your body and what physical sensations you associate with that comfort. Explore allowing yourself to breathe.
- v. Let your eyes look around again and see something they like to see.
- b. Reflection on the structure of the exercise: the discomfort is sandwiched between two comforts *and* two orientations to the present via awareness of the environment. This can be an excellent exercise to practice often to support the process of gradually opening to a wide range of human experience (such as can emerge in voice classes, performance training, and life...) in a self-regulating way.
- c. It's also a valuable exercise in which to discern your own liking. (this step often gets skipped or erased in the process of growing up, and it's so relevant for performers, and others.)

10. Brief frequent eye contact in a spirit of mutual support. (this is to help each of us experience a felt sense of mutual support. Does it do that for you?)

11. During this talk, listen to what you need for self care and support from others:

- a. In this moment would contact with others, or having some space, feel better to you? Take the time to feel into this (take the time now to inconveniently move to the left or right side of room to follow your listening about what you want).
- b. As the talk progresses, keep listening for and following your own impulses for comfort.
- c. If you begin to feel saturated, listen to what you need. For example, *ask for a pause or take a break.*

CHARGE

1. Charge often arises for students when they do deep or highly energetic work.

- 1. Any kind of creative work that activates involuntary parts of the nervous system can lead to charge.
- 2. Being witnessed by others—which is often central in performance training—is a big source of charge for many people. Outside of the arts, charge is everywhere. People often experience huge charge when public speaking, for instance.

3. Charge can be associated with the activation of the social engagement nervous system, if someone feels safe enough...
4. When we perceive a threat, our charge often gets associated with the activation of the sympathetic nervous system — fight or flight. Obvious threats get build charge. And we're also more likely to interpret ambiguity as a threat. Fight or flight in the moment, or over time, can have significant consequences for breathing, for the voice, for receptivity, for our attention...
5. In more extreme cases, that charge is associated with the activation of the parasympathetic threat response known as freeze. This tends to be associated with a sense of flatness, disconnection, depression, confusion, helplessness... This also has big consequences for the voice, receptivity, our attention...

SAFETY

1. **As teachers, part of our role is to develop a container for the classroom that supports a sense of safety for each member in the classroom.** You can't make your students feel anything. But, recognizing that each person is different, you can be curious about what might support them.
 1. People are allowed to feel what they feel; including not feeling safe. Shaming people into feeling safe, or assuming that if you feel safe others should, isn't a useful path.
 2. That said, safety is the context in which the social engagement system, and a whole bunch of things relevant to the voice, to being present, and to waking up presence begin to emerge more fully.
2. **It's also our role to offer opportunities for real exploration for each person in the class.**
 - a. "Safety" that avoids all discomfort and risk denies reality.
 - b. Learning happens when students can move between being inside and outside of their comfort zones.
 - c. Useful learning does not happen when someone feels fundamentally unsafe.
3. **Highly sensitized students in particular may have a hard time feeling safe in your class.** This can affect so much of their experience and the experience of others. So it's worth being curious about.
4. **Here are some possibilities to support a felt sense of safety in your classroom.** With all of these, there are exceptions. So think of these as, MAYBE:
 - a. Teach what's in front of you.
 - i. Having done whatever preparation you do before teaching, be open to letting it go to relate with what's actually happening in the moment as you teach.
 - ii. While this promotes safety, it goes beyond safety. It's fundamental to good, responsive teaching.
 - b. Don't attempt to force your students to do anything.

- i. It may seem like you're forcing them for their own good, but when you force students you're teaching a deeper, unhelpful lesson. You're teaching your students to be compliant, which is the opposite of supporting them in finding their own voice.
- ii. Forcing by its nature isn't receptive. Inspire rather than force or manipulate—find your ways to do this.
- iii. *Students giving themselves* permission to say *No* in your class supports them in having access to an essential part of their voice. The teacher does not give permission for students to say *No*; the teacher helps the students recognize that students can give themselves permission because it is their right, their birthright, to say *No*. This is a foundation for their being able to say a wholehearted *Yes*. Support both of these.
- iv. There is one basic exception to this rule on forcing: if your students are in imminent danger of harming themselves or others, do what you need to do.
- c. Respect the wanting, and not wanting of your students.
 - i. This may seem radical, but it's also practical.
 - ii. Your work in helping students with their voice may involve helping them be in touch with their wanting and the nuances of their wanting--not just as ideas or images but as integrated, felt experiences--and then supporting them in discerning which impulses are helpful to follow.
 - iii. How much of life, and of art involves the pursuit of wanting, or the recognition of wanting, or of the frustration of wanting, or the confusion of wanting...?
 - iv. When you ask students to do something, if they get in touch with their own wanting, their pursuing it can reinforce their sense of connection and agency.
 - v. If there's no wanting of any kind, respect that.
 - vi. If a student wants to do some work that doesn't feel right to you, you don't have to permit it in your classroom. If that happens, take time later to wonder about your reasons, and if appropriate address this (perhaps privately) with your student.
 - vii. While you can let mature students explore freely, don't require students to go further than you can digest yourself. If you recognize you're not able to be present, when possible do what you need to do to help yourself be more present instead of pushing on.
- d. Allow time. This is one of the keys to supporting students in listening to themselves.
 - i. When I ask students if they want to do something, many will say *yes* without even taking a moment to sense if that's true for them. They are used to saying *yes* to an authority — or to believing that good participation means doing everything offered by a teacher — and they don't listen to themselves.
 - ii. Obviously, students don't always need to pause before taking an action, but some students may need to take time for a while until their listening is alive.
 - iii. As you teach, taking time to listen, to yourself and to the environment, will also help you and your students.
 - iv. Just last month, I learned about the profound value of explicitly calling for a pause to settle my own nervous system, and the value of that tool for students. If this spoke to you (ha!), if you feel wanting, I encourage you to try

- it out and let me know what you discover (also give credit for this and other exercises the first time you offer them).
- e. In a context of mutual support, respect diversity and support inclusion.
 - i. Let's take a moment to recognize the contradiction in my saying this:
 - 1. No other voices are primary leaders of the sections that I have been leading.
 - 2. As an upper middle class, Ivy League educated, cisgender, straight, English speaking white man living in Los Angeles, in the United States, who is the son of the founder of the work we are all studying, I have access to a lot of resources, power, and other privilege.
 - 3. This is one example of a real problem of diversity and inclusion in the training.
 - ii. I want to learn how to do diversity and inclusion work in a real and helpful way, and if you want to offer it, I welcome your support, in a context of mutual support. You have no responsibility to help me. If it feels to you like your offering help could be mutually supportive, I welcome it.
 - iii. Remember, trauma work is boundary work. Boundaries imply differentiation as well as connection. My sense of this is so new, and still tenuous, but my sense is that trauma work and diversity and inclusion work share the possibility of differentiation and connection as fundamental access points.
 - iv. There's a section on diversity and inclusion coming up in a week. While a few Fitzmaurice teachers have been doing deep diversity work for a long time, as an organization, we're only getting started, and we have a lot to learn about how to support a sense of safety and agency in the classroom by respecting diversity and supporting inclusion.
 - f. Take care about diagnosing trauma/pathologizing someone
 - g. Take care about ignoring signs of trauma:
 - i. A student in an acting training program called me to set up a first appointment because he had some concerns. Before I met with him, he committed suicide.
 - ii. I don't mention this to be alarmist. It's important.
5. **Ask yourself, are your students digesting their experience:** As a FV teacher, or a teacher of other kinds of performance related work, at a fundamental level you are encouraging students to explore healthy and creative ways of opening to themselves and others, while also having healthy boundaries. That's a lot for some people to be with, especially people who've had a hard time dealing with their everyday internal and environmental experience, or a hard time maintaining boundaries. Stay curious:
- a. Are your students able to digest their experiences during class?
 - b. Are they able to continue to digest outside of class?
 - c. How do you know?
6. **What supports safety for you?** In partners, consider what supports safety *for you* in a classroom environment.

7. **What supports safety for you (part 2)?** In the group, eyes closed, popcorn style, offer condensed versions to the group of what supports safety *for you* as a student in a classroom environment. Let's listen to the variety that emerges.

PREP YOUR STUDENTS TO BE MORE ABLE TO BE WITH CHALLENGES IN HEALTHY AND CREATIVE WAYS *BEFORE* BIG CHALLENGES ARISE

1. **Support the regulation of your own nervous system:** we practiced this together in the first four days of the training program. See the notes from that period for more detail.
 - a. This supports you and your students working well with challenges and reducing the potential for harm.
 - b. If, for example, you want to ask your students to allow themselves to breathe, check in with your own breathing first.
2. **Learn to *be with* your students and to see them as fundamentally whole** without ignoring signs of the challenges they face.
 - a. The connection the teacher has with a student is primary.
 - b. Teachers who see students primarily in relation to what is wrong with them, or what needs to be fixed, are *seeing with a perspective that is similar to a perspective born out of trauma*.
 - c. Teachers who ignore all challenges students face, who feel everything needs to be good, are also *seeing through a perspective like one born out of trauma*.
 - d. Learn to give attention to the rich multiplicity in students rather than only giving attention to one part of them.
 - e. This reflection by the teacher helps the students see themselves more accurately.
3. **Learn to differentiate yourself from your students, and to support them in differentiating themselves from each other.**
 - a. Remind yourself that your experience isn't the same as others', and allow yourself to stay curious.
 - b. For example, one of my common failures as a teacher is to assume that because I feel appreciation for someone, or express appreciation to someone, they can feel my appreciation.
 - c. Notice what you are feeling in this moment. Now look around. Can you recognize that while you may share commonalities, the others in this space are not the same as you, perhaps in surprising ways?
4. **Support students in having healthy responses to basic human experiences:** Basic experiences such as connecting with themselves and the environment, connecting with others, recognizing and giving voice to desire, recognizing and giving voice to boundaries, and recognizing the reality of change—*before* students face big challenges in your class.

- a. When you give attention to something, it can heighten your awareness of it as well as others' awareness. For example, if you primarily give attention to what's wrong in a student, this will tend to heighten the student's experience of what's wrong. And vice versa. In other words, the way you direct your attention can support students.
- b. [Rather than just grabbing what's below randomly, use what's actually happening in the moment as much as possible]
- c. Help students learn to settle themselves by orientating to the outside world. This is a reflexive response people have *after* they experience something intensely difficult, to check out their surroundings and assess safety. Really seeing the outside world, that it is at least somewhat safe, suggests to the nervous system that things are okay enough to settle and give some awareness/openness to the outside world.
- d. Help students learn to ground themselves with the ground: help your students experience how the ground is literally supporting them.
 - i. Take care when asking sensitized students to ground deeply in the spine or in physical sensations because for some students that can be hyper-stimulating.
- e. Help students find comfort in comfortable movement.
- f. Help students learn to identify feeling comfortable and the physical sensations in their bodies that they associate with feeling comfortable/feeling good.
 - i. Many people experience comfort only as the absence of discomfort. It's extremely useful to be able to identify comfort in the body (if it's done in a way that isn't forced or shaming). Absence of discomfort isn't the same as discomfort.
 - ii. Many performers equate intense suffering with good performing. It's useful to help students experience how comfort, enjoyment, pleasure, ease, etc., are also experiences that have creative value. Begin to include them in the repertoire of your teaching by giving these feelings attention and value without shaming people who don't feel them. Note: this is very different from trying to *make* people feel something.
 - iii. Don't ask students to give attention to their internal experience if they can't yet do so without a lot of distress. Instead, offer them something else. If a moment spontaneously arises when they are aware of how good they feel, that may be a good moment to encourage them lightly to feel inside.
- g. Help students learn to identify signs of release and nervous system deactivation that are associated with a *surprise breath*: a peak in simulation followed by deeper deactivation.
 - i. *Surprise breath*: spontaneous (usually large) inhale followed by a spontaneous, easy, full exhale.
 - ii. Muscles softening
 - iii. Heat
 - iv. Sweat
 - v. Flush
 - vi. Spontaneous tremor: when a spontaneous tremor happens it can be highly deactivating to the nervous system, if a student appreciates that possibility. If

- a student doesn't understand that, and is afraid of it, spontaneous tremors can feed a loop of fear that can be more activating.
- vii. Note: trying to calm the nervous system by suppressing the next peak of stimulation—which is what many chronically anxious people do—can keep the nervous system highly activated. In order for the nervous system to deactivate, it first needs to hit specific levels of activation (think of the notches in a bamboo stalk, each of which has a slide attached that can potentially go down many notches. The only way to get on the slide going down is first to go up a notch). There are many levels of stimulation at which deactivation can happen. Not just one level (e.g., not just huge intensity and then catharsis).
 - h. Help students recognize lightly comfortable and uncomfortable experiences they feel, and help them learn that they can allow themselves to be and to breathe with these experiences (without hyper-focusing or holding onto them).
 - i. Help students learn to *titrate* their experience: see week 1 notes.
 - i. Help students learn to be with gradients of stimulation, and help students learn to release/deactivate at progressively higher levels of stimulation.
 - j. Help students create their own rituals to enter and exit creative exploration. This kind of structure can make it easier to allow oneself to be, to enter wholeheartedly, and to let go of the exploration when it's done.
 - k. Support students in being curious about and interested in their own self care (see end of this talk for examples).
 - l. Help students connect their inner experience to text or song: help students experience how their various in-the-moment sensations and emotions can help them connect to pieces they are working on and deepen their relationship to their pieces, in ways that support the specificity of the piece they are working on.
 - m. Help students experience the support of unforced play.
 - n. Help students learn to ask for and receive support from others (when they want it).
 - o. Helps students experience a sense of group connection with mutual support. E.g., through brief, frequent eye contact.

5. What else might be helpful?

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE TRAUMA ACTIVATION / WHAT TO BE AWARE OF

1. What follows are examples of fight, flight, & freeze that may be dysregulated:
2. **Hyper stimulation or flatness, disorientation, disassociation.**
 - a. What's happening with your student's breath, eyes, body, speech, etc.?
 - i. Breath: extremely fast or extremely labored involuntary breathing or various forms of extreme control that don't seem relevant to the moment or don't change when the circumstances change.
 - ii. Tetany / hyperventilation: indicates a lack of sync between breathing and physiological need.

- iii. Eyes: not being able to see the outside world; eyes flipping up into the back of the head (even with eyes closed); blankness or lack of focus; focusing on something that's not there (and not related to good use of the imagination).
- iv. Body: active rigidity and/or flaccidness of the body (and sometimes personality). Intense fear of tremor/holding back of tremor.
- v. Speech: losing the ability to speak or to speak coherently or fluidly.

3. Emotion

- a. Lack of any emotion (numbness, or blankness); or extreme emotion that is taking someone toward going out of control. I will come back to the crucial difference between going out of control and letting go of control in just a moment.
- b. Repetitive affective states while doing the work (always crying, angry, etc.)
- c. Extreme shame that may not be congruent with the apparent present.

4. **Panic, rage** (these are much higher intensity experiences than everyday anxiety or fear, or frustration or anger). Sometimes they're related to something that's present for someone. Sometimes they seem to come out of nowhere.

5. **Losing a sense of witness** such that someone has a hard time being aware of their own experience or being in control of their own actions.

- a. Being out of control is not the same thing as letting go of control.
- b. You never have the goal that your students will go out of control. If they go out of control, it's your responsibility to help them or get them help.

6. **These experiences can be extremely challenging at times. They are also normal human experiences that can have intrinsic value.**

- a. Being able to disassociate, for example, can be enormously healthy. Daydreaming is also part of the creative process.
- b. Sir Ken Robinson tells a great story about a girl who couldn't stop fidgeting and was being evaluated to determine what her problem was: she turned out to be a dancer. (see [youtube video](#): story starts at 14:45).
- c. In one of his books, Irvin Yalom (a therapist) talks about diagnosis: It should be interesting to therapists that it's easier to diagnose patients on their 1st visit than on their 10th visit; because over time therapists get to know the richness and nuances of their patients' lives.

4. **Partners:** In your own history of training, is there anything you've witnessed in someone else that you want to share (keeping that person completely anonymous)?

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO THESE CHALLENGES

When big challenges arise for students, there is often an opportunity to channel that energy into creative work or otherwise support students in having a new experience that they feel good about. Here are some basic examples:

1. **Find a bridge to text/song from their in-the-moment experience:**
 - a. Helps the student perceive their heightened experience as positive/creative/meaningful.
 - b. Helps release excess energy.
 - c. Empowers them: sometimes working with people using text/song can not only help them feel better in the moment but can also be truly empowering.
 - d. Sometimes a specific text/song can make a huge difference (for example, a piece which encourages healthy aggression or boundary setting).

2. **Experience sound powered from the belly**, with an open mouth, connecting to the outside: also known as *structuring*.
 - a. This can invoke the social engagement part of the autonomic nervous system, or
 - b. The sympathetic nervous system
 - c. Both of which inhibit the parasympathetic freeze response.
 - d. For this reason, structuring can feel surprisingly emotional to some students.
 - e. When students don't like their experience while structuring, this could be many things. One of them is dissociated feeling: e.g., "I don't feel anything and I'm so frustrated about that."

3. **Help your student express their experience**, and share the experience in ways that feel good. This can help them be in the moment. It is fundamentally different from talking about *why* the experience is happening, or about the student's history that made this experience happen, or holding onto a specific painful aspect of the experience. Examples include:
 - a. Express vocally
 - b. Share verbally
 - c. Move physically
 - d. Write from the gut

4. **Catharsis**: it's generally unhelpful to encourage a pattern of repeated catharsis. Catharsis addiction is a real thing: in order to feel the pleasure of release, someone learns that they first must have incredibly intense, often painful experience. It's of course fine if catharsis happens, but it's unhelpful to encourage it as a pattern.

5. **Notice what else there is to experience** in addition to what they are focusing on.
 - a. Ask your students what else can they notice in the moment?
 - b. All experiences have multiple facets.
 - c. Some facets can be much more empowering for your students to give attention to than others.

6. **Find out from your student if there's any specific desire s/he has.**

7. **What else might be helpful?**

BEING WITH STUDENTS IN THE MIDST OF BIG CHALLENGES / CRISIS

In some circumstances, if a student's nervous system is becoming more and more dysregulated, and the student becomes concerned (or you do), it may be important to shift from creative exploration to supporting the student in regulating their nervous system. Not everything I mention below will be helpful to every student. So, MAYBE:

1. **Doing more destructuring in those moments, or going after more intensity, usually isn't helpful.**
 - a. If your student is in the midst of extremely high nervous system activation, and they're having a really hard time with it, doing further destructuring in that moment (which might be more stimulating), or other really high intensity work, usually isn't helpful.
 - b. In strongly dysregulated systems, doing more destructuring often doesn't lead to resolution; it leads to further dysregulation.
2. **Help students feel settled with your settled, caring attention.**
 - a. As teachers, learn to let your own feelings be and change, while also slightly leaning towards what is comfortable in your own experience. This helps settle your nervous system, which in turn helps settle a student's nervous system. This isn't the same thing as "trying to be calm" which can have the opposite effect.
 - b. Be present with your students as they experience feelings, and allow yourself to breathe. This may be a lifetime's learning, but if your student can sense that in truth you are not overwhelmed by their challenges, or distancing yourself from them, this in itself can be very helpful.
 - c. Stay with them until they feel settled.
3. **Learn to perceive your students' protective/supportive impulses, like hiding and disassociation, for what they are:**
 - a. There is nothing wrong with your students wanting to protect/support themselves. It's natural. Rather than viewing this negatively, learn to appreciate this.
4. **Help settle students by orienting them to the outside world, and engage them in genuine conversation.** Do this as soon as possible, and do it at the end of your interaction as well. Make sure the student is able to orient to the outside world before you leave.
5. **Help students ground with the support of the ground.**
6. **Help students ground by guiding them to easily slow down their breathing** (if they are hyperventilating or over-breathing).
7. **Help students ground students in comfortable movement.**
8. **Help students settle with touch:** to be present with them, being mindful of whether the touch seems useful and how the touch is being received.

- a. Various kinds of touch can be useful, and you've already begun to explore some of them in this program. For example, the feet, the kidneys, butt points, a hand on the sacrum and back of the heart, back to back, a hug, even spooning in some cases, etc.
 - b. Sometimes touch can be by the student, sometimes by other students, sometimes by you. Who does the touching often really matters.
 - c. Often gender really matters.
 - d. Sometimes touch is entirely unhelpful or some kinds of touch are unhelpful.
9. **Help students settle by helping them recognize a moment in which their nervous system deactivates**, as it is happening, e.g., the surprise breath, heat, etc.
10. **Help students settle by giving attention to their feeling of betterness/goodness**, if it arises naturally in the moment, no matter how small.
- a. Students noticing even for a moment that they feel better can be extremely deactivating.
 - b. If a student is in the midst of experiencing a very difficult challenge, and there is even a moment's respite or a moment of feeling a little better, follow that with your attention and help them notice and pay attention to it as well, and if possible help them notice the sensations that they associate with feeling a little better.
 - c. Sometimes a moment of humor spontaneously arises. Follow it without forcing it.
11. **Help students settle in the *oscillation* of comfortable/uncomfortable** experiences that spontaneously begins to emerge as they start to feel better.
12. **Give other kinds of support:** e.g., food to help with blood sugar. Water to help with hydration. Adjusting the environment to make it more soothing or protective. Using blankets to help with cold...
13. **Ask for support from others as you need it.** This will help you feel nourished even as you give support, and it can make your support more trustworthy.

SELF CARE AND RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

1. **Engaging in self care, and asking for support when you want it, makes you a better teacher:** this may seem personal, and it is. It is also entirely relevant for teaching.
- a. Regardless of the context in which you teach, your modeling being alive and present in healthy ways is probably your most powerful teaching to students.
 - b. You will teach with greater confidence and integrity when you are taking care of yourself, and when you know from your direct experience that practicing FV is a helpful and healthy part of your self care and development.

- c. Teacher burnout is real, prevalent, and destructive to teachers and to students. Just because other teachers are burned out, barely present, or stressed out, doesn't mean you need to join them in that experience.
- d. What kinds of support are you able to ask for and receive? I am just now really learning that this is a big part of self care.

2. **Develop self care, and your capacity to receive support, in ways that really work for you**, to help you feel alive and able to relate with others in sustainable ways.

- a. Find ways that work for you to nurture and develop key aspects of your humanity:
 - i. Cultivate your own voice and capacity to communicate in different situations.
 - ii. Cultivate your presence, and learn to take care of your own nervous system.
 - iii. Cultivate your capacity to be open and to have boundaries.
 - iv. Cultivate your connection with your body: movement, exercise, etc. What works for you?
 - v. Cultivate your creativity and your capacity for play and enjoyment.
 - vi. Cultivate meaningful and enjoyable relationships. Cultivate community.
 - vii. Cultivate opportunities for work that you feel passionate about, that you enjoy, that also support you.
 - viii. Cultivate your capacity to give in ways that don't hurt or diminish you, and that feel nourishing to you.
- b. Delve into what supports you:
 - i. People: who can you go to for support, for help in being present, communicating effectively, making connections, thriving...
 - ii. Breaks and active pauses: give yourself the space you need to regulate your own nervous system and help you be receptive and engaged when you need to be.
 - iii. Exercise: what works for you?
 - iv. Sleep: what works for you?
 - v. Computer, TV, and phone: what relationship with screens works for you?
 - vi. Food and drink: what works for you?
 - vii. Nature: what works for you?
 - viii. Creativity: what works for you?
 - ix. Learning: what kinds of exploration in various fields help you grow and feel engaged?
 - x. When relevant, find out who you can go for help to address challenges you're having, to help you be present, to help you communicate effectively, and to help you thrive.
 - xi. What else supports you?

3. **Partner Conversation:** what supports your self care and receiving support from others?

REFERRALS / RESOURCES

1. **When students can use more help:** If you reach your limits in being helpful to a student, it may be helpful to refer the student to therapy or other counseling, ENT's, other teachers, bodyworkers, etc. Referring a student to someone else doesn't mean you have given up on them—precisely the opposite.
2. **Who to refer to?** As much as possible, figure this out in advance. Finding truly gifted people to help your students isn't always easy, and your students deserve truly gifted helpers.
 - a. In some institutions in which FV teachers work, there are very specific rules for this. Familiarize yourself with the rules, and learn to work with them skillfully.
 - b. A rule of thumb for referrals: if you were in need, would you feel good about going to this person? If not, don't refer your students to that person.
 - c. A brief thought on medication: the right medication at the right time can be profoundly helpful. Medicating students automatically when they're having any sort of challenges is unethical and sometimes harmful.

SOURCES FOR THIS SESSION

1. **This session is rooted in my experience and exploration.** In addition to FV, my main sources include my own work with creative, meditation, and movement practices, individual and group therapy, various kinds of training in trauma work, and learning from students, friends, and colleagues. Any errors, omissions, or other problems in this talk are my own (and I'd love to hear about them!!)
2. **My key sources for this talk**, in addition to Catherine and the tremors, include:
 - a. My training in Peter Levine's [Somatic Experiencing](#) with my teacher [Steven Hoskinson](#), and individual therapy, and recognizing how they have supported my teaching of FV.
 - b. The nervous system model is drawn from Stephen Porges' work on [Polyvagal Theory](#), and John Chitty's description of the "[triune](#)" autonomic nervous system.
 - c. The brief, frequent eye contact and the pause come from [Ray Castellino](#).
3. **Training Opportunities to work with trauma** (professionally and personally):
 - a. SE
 - b. Organic Intelligence
 - c. Arianne Giarretto for Sexuality and Sexuality trauma.
 - d. Ray Castellino (for pre and perinatal, developmental, and early childhood trauma).
4. **Books to start with to delve deeper into the mechanics of working with trauma:**
 1. *In An Unspoken Voice*: Peter Levine, founder of Somatic Experiencing
 2. *A Pocket Guide to Polyvagal Theory*: Stephen Porges

DISCUSSION

1. What do you want to talk about?
2. Are their performers/students you've encountered that you want to talk about (keeping anonymity)?

CODA

1. What self care or support from someone else would you like right now?