**STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES (Shapiro, 2001)**

**A. LIGHT STREAM TECHNIQUE**

1. Concentrate on upsetting body sensations.

2. If it had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, what would it be? (shape, size, color, temperature, texture, sound)

What is your favorite color you associate with healing? Imagine that [your] favorite colored light is coming in through the top of your head and directing itself at the shape in your body. Let's pretend that the source of this light is the [cosmos], so the more you use, the more you have available. The light directs itself at the shape and resonates, vibrates in, and around it. And as it does, what happens to the shape, size, or color? Repeat until the shape is completely gone. This usually correlates with the disappearance of the upsetting feeling. After it feels better, bring the light into every portion of your body.

**B. SPIRAL TECHNIQUE**

Bring up a disturbing memory and concentrate on the body sensations that accompany the disturbance. This is an imaginal exercise and there are no right or wrong responses.

“When you bring up the memory, how does it feel from 0-10?”

“Where do you feel it in your body?”

Concentrate on body sensations.

“Concentrate on the feeling in your body. Pretend the feelings are energy. If the sensation was going in a spiral, what direction would it be moving in, clockwise or counterclockwise?”

Instruction: Move the spiral in the opposite direction.

“Now with your mind, change direction and move the spiral in the opposite direction. Just notice what happens as it moves in the opposite direction.” (If the technique works, moving in the opposite direction will cause the feelings to dissipate and the disturbance to drop. If the spiral doesn’t change, doesn’t move, nothing happens, then choose another technique.)

**C. BREATHING SHIFT**

Bring up a good, happy, or positive memory. Try to use whatever affect is most useful. Notice where your breath is starting and put your hand over that location in your body. Now breathe a moment or two and notice how it feels. Now bring up a memory with a low level of disturbance and notice how your breath changes. Put your hand over that location in your body. Now change your hand to the previous location and deliberately change your breathing pattern accordingly. This should cause the disturbance to dissipate.

**D. DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING**

1. Take a deep breath and fill your lungs completely so you get the most out of breathing. You might scoot forward in your chair and place one hand over your abdomen and the other hand over your chest.

2. Start by exhaling and then breathe in all the way with your abdomen for a count of two and then breathe in all the way with your chest for a count of two. Hold that for a count of seven and then breathe out all the way with your abdomen for a count of four and breathe out with your chest for a count of four.

3. Repeat the sequence four times.

**Somatic Resources (Ogden, 2002)**

These resources are a way to begin developing a sense of presence and regulating arousal.

Hypo-arousal – lacking energy, depressed, lethargic, dull

Hyperarousal – anxious, jittery, amped up, buzzing

**Grounding**

Hypo and Hyperarousal

In a seated position, gently push both feet into the ground. Gradually begin to notice

how the body feels as this grounding takes place. Going up the body notice the seat on

the chair, back against the chair. Notice what changes in energy, attention, breath, etc.

**Alignment**

Hyperarousal and Hypo

For hypo-arousal: “Notice what happens as you bring your attention to your spine and

begin to lengthen it. What do you notice? You can continue bringing your attention from

the bottom to the top of your head, gradually noticing the alignment. Eventually, standing

to notice the complete alignment.”

For hyper: Begin by noticing the current state of the spine. Relaxing the spine may be

helpful first. Followed by lengthening. Following what feels best.

**Centering**

Hyperarousal

“Begin by placing one hand on your heart and one on your belly, notice what happens in the body as you drop your thoughts and focus on your hands. Observe the weight on your hands, temperature, sensations, change in breath, energy.” If this is too difficult, just placing one hand on heart and focus on heart beat and breath. Or just placing a hand where the most anxiety is present.

**Containment (Body Squeeze)**

Hyperarousal

Begin by feeling the top of your head with both hands and gently squeezing, saying “this is my body”. Continue going down the body, shoulders, arms, hips, legs, gently squeezing and saying “this is my body”.

**Orienting**

Hyperarousal or Hypo

When you find yourself dissociating (mind blank, not present, dazed, etc.) orienting can bring you back to dual awareness, back to the present moment. Slowly turn your head from side to side, leading up to 360 degree turning movements through the head, neck and spine. Notice what happens in your body as you do this.

Helpful for social anxiety (out in public): Notice 3 things around you that are red (or blue, or green). Notice 3 sounds around you. Notice (and touch) 3 things around you; notice their size and texture, etc.