



FELT SENSE

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Understanding Felt Sense

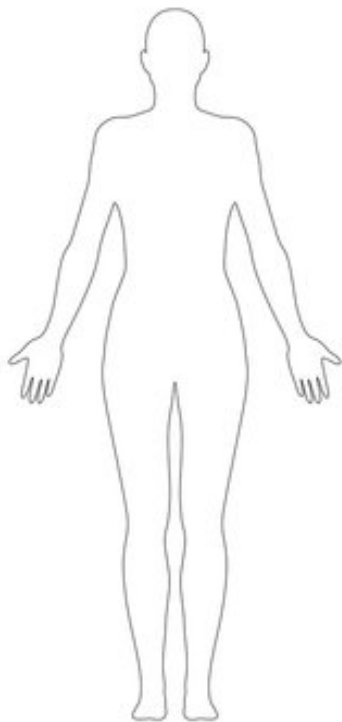
Felt sense work is a way of paying attention to the body's internal experience. Rather than focusing only on thoughts or explanations, felt sense invites curiosity about the subtle sensations, emotions, and movements happening inside the body. Many people can understand their experiences logically, yet still feel stuck. This often happens because healing requires both thinking (top-down processing) and sensing (bottom-up processing). Felt sense helps bridge that gap.

What Is a Felt Sense?

A felt sense is the body's internal knowing of a situation, memory, or emotion. It is often vague at first and becomes clearer when we slow down and pay attention. A felt sense may appear as pressure, temperature changes, movement, tension, emotional tone, or even images and metaphors.

Instead of forcing the body to change, felt sense work focuses on noticing, describing, and staying curious about the experience. When the body feels understood, sensations often shift naturally.

Where People Notice Felt Sense



Chest – tightness, pressure, warmth, openness

Throat – lump, constriction, pressure, holding

Stomach or gut – knots, dropping sensation, fluttering

Shoulders or neck – heaviness, tension, bracing

Jaw – clenching, pressure, holding back

Arms or hands – buzzing, tingling, energy, numbness

Back – weight, pressure, support or collapse

Language That Can Help Describe Felt Sense

Physical	Movement or Energy	Affect	Images	Meaning
Tight	Rising	Sad	Like a knot in my stomach	YOU
Light	Sinking	Ashamed	Like cement	GET
Heavy	Spreading	Angry	Name a colour	TO
Warm	Vibrating	joyful	Texture	DECIDE
Cool	Flowing	hopeful	Smell	THE
Tingly	Circling	Anxious	Weight on my chest	MEANING
Buzzing	Flowing	Calm	A wave moving through me	
Pressured	Stuck	Relieved	Pressure building	
Pulsing	Surging	Exacerbated	A wall or barrier	
Expanding/ Contracting	Draining	Curious	Stuck/ Frozen	
Sharp/ Blocked	Fluttering	Overwhelmed	Like electricity	
Dull	Pushing	Tender	A volcano	
Open	Holding	Defensive	A deflated balloon	
Closed		Protective	A balloon expanding	

· When I stay with it, I notice...?

How to Practice Felt Sense Awareness

- Slow down and take a moment to notice what is happening in your body.
- Bring gentle curiosity rather than trying to change the sensation.
- Name the sensation using simple descriptive words.
- Notice whether the words you choose resonate with the sensation.
- Stay with the experience long enough to see if it shifts, moves, stays the same or changes.
- If the sensation becomes overwhelming, gently shift attention to something grounding.

Why Felt Sense Matters

Many people are highly self-aware and can explain their patterns clearly. However, insight alone does not always create change. The nervous system stores experiences in the body, and those experiences often need to be felt, processed, and integrated physically as well as cognitively. Felt sense work helps people reconnect with their internal experience so that emotions, memories, and patterns can move and resolve more naturally.

This approach can help people feel more connected to themselves, more regulated in their nervous system, and more capable of responding to life with flexibility rather than automatic reactions.