

# Working With a Somatic Sex Educator

Adapted from the SSEA web page on ethics

## Somatic Sex Education

Somatic sex educators focus on helping you build capacity for somatic awareness and expanded pleasure through body-based exercises and experiences.

Designed to nurture, deepen or awaken your sensual self, experiences can include coaching in breath, movement, body awareness, boundary-setting, communication, anatomy, sensate focus, massage, erotic trance and other body-based teaching about sex. We strive to assist you in developing presence within your body, opening interior awareness, and learning how the body can feel more and more alive.

Somatic sex education is a wonderful way to address a range of sexual problems, from premature ejaculation to not being able to orgasm readily.

We all set personal limits on the quantity and quality of pleasure we allow ourselves, and live in a culture that shames sexuality, frowns upon pleasure, and fails to teach us how to honor and celebrate erotic energy. Sexual wounding becomes embedded in the body's tissues and responses.

Somatic sex education can help you expand the pleasure that is possible. This expansion has physical, emotional, mental and spiritual components.

"The soul feels unsafe in a frightened body. This bodywork breathes courage into the body, inviting it to feel pleasure within its own edges. This is a way of preparing the body to be a home for the soul again."

~~ Mehdi Darvish Yahya

## Client Checklist For Working With A Somatic Sex Educator

There are several factors that can have an impact on a person's ability to work effectively with a Somatic Sex Educator. This checklist doesn't claim to be all someone needs to consider when they are contemplating working with a Somatic Sex Educator. It is provided as a starting point.

Self-care after a session is as important as what happens during sessions with a Somatic Sex Educator. Some of the items in the following list offer guidance about what clients can do to integrate healing and wholeness.

**Do you have a support system?** It's important to have support for your journey in addition to your Somatic Sex Educator. Consider your inner and outer resources and the people and animals who are in your life. Who can you talk with about this work?

**Are you ready emotionally?** The process of discovering, identifying, releasing and healing from trauma, injury, disease, sexual abuse or neglect is powerful. It can feel like your world is being turned upside down. Profound emotions can be released, and have a big impact on your life.

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**Are you ready physically?** Will your physical health, diet, exercise, and sleep routines support you through the process? When physical health issues are present, be sure to consult with your doctor to make sure you are not neglecting important medical treatments. Let your Somatic Sex Educator know of any medications with side-effects that may influence your state of mind or emotions during sessions.

**Are you ready mentally?** How do you react to challenges? What happens in your mind when you feel triggered? It is important to establish a practice of mindfully witnessing thought patterns associated with your sexuality before engaging in a program of Somatic Sex Education focused on body-based learning. Practices like meditation, journaling, prayer and personal nurturing can be important for people on this journey.

**Do you have enough time?** A journey to sexual wholeness is not a simple process. Be wary of anyone promising simple solutions or techniques that will miraculously “make everything better” and heal your wounds. In addition to time for your sessions with a Somatic Sex Educator, you must also give yourself adequate time to process and integrate what your sessions reveal or trigger. “Homework” given to you by your Somatic Sex Educator will likely form an important part of your journey to wholeness.

**Can you afford a series of sessions?** There can be a significant cost involved to complete a program of Somatic Sex Education, which could take several months or more. Each client is unique, so the time it takes and the number of sessions needed to complete a learning process are different for each person.

**Have you found a Somatic Sex Educator you feel good about?** Check out a Somatic Sex Educator’s qualifications, experience and reputation. Interview a potential practitioner to see if you feel they are a good fit for you. Many Somatic Sex Educators offer a complimentary 10-minute call or Skype session. If you have reached the point where sexual healing and wholeness feels imperative for you, then trust that your due diligence and intuition will lead you to the right people to work with.

**Are you able to speak up if things feel wrong?** The majority of Somatic Sex Educators are well-qualified, trustworthy and very competent. They are following a calling to help others the way they have been helped to heal and learn sexually. And all of them can make mistakes, or inadvertently trigger painful memories. Occasionally Somatic Sex Educators can be misguided, or lack appropriate boundaries. To work effectively with a Somatic Sex Educator, you need to notice when things feel wrong, and speak up. Ask your practitioner immediately to stop and change the activity or the plan for your sessions.

**Are you building a community?** Ask your Somatic Sex Educator to tell you about workshops and help you find groups that you can participate in. Don’t become dependent on a single practitioner. Create a “sexual wholeness” community.