

"Physical self-awareness is the first step towards releasing the tyranny of the past."

- Bessel van der Kolk

## Trauma Healing Performing Arts

This work sheet includes a number of performing arts tasks which aim to help you get in touch with your body and release trauma or trapped emotions. You're welcome to adapt the tasks to suit you - they are there to inspire you to perform in a way that feels healing for you!

### Shake it Out

Find a space big enough to stretch and move around in, and put some music on if you like.

1. First stretch your body, starting from your toes and moving all the way to the top of your head, breathing deeply into every part you stretch and noticing how it feels.
2. Next you're going to shake different parts of your body bit by bit, as if shaking water off every part of you.
3. Notice which areas of your body feel loose or tense, listen to your senses and shake to feel the most release.

### Intuitive Dance

Find a song or playlist that captures how you're feeling and appeals to your inner dancer, and find a space to let loose.

1. If you're feeling a little stiff or nervous, start off by stretching or shaking your body to loosen up. Try to let go of any self-consciousness and be present in your body.
2. Listen to the music and imagine the rhythm flowing through you, allowing your body to move in time with the beat.
3. Keep focusing on what you can hear and sense, fully feeling this experience as you express yourself through dance.

### Circus Hoop

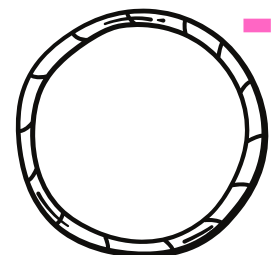
For this task you will need a hula hoop, but you can also be creative and use a different object such as a scarf or cane.

1. Get to know your hula hoop by pressing against it and feeling the pressure against your hands. Breathe out and in as you push and pull the plastic, seeing what feels good.
2. Experiment with the hoop, stepping through it, twirling it around your body and swinging it around your hands or hips.
3. Get into the flow as you dance and sway with your hoop, allowing it to become a part of your expression.

### Dramatic Speech

Find a speech, song or poem that you really connect to, which resonates with how you're feeling or inspires you.

1. Find a space to stand with the words at a readable distance in front of you and your hands free to move about.
2. Familiarise yourself with the words and read them aloud, noticing how your voice expresses the words and how your body feels as you speak them.
3. As you practice your speech, try to express yourself physically with your face, hands and body movements.



Traumatic experiences from the past are often held in our bodies as trapped emotions, which takes a toll on physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Engaging in performing arts is a great way to get in touch with your body's senses, express your feelings, release trapped emotions and heal from the past.

