



MANUAL 2019

What is Soma-Embodiment?

Developed and idealized by Sonia Gomes, SOMA-Embodiment aims to be a tool complementing the work of Somatic Experiencing®, by Peter Levine. The program includes technical aspects of Rolfing Structural Integration and Movement of Ida Rolf, Tonic Function and analysis of the Movement by Hubert Godard, supported also by the vision of the functions of the Autonomic Nervous System presented by Stephen Porges in his Polyvagal Theory and, finally, the contributions of the ecological psychology of the perception of James Gibson. It also has the influence of thinkers like Henri Wallon, Donald Winnicott and André Bullinger. In the development of this program, Sonia had the unique help of Rolfing's teacher, her friend, Marcelo Muniz, who worked in partnership with her for five years. Another great support for the implementation of SOMA-Embodiment was SE's faculty Urs Honauer, without which it would not be possible for SOMA to achieve the consistency as an intervention instrument in Europe.

The many influences of Sonia Gomes, who was a direct student of Peter Levine, Stephen Porges and Hubert Godard, in addition with more than 40 years of experience as a clinical psychologist in the field of trauma and of body psychology, have made possible the creation of an innovative tool with practical results consistent in the renegotiation of trauma. The SOMA-Embodiment, was theoretically described in Sonia's doctoral thesis, "Engaging touch & Movement in Somatic Experiencing® Trauma Resolution Approach (IUGS-New York)" and

today is already used in clinical practice by professionals in more than 10 countries in the world.

Contributions in trauma therapy

The fundamental concept of SOMA goes through the fact that before renegotiating emotional trauma, the body needs to find physical stability. Therefore, in any type of trauma there is a rupture of the sensorimotor coordination, which can happen at any stage of human development. When activated, trauma causes the Autonomic Nervous System to focus on a “re-acting”: a repetition of the pattern of defense, of a posture or repetitive action evoked by traumatic memory. Here is a great contribution from SOMA-Embodiment to trauma therapies:

Key and innovation of SOMA for therapeutic interventions

The focus is the system of three-dimensional orientation of the physical body in relation to space and gravity, offering options of support and adaptation to the life of the internal and external world through the Tactile System (hapticity). The goal of SOMA is to restore the pluri-sensorial perception lost in the traumatic experiences.

In the therapeutic process of SE TM, when the client is tracking body sensations, it is normal to find psychological inhibitions and suppression of emotional expression. With the complement of the SOMA tool it is possible for the therapist to perform a simultaneous work of social engagement through synergy, resonance, intuition, physical stability and psycho-education. All this added to the touch. In this way, the client gradually learns to access the incomplete defenses and, at the same time, retrace the path through gamma and alpha motor activities, increasing contention, accessing coherence, and finally being able to “resignify” traumatic memory.

Back to the body

In summary, the SOMA-Embodiment tool allows the therapist to renegotiate the traumatic load and bring to the client a healthy restoration of the sensorimotor senses. The application of SOMA techniques enables the traumatized client, who has a lack of fluency in his five senses (hearing, touch, smell, sight and taste) and in his experience with time and space, to reorganize his/her way of being in the world, opening up to the sensations and feeling more alive and associated with the body. SOMA allows the client to return to the body, extracting the excess of dissociation that is intrinsic to the trauma. It is the possibility of a return to world-body reality after the escape before a traumatic load not supported by psychophysiology.

The aspects that involve returning to the body require an embodiment of the real-time sensation of the living body, interconnected with the inside and outside itself. The goal is to create possibilities for the client/student to perceive himself/herself in the present moment and to be active to change strategy at any moment of the elements that she/he needs to self-regulate. Therefore, it is necessary to reestablish the identity with its own **TERRITORIALITY**, with the options of **SUPPORT** that brings to him more relational security and awaken the **PLURI-SENSORIALITY** to facilitate the **ORIENTATING**. The return to the body also requires the use of the intuition given by the experiences of all the senses that come from the extremities of the body, the inherent sense organs of adaptability of life here on Earth, which is the bodily ecology that **HAPTICITY** makes it possible. The return to the body is to feel a well-being that the whole body **RESONATES** and can access to health by **COHERENCE**.

- Territoriality
- Support
- Hapticity
- Pluri-sensoriality
- Coherence
- Resonance

Sonia Gomes

Sonia Gomes is a teacher at **SETI** - Somatic Experiencing® Trauma Institute and member Senior faculty at SE™ Professional Training in Brazil, Europe, the United States, South Africa and Asia. With more than 40 years of clinical work, she has a PhD in Clinical Psychology, a degree in Structural Rolfing® and teaches Rolfing Movement, having been a direct student of Hubert Godard and Peter Levine.

Sonia created SOMA-Embodiment as a complementary training to SE™, based on her practical experience and on her doctoral research. The program involves the understanding of the functional dynamics of the Perceptual System, which includes the haptic activity in order to identify the body and emotional defenses in traumatized people.

In summary, using the basic principles of SE™, Sonia helps her clients and students, through touch and movement, to find a way out for blockages in the body, mind and brain caused by different traumatic events.

With SOMA, Sonia Gomes adopts an integrative approach with a clinical practice recognized by students and clients. Her commitment is to deepen your practice of SE™ and thereby provide to the clients and students the relief of suffering resulting from trauma and an improvement in personal development.

The Training

STRUCTURE of SOMA- training

Introduction: 3 days

Module I: 5 days

Module II: 5 days

Module III: 5 days

The SOMA-Embodiment training program harmonizes theoretical contents of trauma therapies, based on modern studies of psychology, physiology and neuroscience. At the same time, it is a formation of phenomenological bases, in which the student learns in practice exercises and tools for clinical application.

With daily demonstrations of Sonia Gomes, participants have the possibility to see the applicability of the theory in different traumatic events and to execute them with the supervision of formed assistants. Here are some of the points that students develop throughout SOMA-Embodiment's training:

1. Expansion of the Perceptual System (Hapticity)
2. Restoration of mobility, Breathing, Circulation and rest digestion
3. Unlocking Traumatic Movement Restrictions
4. Reestablishment of balance and fluency in movement
5. Use of resonance and intuition to work with trauma

INTRODUCTION (3 DAYS)

What is SOMA as a SE™ tool? Developing the Embodiment for self-regulation and trauma healing

- SOMA as a multidisciplinary tool: a summary of the works of Peter A. Levine (SE™); Stephen Porges (Polyvagal Theory); Ida Rolf (Structural Rolfing) and Hubert Godard (Tonic Function).
- Basis of embryology to understand gravity developmental phases of the newborn and relate to the plans of the body structure and separation of the four foundational joints.
- Exercises and techniques to develop Embodiment: Territoriality, Support, Openness of Hapticity; Re-establishment of plurisensoriality and restoration of proprioceptors, interoceptors and exteroceptors.
- Hapticity: how to use the alpha - gamma touch and bring the vision of the body as territory
- Reactivation of the active defense responses of fight and flight through the stability and spatial orientation coordinated to the touch and movement.

- Unfolding the Holdings: tracking of body compensation systems, awareness of body posture in gravity, space and time for release the traumatic load.
- Organization of internal and external space through movement in the gravitational field.
- A panoramic view of the entire SOMA program. What expect from the SOMA training and how it works in trauma treatment?
- Video demonstrations with Sonia Gomes with different types of trauma.

MODULE I (5 DAYS)

How does traumatic experience impact body, mind and brain? A neurophysiological and integrative view

- Tonic function, touch and movement as tools for sensorimotor re-signification: the ecological theory of perception
- The impact of the traumatic load on the way of perceiving the world: sensory-motor deprivation and loss of vitality
- The Tonic Function and the Haptic System: the consciousness of the pre-movement and the kinesphere, the alpha and gamma touches and the territoriality.
- The phenomenology and the neurophysiology of gravity in the relation of hapticity and stability of the core: the holdings, first and second foundational articulations.
- SOMA exercises and techniques: sounds, breathing, cardiac coherence and movement as modes of access to freezing responses

- Embodiment as an element of transference: social engagement, presence and resonance as keys of healing of trauma. The union of trauma therapies with the Polyvagal Theory
- Stimulating the fluency and coordination of the movement: expressivity and impressiveness to overcome the inhibitions and restrictions of the body. Guidance answers and Vergence
- Ecological psychology of perception: the uniqueness of perception and action. The touch and movement for the re-signification of sensory-motor deprivations and to awaken vitality
- Protocol I: How to use SOMA in High Impact Traumas – Inescapable Attack
- Daily demonstrations with Sonia Gomes followed by practice among students: the awakening of the Haptic System

MODULE II (5 DAYS)

The phenomenology of space, the presence of the other: limit works on the relation of the arms to the support

- Restoration of sensory-motor deprivation and lack of vitality: tracing the transgenerational, perinatal and developmental traumas.
- Inter-subjectivity sensory “being with me and with the other at the same time”: third and fourth foundational articulations.
- Process of emotional development and bonding under the perception of the Haptic System and the perspectives of Wallon, Winnicott and Bullinger psychology.

- Tracking of traumatic emotional energy associated with stored memories through three levels of organization of the nervous system: interoceptors, exteroceptors and proprioceptors
- Unlock movement restrictions that correspond to symptoms and behaviors: reestablish balance in the Autonomic Nervous System;
- Unfolding the Holdings: tracking of body compensation systems and awareness of body posture in gravity, space and time for the release of the traumatic load
- How the prefrontal cortex is related to emotional stability and a sense of identity. Understanding emotions by relating them to an integrative neural circuit: Wholeness
- Communication with the nervous system, emotions and connective tissue: achieving plasticity by integrating and developing the Affective System;
- Protocol II: How to use SOMA in Global High Intensity Activation (GHIA); Pre-Natal; Birth Trauma and others related to GHIA.
- Daily demonstrations with Sonia Gomes followed by practice among students: tracking since the embryological development

MODULE III (5 DAYS)

Working with SOMA in complex traumas, syndromes, chronic conditions and serious injuries - collective trauma (natural disasters, terrorism, etc)

- How to work with emotions when there are injuries, syndromes and chronic conditions?
- Emotion-related injuries: how to identify the surviving active parts? Diagnosis-Biography-Personality: the dissociation of trauma and the search for reintegration;

- The function of time in shock trauma. How to remove the shock in the renegotiation of the trauma and when is the right moment to intervene?
- The similar patterns in trauma development, shock and physical injury. When emotional and expression experiences meet trauma?
- Protocols III: how to use SOMA in Complex Trauma, Syndromes, Emotional Trauma?
- Daily demonstrations with Sonia Gomes followed by practice among students: renegotiating complex traumas

Requirements for training

The SOMA-EMBODIMENT program is aimed at Somatic Experiencing® practitioners or students who have completed their first year of training. It is also accessible to professionals trained in various therapeutic approaches within the trauma healing segment. Full certification requirements include five personal sessions provided by qualified providers and two supervision sessions.

Reviews

"I am a SOMA practitioner (as well as a SEP) and I use SOMA in my private practice extensively. When a client comes to me in a freeze state, SOMA works best. I also have clients with sport related traumas and without SOMA the amazing results would not be possible. In fact, most of my work today includes SOMA and I am deeply grateful to Sonia for empowering me with this knowledge",
Dr Marita van der Bank, South Africa

"I did a demonstration session with Sonia during my training at SOMA. I had had a fall many years ago and I had lost a lot of my sensations in the lower part of my body. After this work I realized that my relationship with gravity changed

completely and I started to awaken the perceptions and sensations of my legs ",
Catherine Grimal, France