

# Self-Care after a Workshop Experience of Opening and Exploration

The SoulCollage® experience with which you have just engaged may have dropped a stone into the waters of the unconscious mind and it may bring many more ripples to the surface. The ripples could go on for some time. They may be especially strong during the first week after the group ends. Even if you don't think you feel too opened, we recommend that you give yourself as quiet a time as you can for integration and not schedule anything extra beyond your regular tasks.

Your experience is to be honored so we suggest not talking about it lightly or you may feel diminished by the telling. Be careful with whom and how you discuss any experiences or insights that feel sacred to you. Please respect that other people's experiences are confidential and not yours to relate.

You may have experienced a generalized opening and expansion of the feeling realm. As with any opening that is beyond the usual range there is often a reflexive contraction to the expansion before the feelings settle into a more consistent mode. You may have all sorts of feelings for a few hours or a day or so after the group ends. These feelings may include increased energy and openness, vulnerability and rawness, happiness or sadness. If you are feeling these kinds of signals of change, we suggest you try to spend some time alone or with good friends or working with your SoulCollage® cards — something that feels like it is the right nurturing thing for you to do for yourself at this time. If you are not sure what you need, try suggestions from this list or visit your therapist. It is all part of the rebalancing until a new equilibrium is established.

## Nurturing Ideas

### SoulCollage®

Use this SoulCollage® process that you have been attracted to and in which you have been trained. Grab some magazines and tear out images that attract you if you feel like it. Honor the ideas you had in the workshop or training by following through with some of them. Do readings for yourself to help you with your personal direction.

### Write in Your Journal

Do some writing about your SoulCollage® cards, perhaps especially the ones that you made or that came up for you during the reading. Let the cards speak to you by writing from them about whatever is coming up for you. Or just write randomly in your journal. Just start writing, don't worry about grammar, jump subjects mid-sentence, or write whatever you want until the energy feels satisfied.

### Meditation

Sitting meditation can help to create a feeling of safety while the feelings or images pass through. Just follow the breath as best you can. You can close your eyes or leave them open and pick a visual focal point, something pleasant, such as a flower or leaf perhaps, and keep the vision softly focused there while breathing slowly.

### **Exercise**

Walking, running, swimming, or exercise classes help to change the body chemistry towards more positive energies. Often you will not actually *want* to do this, but the doing, just moving the body, can change the feelings, especially anger and depression.

### **Baths and Showers**

Warm baths with oils or bath salts are wonderful for comfort and relaxation of the body. Take as many as you want.

### **Time Alone**

Time by yourself is essential at times. Be sensitive to when you really need to nourish yourself by stopping the action for a while.

### **Naps or Sleeping More than Usual**

Sometime the best integrative intervention is to let yourself sleep. Sometimes you may want to sleep more than usual after an intense time. Often this may be the psyche's way of taking a break, recouping after a big outlay of energy, and also a way of performing integrative tasks below the conscious level.

### **Calming Music**

Play soothing music for yourself. Use headphones, perhaps.

### **Eat Grounding Food**

Grounding foods such as the heavier foods: honey, meat protein, and root vegetables help rebalance the body after an intense "mountaintop" or "personal exploration" experience.

### **Friends**

Talking to a good friend makes a real difference. Time alone is sometimes a good thing, but isolation can be hard, especially after the connections made during the group experience. Seek out more good experiences of connecting with people if you find yourself feeling isolated.

### **Nature**

Walking in nature, concentrating on trees, plants, and animals creates balance and connection.

### **Therapy**

If you have a therapist, make an appointment as a follow-up sometime soon after the group. Call her/him as necessary. You might take your new SoulCollage® card(s) to the session.

### **Support**

Perhaps you can ask for and receive support from the group members. Make phone contact by mutual arrangement with each other. Perhaps there are online groups where those doing or facilitating SoulCollage® offer support to each other in professional and emotionally supportive ways.