

# Safe Use of Touch

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*Pernilla Siebenfreund*

Touch is  
the Primary Language  
of Compassion



*“Touch can have strong effects on our bodies, because when the skin is touched, that stimulation is quickly transmitted to the brain, which in turn regulates our bodies.*

*Depending on the type of touch we receive, we can either be calmed down or aroused.”*

- Tiffany Fields



# Guidelines for Safe Touch

- Educate yourself on the legal and ethical guidelines in your profession
- Examine your motivation for offering touch
- Never use touch without consent of the client
- Don't touch if any hesitation in you, or in the client; verbal or non-verbal
- Do a touch inventory and assessment



# Some Benefits of Using Touch

- Expresses non-verbal care
- Establishes connection
- Communicates acceptance and touchability
- Provides corrective experiences in reparation of abuse and neglect
- Retrains the client's nervous system in the context of trauma



# Some Benefits of Using Touch

- Promotes body awareness
- Focuses or directs attention
- Promotes cognitive and emotional insight through direct felt experience
- Supports or contains the expression of emotions
- Helps with grounding and coming into greater contact with reality



*“We need 4 hugs a day  
for survival.*

*We need 8 hugs a day  
for maintenance.*

*We need 12 hugs a day  
for growth.”*

- Virginia Satir



**HEDGE-HUGS**

