

A Letter to New Clients

"The impulse to heal is real and powerful and lies within the client. Our job is to evoke that healing power, to meet its tests and needs and to support it in its expression and development. We are not the healers. We are the context in which healing is inspired." Ron Kurtz (The Hakomi Way, 2018)

If you're thinking about becoming a Hakomi client, here is what you might experience:

ABOUT THE METHOD:

Hakomi is a method of assisted self-study and discovery. The method is based on the idea that much of our everyday suffering is unnecessary and is produced by unconscious beliefs that are irrelevant, untrue or out of date and Hakomi is designed to bring these limiting or wrong ideas into consciousness. Once these beliefs (memories, habits, emotions) are conscious, they can be examined and changed to offer a more satisfying way of being.

The Hakomi therapist pays very close attention to the way the client expresses themselves nonverbally. Such things as tone of voice, movements, gestures, posture, facial expressions are usually very significant indicators of beliefs and unconscious material. On the basis of those observations, the therapist creates little experiments that are done with the client in a mindful state. Such experiments may evoke reactions, often emotional ones. When reactions are evoked, memories, beliefs and associations may emerge which help clients realize something about themselves.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

This method is focused on helping you heal your life. Your personal history is written in the way you do things now, your style, your defining characteristics. You can expect that the therapist will be looking and listening for these subtle signs and will bring them to your attention as part of setting up the little experiments in mindfulness that are the core of the work.

The therapist will also be genuinely kind and patient, safe, caring, and non-judgmental. The vulnerability and openness of mindfulness require an extremely safe environment. You can expect the work to bring up emotions. The therapist knows how to be with you when this happens and knows how to offer comfort and help you understand.

WHAT YOU NEED:

You need to be willing to be with your own present experience. Your reactions to experiments in mindfulness will be the basis of the work you do. So, you need to be willing to stay focused on your experience. You need to be open to going into mindfulness, which is a calm, inwardly focused state, to simply witness yourself and what happens inside you. You might experience some painful emotions on the way to finding out how to relieve your unnecessary suffering and let go of limiting beliefs and old habitual patterns. You need to be willing to speak about yourself as you feel now. This work is not about asking questions, problem solving or making conversation. The courage you have to be open and honest in looking at yourself are your greatest allies. The rewards will be a deeper understanding of yourself and others, greater pleasure in everyday living, and richer, happier relationships. Self-study can create all that.

SUSAN DEMPSEY is a Hakomi practitioner and trainer, having studied the Hakomi method with the Vancouver Hakomi Education network in which she is part of the training team. Susan uses the Hakomi method of assisted self-study as one of a number of approaches to growth and healing in her practice. You can find more information about Susan's work at <https://www.susandempsey.ca>