**THE SEVEN CHANNELS OF EXPERIENCE**

Adapted From David Mars, AEDP senior faculty

According to the breakthrough research of Bud Craig (2006 to 2009) and Jaak

Panksepp (2009) and the writings of Damasio (2010) and Alan Schore (2012),

the experience of the self involves the whole brain from brainstem to

pre-frontal cortex and the whole body from head to toe.  In practicing AEDP

we:

1. Attune to the whole body experience of a client.

2. Cultivate our own internal capacities to meet the client in the channels where the client

“lives” experientially.

3. Build bridges to those channels that bring comfort so the client can stay in and build a

greater window of affective tolerance and build the capacity to drop into core emotion.

4. Establish a secure base through attuning and guiding to expand awareness to channels

that are blocked through defensive exclusion.

5. Rely on our own internal experience, moment to moment.

6. Make use of our observations, emotions, experience of client in the moment; make our experience explicit; and metaprocess!

**1: SENSATION**

In the nerves, muscles, organs including the skin. Sensation underlies and accompanies the other six channels.

Sensation includes the ranges between:

1. Tension to relaxation in any part of the body

2. Hotness to coolness

3. Comfort to discomfort

4. Supported, floating, or burdened

5. Pressure, pinching, pain

6. Heaviness to lightness

7. “Prickly” to pleasurable

8. Enjoyable to distasteful

9. Any sensation that brings information that connects mind and body

10. Tingling to draining

**2:** **EMOTION**

1. Core affects of anger, sadness, joy, fear, pride, love, and disgust and all the complex and subtle shades of feeling states as well.

2. Notice how the feeling state shows itself.  For example, “How do I know I am sad?” could link to sensation, or to energetic state.

3. “What does the sadness want to say?” could link to imaginal or remembered experiences.

4. Noticing the impulse to action shown in emotion-laden movement can answer the question, “What does that hand want to do?”

**3: ENERGETIC**

(The energetic channel is vital for attuning to avoidantly attached clients, as energetic sensitivity is often used by such people to scan for intrusion)

Subtle experiences akin to meridians in the context of acupuncture or Chi in the martial arts:

1. Energetic lightness to heaviness

2. Eye brightness to dimness

3. Vividness of iris coloration to dullness

4. Energetic charge, fullness or depletion in the pelvic bowl, solar plexus, heart, throat, forehead or at the top of the head

5. Chills” or streaming up or down the torso, arms and legs

6. Flushing or rising heat

7. Micro-vibration: the “hum” or rapid oscillation of the body including tremulous affects

**4****:** **MOVEMENT**:

Body movement including postural shifting, and often non-conscious expression of the

limbs, hands, fingers and face.

Knowing internal experience through tracking what the movement shows, brings, evokes.

1. Breathing rate, type and depth including breath holding

2. Heart movement

3. Gesture

4. Facial expression

5. Noticing stillness, frozenness

6. Can be the pathway to Portrayals, as the body shows the way to

what had been excluded from awareness…often for decades

**5: AUDITORY**

Voice tone, patterns of speech and prosody (the “music” of speech).

1. Resonance and pitch

2. Hearing and feeling where in the body the voice emanates and resonates

3. Content and meaning of speech

4. Changes in the sound of the breath (sighing, yawning, friction in breathing, etc.)

**6: VISUAL:**

“Seeing” with compassion and an eye for explicit detail vs. “watching”. (M to M tracking)

1. Facial expression, skin coloration and eye brightness

2. Seeing movement in its exquisite detail paired with the prosody and meaning of speech including expressed images. Creating a co- constructed whole of what is shown, seen and held

3. Eye contact, intention and care of expressed through our own eyes

**7: IMAGINAL**

Spontaneous or intentionally invited internal images.

1. “Seeing” images that are either literal or symbolic

2. “Hearing” in imagined or remembered sound

3. “Seeing” actions in recall or “future” imagination

4. Imagined olfactory experiences

5. Imaginal channel allows us to “see” in order to track how old a client/patient is in a portrayal in order to undo aloneness, and where they are located.

6. “Knowing” intuitively as a kind of “knowing that feels correct” and can then be explored

7. Synergistic with and highly enriching to the other six channels.

Adapted by Kate Halliday, LCSW, Certified AEDP Therapist and Supervisor