

Self Directed Integration Tips

This guide is inspired by the teachings on integration from Atira Tan, whose work has deeply influenced my understanding of what it means to truly embody healing.

In a world that encourages constant consumption—of information, experiences, and even healing itself—Atira’s work reminds us that transformation doesn’t come from more input, but from what we do with what we’ve already received. I’ve taken these foundational principles and woven them into my own practice as a somatic therapist, offering them here in a way that supports you in slowing down, listening inward, and allowing your healing to become something you actually live.

1. Listen to Your Body’s Needs

Begin by gently bringing your awareness back to your body. On a regular basis, pause and ask yourself: “What is the most loving thing I can offer myself right now?” And instead of rushing to answer from the mind...let your body respond.

You may notice a need for rest, nourishment, water, or space.

2. Deepen Your Relationship to Your Body

Integration deepens as you build a more conscious relationship with your body. This can look like engaging in practices that bring you into your body— not just thinking about it, but actually feeling it. You might explore things like massage, yoga, breathwork, mindful movement, or even martial arts. These practices support you in developing awareness, safety, and connection within your nervous system. The more you learn how to be with your body, The more available integration becomes.

3. Practice Meditation

Meditation is one of the most supportive tools for integration because it strengthens your ability to be with what is. Through consistent practice, meditation can support emotional regulation, clarity, and a deeper connection to your internal world. It can also have a positive impact on the body—supporting nervous system balance and overall well-being. There are many different approaches— Vipassana, Zen, somatic meditation, presence-based practices...What matters most is not which one you choose, but that it feels accessible and supportive for you. Integration happens when you can stay present with your experience—without needing to rush past it, fix it, or turn away. And meditation gently trains that capacity over time.

4. Practice Gratitude

A simple gratitude practice can be a powerful way to support integration. Each day, take a moment to reflect on what you feel genuinely grateful for—people, experiences, small moments, or even something within yourself. Gratitude has been shown to support emotional well-being and can gently shift your nervous system toward a more regulated, resourced state. It can also help you reconnect with moments of safety, connection, and support—especially when things feel heavy. But beyond the research, gratitude invites you back into a relationship with your life.

5. Keep a Journal

Journaling can be a powerful tool for integration. Take time to write about your experiences—what you noticed, what you felt, what moved through your body, and what stood out to you. You might reflect on insights, emotions, or even subtle sensations that arose during a session, meditation, or meaningful moment. And just as importantly, return to what you've written. Revisiting your journal can help you stay connected to the deeper truths and teachings that emerged, allowing them to continue unfolding over time. Integration isn't always immediate; sometimes it reveals itself in layers.

6. Reconnect with Resourceful Moments

Take time to remember moments in your life where you felt deeply connected— to yourself, to others, to something greater. These might be experiences that felt joyful, loving, peaceful, or even hard to put into words— moments where something inside of you softened or came alive. As you bring one of these moments to mind, gently notice what happens in your body. Can you feel it? Even just a little? See if you can allow those sensations—those feelings—to be here with you now. Let them ground you in the present moment. Your body doesn't only hold pain or stress - it also holds memories of safety, connection, and aliveness. And reconnecting with these moments is a powerful way to support integration.

7. Read

Learning can be a powerful support for integration—when it's done with intention. You might feel called to explore books or teachings that deepen your understanding of presence, healing, or embodiment. You can also ask trusted friends, mentors, or practitioners for recommendations that feel aligned. This is important: Notice when learning begins to shift into overconsumption. You don't need more information for the sake of more information. Let what you read support what you're already integrating—not distract you from it.

Sometimes, the most powerful practice is not reading something new, but returning to something that already moved you, and letting it land more deeply.

8. Get Creative

Creativity is a powerful pathway for integration because it allows what's inside of you to move. You might write, draw, paint, sculpt, or explore any form of creative expression that feels accessible. There is no right way to do this. This isn't about skill or outcome— it's about expression. Creative practices have been shown to support mental and emotional well-being, helping the body relax, regulate, and even restore.

9. Build a Relationship with Nature

Nature can be a powerful space for integration. When you step outside—whether it's a quiet walk, sitting by water, or simply feeling the sun on your skin—you're invited into a slower, more grounded rhythm. Nature has a direct and supportive impact on your well-being—helping the nervous system regulate, the body soften, and the mind become less noisy. Beyond that, nature reminds you that nothing is rushed. Everything unfolds in its own timing. And you are allowed to do the same.

8. Deepen Your Spiritual Connection

Integration is not only personal—it can also be deeply spiritual. You might feel supported by practices that help you connect to something greater than yourself—whether that's through prayer, meditation, ritual, time in nature, or a sense of connection to the earth, the universe, or your own inner wisdom. There is no one right way to experience spirituality. What matters is that it feels authentic and supportive for you.