



## Accendo Incedo Magnus (A.I.M.) International Inc.

Box 1865

Whitecourt, Alberta T7S 1P6

Phone: (780) 778-2211 Fax: (780) 778-2414

email: aimstar@telus.net

# Understanding Trauma

When an animal is confronted with a novel or life-threatening situation in the wild it responds naturally by fighting, fleeing or freezing. If the animal survives, it discharges excess energy from its nervous system through shaking, trembling or twitching. This discharge leaves the animal ready to fully respond to any subsequent threat. Animals may move through this sequence several times a day without experiencing any negative effects or exhibiting symptoms of trauma. Apart from our well-developed neo-cortex or “thinking brain”, our innate responses to threat are identical to animals in the wild. However, we are not always able to respond in the natural way that our nervous system was designed. You may remember feeling cold and trembly after a minor accident or you may have been encouraged to stifle your feelings, told to pull yourself together, or felt embarrassed about your response. After all it was just a little accident. Nevertheless, your “animal brain” responded as if it was a life-threatening situation and a great deal of energy was mounted in your nervous system to protect yourself. It is likely that you were unable to fight or flee. Instead you froze. Following this minor accident, you may have had trouble sleeping, were nervous particularly in situations similar to the accident, had intrusive thoughts about your vulnerability, startled easily, had pain and were generally anxious or depressed. These are signs of dysregulation in the nervous system.

## SELF REGULATION THERAPY

Self Regulation Therapy is the primary therapy used in individual sessions at A.I.M. International Inc. It is a mind/body approach grounded in solid brain research and aimed at diminishing excess activation in the nervous system. It has its basis in neurobiology and reflects our innate capacity to flexibly respond to a new situation or threat. Significant overwhelming events at any time in one’s life can result in changes in the nervous system that negatively impact the way a person feels and relates to others. **SRT** enables the nervous system to integrate overwhelming events and brings balance to the nervous system. **SRT** works by providing a safe, contained environment in which the individual can complete the thwarted response of fight, flight or freeze. By resourcing the client, new neural pathways are developed to manage daily challenges and stressors. Once the nervous system is balanced and activation discharged, individuals are able to experience joy, closeness in relationships and vitality and resilience in the body.

Examples of Discharging: Tears, Laughter, Yawning, Trembling, Twitching, Pulsating, Tingling, Feeling Heat or Cold.

