

The Role of the Body in the Treatment of Chronic Traumatization: A Psychology of Action

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Sensorimotor Psychotherapy is conducted within a phase-oriented treatment approach and this presentation will address interventions for all three phases of treatment: stabilization and symptom reduction, work with traumatic memory, and re-integration. Current research is showing major breakthroughs in what happens in the brain following trauma, indicating that insight and understanding may have only a limited influence on the operation of subcortical processes. A body-oriented approach is called for that facilitates new actions and addresses dissociative symptoms, including somatic components of traumatic memories (e.g., pain, analgesia, and motor inhibitions), and avoidance-related symptoms such as bodily anesthesia. Dr. Ogden will address the role of the body and of mindfulness in the treatment of chronic traumatization, using the theory and practice of Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, a clinical approach that integrates cognitive and somatic interventions in the treatment of trauma. Through videotaped excerpts of sessions with traumatized patients and brief experiential exercises, this workshop explores how people's minds and bodies process and interpret traumatic experiences, with a focus on how controlled action might help overcome traumatic repetitions and continued flight/flight/freeze/submit responses.

Learning objectives:

1. Recognition of trauma-related somatic symptoms
2. Describe body-oriented interventions for phase oriented treatment
3. Application of physical action in treatment for chronically traumatized and dissociative patients.