

SENSORIMOTOR PSYCHOTHERAPY: INTERVENTIONS FOR TRAUMA AND ATTACHMENT

by Pat Ogden & Janina Fisher | *Review by* Matthew Dahlitz

Ogden, Minton, and Pain's (2006) *Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy* was for me a wonderfully articulate and accessible introduction to the intelligence of the body and its indivisible relationship with our psychology. Now, Pat Ogden and Janina Fisher have complemented that publication with a "workbook" that puts at clinicians' fingertips a series of highly practical worksheets covering many aspects of the physiology of mental health—in 35 chapters and over 800 pages! This encyclopaedic work is a treasure trove of practical information and ready-to-use materials that you can utilise over a client's entire healing journey.

In *Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Interventions for Trauma and Attachment*, what Ogden and Fisher have given psychotherapy is a very clear roadmap for addressing physiology during therapy, both theoretically and experientially. Each chapter begins with a "Therapist's Guide" which outlines the purpose of the chapter and the types of clients who may benefit from it, gives suggestions for clinical use, provides an overview of worksheets, and finally explains how the material can be adapted for dissociative clients. Then we are given a succinct précis of the theory followed by approximately five or six very well presented worksheets (one to a page) that can be easily integrated into therapy sessions. The book starts with chapters on essential principles and an orientation for both clinician and client, followed by the basic concepts and skills that underpin the sensorimotor approach. Its three larger sections follow three phases of therapy: developing resources, addressing memory, and moving forward. Once I got a feel for the logical progression, the book was easy to navigate and I quickly found myself jumping to various chapters and worksheets that seemed applicable to my current clients.

From a neuropsychotherapy perspective, this book gives us all the foundational "bottom-up" tools we need to work with clients. For example, chapters on basic orientating responses, mindfulness, the triune brain, neuroception, and the window of tolerance contain a wealth of information that clients can easily grasp, together with exercises that can quickly bring a sense of grounding and control—and that's before even getting into the first treatment phase of the book.

I recently gave a leadership workshop where I was able to use some of the worksheets to give the leaders I was addressing an appreciation of body awareness in their roles at work. These experiential parts of the workshop were particularly well received, with leaders giving positive feedback as to the relevance of somatic awareness to their lives.

At first glance, particularly if you are new to a body-based approach to therapy, this workbook could be a little overwhelming. But it's worth the effort to orient yourself in this approach and find where it may fit in your practice. Already I've gleaned much from the book that can enhance my work with clients, both those who have suffered trauma and those who have not.

In the interests of a balanced review, I've given thought to what might be negative aspects of this latest offering, which takes its place in Norton's Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology. But I honestly have found the work to be a wonderful resource, well written and presented. The one possible enhancement that comes to mind is that the worksheets might be made available as PDFs on a CD accompanying the book for clinicians to easily print and use in sessions.

I believe *Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Interventions for Trauma and Attachment* is an important addition to any psychotherapist's arsenal of resources, and I thank Ogden and Fisher for bringing all their years of experience and wisdom to the table in the form of this very pragmatic workbook.