

Synopsis of the book *Mindfulness and yoga in the healing of PTSD*

As the title suggests, the book describes how mindfulness and yoga can successfully be used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This is done on the basis of relevant theory and research, as well as practical clinical examples.

By way of introduction, PTSD is examined on the basis of the main symptoms of the diagnosis. The book strikes a blow for how the symptoms of PTSD, from a phenomenological point of view, can be interpreted as mental and bodily expressions that disruptively interfere with the traumatized person's ability to be present and attentive.

According to Ivan Højgaard Hansen, being traumatized is similar to finding yourself in a bubble where past trauma constantly interferes with current life. Thus, the attention of the traumatized person is fixated in the past resulting in him being cut off from the aspects of life that are only accessible through an open and attentive presence.

This is where mindfulness in combination with physical yoga exercises comes into the picture. Not only as a discipline on the yoga mat but also as a life practice to create a foundation solid enough to accommodate the complexity of psychological challenges that can arise in the wake of violent incidents. This includes how mindfulness can be used to help the traumatized person out of the particular kind of rumination that keeps the psyche in the past.

Releasing this rumination is described by the author as a process, which among other things, aims to open one's sensory perception up to what "always already" is - in a Heideggerian sense. Hence, the always already here-and-now is the place where we are all born into the world and thus also the place where the seeds of change and existential renewal is obvious.

Thus, the book is both pragmatically and theoretically based and meanders into the phenomenological and existential aspects of life where it becomes clear how attention is the link to cohesion and resonance with the world. An important point is that mindfulness makes it possible to recreate a more authentically felt affinity with the world again by, among other things, anchoring attention in the immediate and the banal.

In a scientific theoretical approach, the book bridges the gap between the psychology of mindfulness, phenomenological and existential perspectives, as well as biological psychology; by drawing on the knowledge of the effects of trauma on the brain's executive functions, memory systems and the autonomic nervous system.

Overall, the book has an existential purpose, namely, to teach the traumatized person to return to life again with deep existential qualities such as presence, peace and psychological flexibility. There is definitely no quick fix. Instead, time and again it emphasizes how discipline, perseverance and concentration play a crucial role along the way.