

Slide 1

**Guiding Clients in Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

J. Douglas Bremner, MD  
Professor of Psychiatry and Radiology  
Emory University School of Atlanta, Georgia

[dougbrmner.com](http://dougbrmner.com)  
[Startnowprogram.com](http://Startnowprogram.com)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 2

**Self Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Clients can learn tools for self recovery from psychological trauma
- Teaching self recovery promotes a sense of mastery and teaches clients to take responsibility for their recovery
- Avoids stigma of mental health treatment
- Many PTSD patients don't have resources to pay for long term therapy
- Teaching self recovery can be done with fewer sessions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 3

**Self Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Clients suffer from social stigma and negativity from friends and family in their recovery attempts
- Comments like "just snap out of it" and "get over it, move on" are common but not helpful
- Those who purport to "help" may be connected to original trauma, or may be retraumatizing client (e.g., legal system)
- Lack of immediate recovery makes clients feel like failures, perpetuates pathology

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 4

**The Multiple Pathway Approach to Teaching Clients Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Teaching stress reduction tools (e.g., relaxation, breathing)
- Psychoeducation – physiology of the stress response, effects of trauma on mental health symptoms
- Promote healthy lifestyles – diet & exercise – as way to improve mood & reduce stress
- Relationship and couples training

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 5

**Recovery**



- Recovery is a circular journey rather than a point-to-point trip

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---


---

---


Slide 6



Instead of this...



Do this...




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 7

### Self Help Recovery from Trauma

- Steps to recovering from psychological trauma
- Individuals can take responsibility for their own recovery
- *Complementary to psychotherapy, vocational rehab, medication, and other interventions*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 8

### Encourage Clients to Adopt Healthy Behaviors

- Stop abusing drugs and alcohol
- Stop self-destructive, unhealthy, and addictive behaviors



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 9

### Client Self Care

- Seek safety and support.
- Spend time with supportive people
- Avoid people who tell you to get over it or just snap out of it
- Remove yourself from abusive environments, the first step of recover

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 10

**Talking About Trauma**



- You can help your clients learn how to talk to people they trust about how they feel.
- The psychotherapeutic relationship can model that.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 11

**Creative Expression as a Trauma Recovery Tool**

- By putting trauma into words, it becomes a story, with a beginning, middle & end.
- Telling a story alone can have healing powers, translating inchoate feelings into something solid.
- Encourage your clients to keep a journal or write a story about their experiences. It can be an exercise just for them.
- Clients can use other forms of expression through art forms, like poetry, painting, music, and dance.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 12

**Teach Your Client Self Acceptance**



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 13

### Accept What Happened

- Help your client first establish a zone of safety so they can express rage and shame about what happened
- After that it may be time to start to accept what happened.
- The process of acceptance is a gradual one that evolves in layers.
- Acceptance requires going through the grieving process.

---

---

---

---

---

---

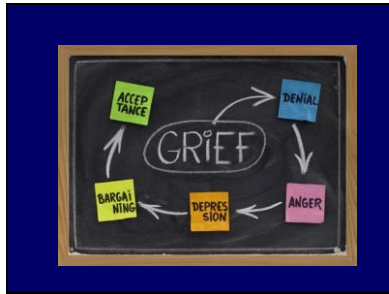
---

---

---

---

Slide 14



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 15

### Acceptance

- Many traumatized people have a sense of guilt over things that happened, or feel bad about themselves.
- Encourage clients to feel compassion for the person who was traumatized
- Acceptance may involve a forgiveness of themselves-forgiveness for it happening, forgiveness for their slow recovery and how they have affected others

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 16

**Stay Away from Negative Thinking**

- Don't blame the victim
- For rape victims, they may think there was something they could have done to prevent the rape
- Teach clients to stay away from the negative mantras they may have picked up from their perpetrator, or others who did not protect them.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 17

**Journal Therapy for Negative Thinking**

- Victims of emotional abuse in childhood develop a negative sound track in their heads
- Have your client write down all of the negative things that go around in their head about themselves or their trauma.
- Now have them write the name of the person they first heard it from beside each thing. Any surprises?
- Next, have them say the things in their head in a funny cartoon voice, like Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck.
- That helps to break the negative sound track in your head.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 18

**Benefits of Altruism in Traumatic Recovery**



Altruism is the principle or practice of unselfish concern for or devotion to the welfare of others, i.e. when you do something for someone and expect nothing in return.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 19

**Why Altruism?**

- The fact that your client is doing it is proof positive that not everyone is out for themselves.
- This helps them feel less isolated, angry and bitter about the world.
- Altruism counteracts the view of trauma victims that the world is a cold and uncaring place
- Research from the Columbine mass shooting and other similar events show that people who practice altruism have the best recovery.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 20

**Why Altruism?**

- By giving of yourself and expecting nothing in return, you help yourself to regain your sense of power and control.
- You start to feel like the world has meaning and you have a place in the world and something to give.
- You develop a sense of purpose and meaning.
- You may have the chance to work to prevent the injustice or negative event that happened to you from happening to someone else

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 21

**Revisiting the Scene of the Trauma**

- Clients can re-visit the scene of the trauma
- They can go back to the place where the event actually happened.
- Revise distorted memories by seeing what the location looks like.
- It will probably look different than from how they remember it.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 22

**Re-Write History**

- When they revisit the trauma, they can rewrite history using their own voice.
- Have your client write down what happened to them. They can share it with you in sessions.
- What were they thinking at the time of the trauma? Did they think they were going to die? Were they looking for their attacker? Were they thinking that they made a mistake?
- What were they feeling at the time of the trauma? Did they feel fear, anger, horror, disgust?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 23

**Transformation**

Help your client transform themselves from victim into survivor. Work to correct the injustices of the world.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 24

**Self Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Trauma victims suffer from social stigma and negativity from friends and family in their recovery attempts
- Comments like "just snap out of it" and "get over it, move on" are common but not helpful
- Those who purport to "help" may be connected to original trauma, or may be re-traumatizing (e.g., legal system)
- Lack of immediate recovery makes you feel like a failure, and makes things worse

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Slide 25

### Psychological Trauma

- Threat to life or integrity of self or close person (DSM-5)
- Affects over half of people in the U.S. at some time in their lives
- Childhood sexual abuse most common cause of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in women (16%)
- Assault most common cause in men (more common than combat)
- Psychological trauma is associated with a wide range of physical and mental health complaints

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 26

### Breaking the Abuse



- A child is removed from an abusive environment (or the abuser is removed)
- Necessary before healing and recovery can begin

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 27

### Coming Home

- A combat veteran returns from a combat theater
- A child is removed from an abusive environment
- Support from parental figures critical in creating a feeling of safety
- For many coming home may first be experienced with a successful relationship in adulthood

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 28

### Effects of Psychological Trauma

- Increased arousal is a normal and adaptive response to being in a dangerous environment
- Adrenaline and cortisol help with the fight or flight response
- Coming home, it may be difficult to "turn off" the survival state of mind
- Clients may prefer to stay at home to avoid things that trigger memories of combat

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 29

### Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma

- About 15% of traumatized individuals develop chronic PTSD
- Increased alcohol, substance abuse, depression, dissociative disorders, somatic disorders
- PTSD is associated with a loss of work productivity, but also greater use of health care resources and higher rates of disease

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

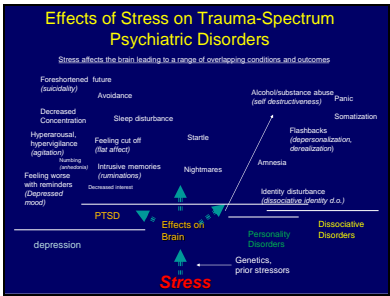
---

---

---

---

Slide 30



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 31

### Effects of Psychological Trauma on Mental Health: Depression



- Feeling depressed/no interest most of the time
- Loss of energy
- Loss of appetite
- Decreased interest in sex
- Not interested in things you used to like to do

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 32

### Effects of Psychological Trauma: Depression



- Problems with concentration or memory
- Impaired sleep
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Crying spells
- Thoughts of taking your life

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 33

### Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma- Intrusive Memories

- Threat to your life and/or self integrity, associated with
- Recurrent intrusive memories
- Nightmares
- Feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring
- Feeling a lot worse with reminders of the trauma
- Having increased physiological reactivity with reminders of the trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---


---

Slide 34

### Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma- Intrusive Memories



- A drive to the grocery store made difficult by seeing a bag of garbage along the side of the road (combat veterans)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 35

### Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma - Avoidance

- Avoiding things that would remind you of the trauma
- Trying to avoid thinking about the trauma
- Having trouble remembering an important aspects of the trauma



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 36

### Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma - Avoidance

- Decreased interest in things previously enjoyed (sports, movies, etc.)
- Feeling detached or cut off from others



- Feeling emotionally numb
- Sense of foreshortened future.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 37

**Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma-Avoidance**



*Psychological trauma can make people feel uncomfortable in crowds*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 38

**Mental Health Effects of Psychological Trauma-Hyperarousal**

- Trouble falling or staying asleep
- Irritability
- Outbursts of anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Hyper-vigilance
- Exaggerated startle response

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 39

**How Does the Brain & Body Respond to Stress?**



The body has its own in-built alarm system...

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 40

### How Does the Brain & Body Respond to Stress?

- Visualization of threat (sight, smell, hearing)
- Activation of fear response system – the amygdala
- Outpouring of stress hormones  
→ norepinephrine (adrenaline) and cortisol

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 41

### How Does the Brain & Body Respond to Stress?

- Moves energy to brain and muscles, away from stomach, increases heart rate and blood pressure
- Activation of the “fight or flight” response helps us survive
- Long-term over-activation of the body's stress response system can have its toll
- Coming home means it is time to turn off the stress response
- How do you do that?

---

---

---

---

---

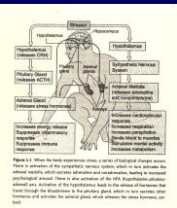
---

---

---

Slide 42

### How Does the Brain & Body Respond to Stress?



The diagram illustrates the physiological response to stress. It shows the brain (hypothalamus and pituitary gland) initiating the release of stress hormones (cortisol and norepinephrine) from the adrenal glands. These hormones then affect various parts of the body, including the heart, lungs, and muscles, leading to increased heart rate, blood pressure, and energy mobilization. The diagram also shows the role of the amygdala in processing stress signals.

From "Does Stress Damage the Brain?" Bremner, 2002; WW Norton

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 43




---



---



---



---



---



---

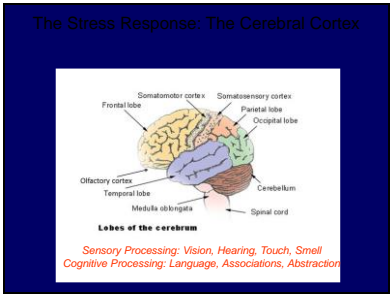


---



---

Slide 44




---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

Slide 45




---



---



---



---



---



---

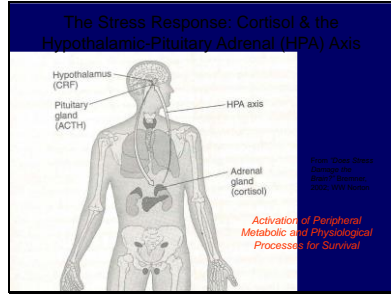


---



---

Slide 46



---

---

---

---

---

---

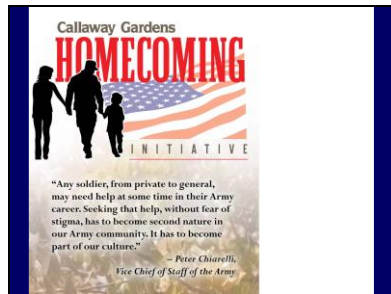
---

---

---

---

Slide 47



---

---

---

---

---

---

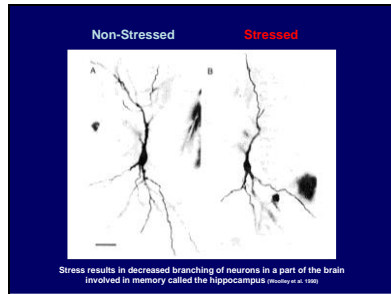
---

---

---

---

Slide 48



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

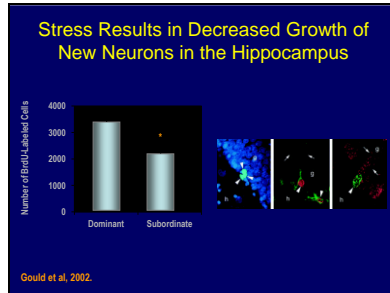
---

---

---



Slide 49



---

---

---

---

---

---

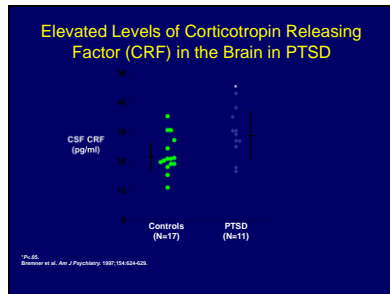
---

---

---

---

Slide 50



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 51

### How Does the Brain Learn Fear?

- When a bright light is linked to an electric shock the light alone will cause fear
- Learning of this "fear response" occurs in a brain area called the amygdala
- This is relevant to how we learn fear

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 52

### How Does the Brain Learn Fear?

- After seeing the light over and over the memory of the shock goes away
- This is called "extinction" and is caused by a brain area called the frontal cortex "turning off" the fear response
- With re-exposure to the shock + light the fear response comes back faster than ever
- Sometimes we have trouble "learning" that something is not threatening

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

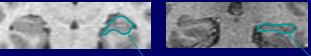
---

---

---

Slide 53

### PTSD is Associated With Changes in the Brain



**NORMAL**                      **PTSD**

MRI scan showing smaller volume of a brain area involved in memory called the hippocampus in a normal control and someone with PTSD.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

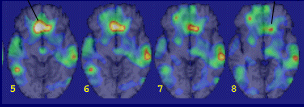
---

---

---

Slide 54

### Decreased Function in Frontal Cortex with Reminders of Psychological Trauma in PTSD



Medial PFC (BA 25)                      AC (BA 32)

5                      6                      7                      8

Decreased function in prefrontal cortex in veterans with PTSD during viewing of combat-related slides & sounds

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---



Slide 58

**The Recovery Process** 

- Trauma survivors can take control of their own recovery
- Partners are an essential part of the process
- Not a straight line to recovery

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 59

**The Recovery Process** 

Not this... More like this...

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 60

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Deep Breathing**

- Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 61

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Deep Breathing**

- The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 62

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Deep Breathing**

- If you have a hard time breathing from your abdomen while sitting up, try lying on the floor.
- Put a small book on your stomach, and try to breathe so that the book rises as you inhale and falls as you exhale.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 63

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

- Two-step process in which you systematically tense and relax different muscle groups in the body.
- Learn what tension feels like in different parts of the body.
- This awareness helps you spot and counteract the first signs of the muscular tension that accompanies stress. And as your body relaxes, so will your mind.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 64

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?**  
**Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

- You can combine deep breathing with progressive muscle relaxation for an additional level of relief from stress.
- Start at the feet and work their way up to the face
- Loosen your clothing, take off your shoes, and get comfortable.
- Take a few minutes to relax, breathing in and out in slow, deep breaths

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 65

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?**  
**Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

- When you're relaxed and ready to start, shift your attention to your right foot. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your right foot. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 66

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?**  
**Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your left foot. Follow the same sequence of muscle tension and release.
- Move slowly up through your body — legs, abdomen, back, neck, face — contracting and relaxing the muscle groups as you go.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 67

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?  
Guided Visual Imagery**

- Visualization, or guided imagery, is a variation on traditional meditation that can help relieve stress.
- When used as a relaxation technique, guided imagery involves imagining a scene in which you feel at peace, free to let go of all tension and anxiety.
- Choose whatever setting is most calming to you, whether a tropical beach, a favorite childhood spot, or a quiet wooded glen.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 68

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?  
Guided Visual Imagery**

*For example, if you are thinking about a dock on a quiet lake:*

- See the sun setting over the water
- Hear the birds singing
- Smell the pine trees
- Feel the cool water on your bare feet
- Taste the fresh, clean air

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 69

**Guided Visual Imagery**



- Close your eyes and let your worries drift away.
- Imagine your restful place. Picture it as vividly as you can—everything you can see, hear, smell, and feel.
- Guided imagery works best if you incorporate as many sensory details as possible.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 70

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions?**

- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Meditation

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 71

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Mindfulness Meditation**

- Mindfulness is the quality of being fully engaged in the present moment, without analyzing or otherwise "overthinking" the experience.
- Rather than worrying about the future or dwelling on the past, mindfulness meditation switches the focus to what's happening right now.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 72

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Mindfulness Meditation**

- Body scan – Body scanning cultivates mindfulness by focusing your attention on various parts of your body.
- Like progressive muscle relaxation, you start with your feet and work your way up.
- However, instead of tensing and relaxing your muscles, you simply focus on the way each part of your body feels without labeling the sensations as either "good" or "bad".

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Slide 73

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Mindfulness Meditation**

- Walking meditation - You don't have to be seated or still to meditate.
- In walking meditation, mindfulness involves being focused on the physicality of each step — the sensation of your feet touching the ground, the rhythm of your breath while moving, and feeling the wind against your face.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 74

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Mindfulness Meditation**

- Mindful eating – If you reach for food when you're under stress or gulp your meals down in a rush, try eating mindfully.
- Sit down at the table and focus your full attention on the meal (no TV, newspapers, or eating on the run).
- Eat slowly, taking the time to fully enjoy and concentrate on each bite.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 75

**How Do You Treat Stress Reactions? Mindfulness Meditation**

- Mindfulness meditation is not equal to zoning out.
- It takes effort to maintain your concentration and to bring it back to the present moment when your mind wanders or you start to drift off.
- But with regular practice, mindfulness meditation actually changes the brain – strengthening the areas associated with joy and relaxation, and weakening those involved in negativity and stress.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 76

**What is Resilience?**

- Capacity to avoid adverse mental and physical outcomes following exposure to extreme stress
- 70% of individuals free of major psychiatric outcome following exposure to traumatic event
- Traumatic event: threat to life of self or others or threat to physical integrity associated with intense fear, horror or helplessness)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 77

**What Promotes Resilience?**

- More education
- Older age
- Social support
- Specific training
- Absence of early life trauma
- Genetics
- Looking at 'glass half full'

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 78

**Factors of Resilience**

- Seeking support
- Seeking purpose in life
- Belief in ability of self to overcome adversity and to influence events and outcomes
- Belief one can learn from and grow from experience
- Self enhancement
- Repressive coping
- Positive emotion
- Laughter

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 79

### Factors of Resilience



- Altruism
- Bonding
- Cooperation
- Optimism
- Contingency planning
- Refraining
- Revisiting

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 80

### Mindfulness Training for PTSD Prevention

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for PTSD prevention
- MBSR is a program involving 8 weekly classes and a single 6 hour silent retreat session at the end
- Develop enhanced non-reactive awareness of the moment-to-moment experience of one's own thoughts

---

---

---

---

---

---

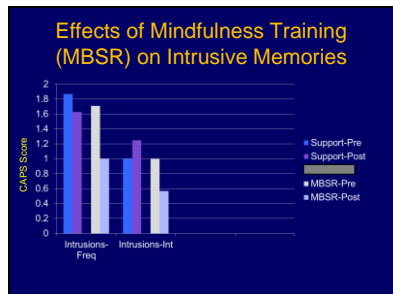
---

---

---

---

Slide 81



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 82

**Too Many Pills?**



- More than half of US on prescription drugs
- 81% take some kind of pill
- Companies create new markets, new risks
- 100,000 deaths per year from medications

Bremner JD. Before You Take That Pill: Why the Drug Industry May Be Bad For Your Health. Penguin, 2008.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

Slide 83

**What Will They Think of Next?**



March 27, 2006  
**Bacon That's Good For You? Researchers Create Pigs That Produce Heart-healthy Omega-3 Fatty Acids**  
*Science Daily* — Researchers report they have created pigs that produce omega-3 fatty acids, which are known to improve heart function and help reduce the risks for heart disease...

*Now you can have your cake (bacon?) and eat it too!*

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2006/03/060327ba0603.htm>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 84

**Medications for the Treatment of PTSD**

- Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Affect brain chemicals like serotonin involved in the symptoms of PTSD
- Paroxetine (Paxil)
- Sertraline (Zoloft)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

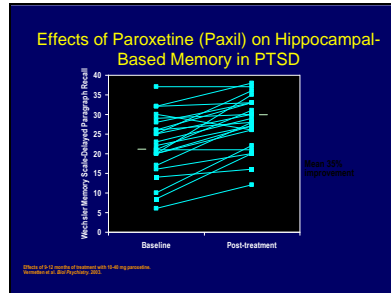
---

---

---



Slide 88



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

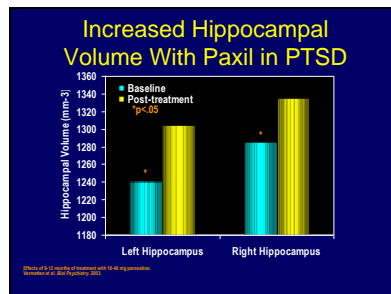
---

---

---

---

Slide 89



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

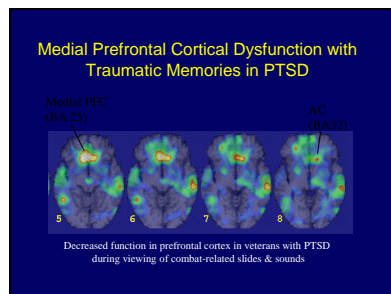
---

---

---

---

Slide 90



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

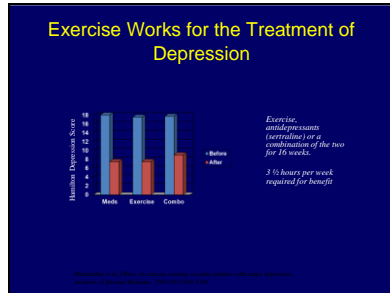
---

---

---

---

Slide 91



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 92

- ### Providing the Tools for Stress Reduction & Recovery: Conclusions
- Meditation training helps stress
  - Relaxation Techniques are useful
  - Diet and exercise can improve mental health outcomes
  - Medications and cognitive therapy can be useful for PTSD and other trauma-related mental health conditions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 93



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 94

**The Multiple Pathway Approach to Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Teaching stress reduction tools (e.g., relaxation, breathing)
- Psychoeducation – physiology of the stress response, effects of trauma on mental health symptoms
- Promote healthy lifestyles – diet & exercise – as way to improve mood & reduce stress
- Relationship and couples training
- START-NOW Program – acronym for learning steps of recovery

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 95

**START-NOW: Guiding Clients on the Path Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

START-NOW Seminar: "Guiding Clients in Recovery From Psychological Trauma"



J. Douglas Bremner, MD  
Professor of Psychiatry and Radiology  
Emory University School of Atlanta, Georgia

[dougbremner.com](http://dougbremner.com)  
[Starhowprogram.com](http://Starhowprogram.com)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 96

**Self Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Clients can learn tools for self recovery from psychological trauma
- Teaching self recovery promotes a sense of mastery and teaches clients to take responsibility for their recovery
- Avoids stigma of mental health treatment
- Many PTSD patients don't have resources to pay for long term therapy
- Teaching self recovery can be done with fewer sessions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Slide 97

**Self Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Clients suffer from social stigma and negativity from friends and family in their recovery attempts
- Comments like "just snap out of it" and "get over it, move on" are common but not helpful
- Those who purport to "help" may be connected to original trauma, or may be retraumatizing client (e.g., legal system)
- Lack of immediate recovery makes clients feel like failures, perpetuates pathology

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 98

**The Multiple Pathway Approach to Teaching Clients Recovery From Psychological Trauma**

- Teaching stress reduction tools (e.g., relaxation, breathing)
- Psychoeducation – physiology of the stress response, effects of trauma on mental health symptoms
- Promote healthy lifestyles – diet & exercise – as way to improve mood & reduce stress
- Relationship and couples training

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 99



**START NOW**

- START NOW Program
- Acronym for remembering points of recovery
- Seen as a circular journey rather than a point-to-point trip

---

---

---

---

---

---


---


---

---

---

Slide 100

The START NOW Program 

Instead of this... Do this...

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 101

**START-NOW**

- Steps to recovering from psychological trauma
- Individuals can take responsibility for their own recovery
- *Complementary to psychotherapy, vocational rehab, medication, and other interventions*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 102

**START**

- **S** is for Safety. Seek Safety and Support.
- **T** Talk about your trauma. tell people about how you feel. Translate feelings into words.
- **A** is for Action. Take Action, move beyond your restricted sphere. Use Altruism as a way to move beyond your trauma
- **R** is for Re-write history. Re-visit the scene of the trauma. Re-live it with new eyes
- **T** is for transform. Transform yourself from victim into survivor. Transform yourself to make it a better place (MADD, Megan's law) etc.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 103

**NOW**

- **N**. Notice others around you.
- **O**. Observe the world and yourself.
- **W**. Have Wonder at the world.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 104

**S is for START**



- Start the **START NOW** program.
- Start adopting better lifestyles.
- Start using tools to cope with stress.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 105

**S is also for STOP**

- Stop abusing drugs and alcohol
- Stop self-destructive, unhealthy, and addictive behaviors



---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

Slide 106



- Stop doing things that will have a negative impact on mental health
- Stop destroying relationships
- Stop the negative downward spiral that leads to isolation, depression, suicide and death.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 107

S is for SAFETY

- Seek Safety and Support.
- Surround yourself with supportive people
- Stay away from those who will bring you down, who tell you to "just snap out of it"

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 108

SAFETY

- Stay away from the sources of your trauma, e.g. if you are in an abusive relationship, get away from that first
- If you need to get away to buttress yourself, do it
- Sometimes it is also good to have Silence

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 109

**I is for Talking**



Tell people whom you trust how you feel

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 110

**I is also for Translating Feelings into Words**

- By putting trauma into words, it becomes a story, with a beginning, middle & end.
- Telling a story alone can have healing powers. Translate your inchoate feelings into something solid.
- Write it down. Keep a journal. Write a story.
- Use other forms of expression through art forms, like poetry, painting, music, and dance

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 111

