

Coping with Trauma: Hope Through Understanding

By Jon G. Allen

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Combining years of research, teaching, and experience treating trauma survivors, Dr. Jon G. Allen offers compassionate and practical guidance to understanding trauma and its effects on the self and relationships. *Coping With Trauma* is based on more than a decade of Dr. Allen's experience conducting educational groups for persons struggling with psychiatric disorders stemming from trauma. Written for a general audience, this book does not require a background in psychology. Readers will gain essential knowledge to embark on the process of healing from the complex wounds of trauma, along with a guide to current treatment approaches.

In this supportive and informative work, readers will be introduced to and encouraged in the process of healing by an author who is both witness and guide. This clearly written, insightful book not only teaches clinicians about trauma but also, equally important, teaches clinicians how to educate their patients about trauma.

Reshaped by recent developments in attachment theory, including the importance of cumulative stress over a lifetime, this compelling work retains the author's initial focus on attachment as he looks at trauma from two perspectives. From the psychological perspective, the author discusses the impact of trauma on emotion, memory, the self, and relationships, incorporating research from neuroscience to argue that trauma is a physical illness. From the psychiatric perspective, the author discusses various trauma-related disorders and symptoms: depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and dissociative disorders, along with a range of self-destructive behaviors to which trauma can make a contribution.

Important updates include substantive and practical information on - Emotion and emotion regulation, prompted by extensive contemporary research on emotion -- which is becoming a science unto itself.- Illness, based on current developments in the neurobiological understanding of trauma.- Depression, a pervasive trauma-related problem that poses a number of catch-22s for recovery.- Various forms of self-destructiveness -- substance abuse, eating disorders, and deliberate self-harm -- all construed as coping strategies that backfire.- Suicidal states and self-defeating aspects of personality disorders.

The author addresses the challenges of healing by reviewing strategies of emotion regulation as well as a wide range of sound treatment approaches. He concludes with a new chapter on the foundation of all healing: maintaining hope.

This exceptionally comprehensive overview of a wide range of traumatic experiences, written in nontechnical language with extensive references to both classic and contemporary theoretical, clinical, and research literature, offers a uniquely useful guide for victims of trauma, their family members, and mental health care professionals alike.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is a triumphant second edition for the best introduction to one of the most important topics in mental health. Allen's sophistication and grasp of an area of enormous complexity is matched only by his ability to communicate the depth of his understanding in an incisive, economical, and crystal clear way. The book is a remarkable feat of creative integration. It is quite simply the best book for presenting current ideas on trauma to anyone, from the intelligent lay reader to the student clinician to the most sophisticated practitioner."--

"Peter Fonagy, Ph.D., F.B.A., Freud Memorial Professor of Psychoanalysis and Director of the Sub-Department of Clinical Health Psychology at University College London; Chief Executive of the Anna Freud Centre, London, England; and Consultant to the Child and Family Program at the Menninger Department of Psychiatry at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas"

"Dr. Allen's understanding of the causes and effects of trauma, the detritus of the comorbid and ancillary difficulties that lie in its wake, and the potential for healing based on current approaches and new ones on the horizon make this volume a veritable treasure trove of state-of-the-art information and clinical wisdom....

This brilliant and compelling book leaves me feeling hopeful about the possibility for growth and generativity for those who have sustained trauma-and inspired by what contemporary psychiatry also offers to help them flourish."-- "From the Foreword by Kathryn J. Zerbe, M.D."

From the Inside Flap

Combining years of research, teaching, and experience treating trauma survivors, Dr. Jon G. Allen offers compassionate and practical guidance to understanding trauma and its effects on the self and relationships. *Coping With Trauma* is based on more than a decade of Dr. Allen's experience conducting educational groups for persons struggling with psychiatric disorders stemming from trauma. Written for a general audience, this book does not require a background in psychology. Readers will gain essential knowledge to embark on the process of healing from the complex wounds of trauma, along with a guide to current treatment approaches.

A respected researcher and educator of both trauma survivors and mental health professionals, Dr. Allen provides an insightful and informative resource that offers real hope in coming to terms with trauma. With an author who is both witness and guide, readers will be introduced to and encouraged in a process of healing that will reach the depth of wounds to the soul, mind, and body.

For clinicians, this compelling work includes broad discussions of trauma from both psychological and psychiatric perspectives. New developments in attachment theory have reshaped the whole book. Important updates from the first edition include new chapters on illness and depression, including suicidal states; self-defeating aspects of personality disorders and self-destructiveness; emotion and emotion regulation; and -- most crucial -- maintaining hope, the foundation of healing.

This exceptionally comprehensive overview of a wide range of traumatic experiences offers a uniquely useful guide for patients, their loved ones, and mental health care professionals alike.

About the Author

Jon G. Allen, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Baylor College of Medicine, and Senior Staff Psychologist at The Menninger Clinic.

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Lena Robertson:

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