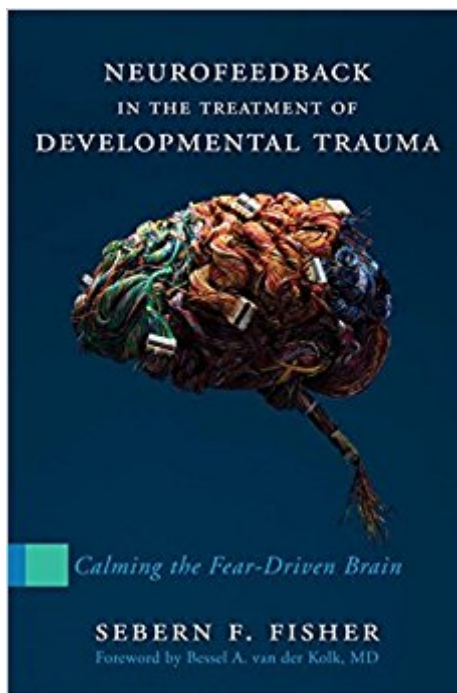




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Neurofeedback In The Treatment Of Developmental Trauma: Calming The Fear-Driven Brain



Synopsis

Working with the circuitry of the brain to restore emotional health and well-being. Neurofeedback, a type of "brain training" that allows us to see and change the patterns of our brain, has existed for over 40 years with applications as wide-ranging as the treatment of epilepsy, migraines, and chronic pain to performance enhancement in sports. Today, leading brain researchers and clinicians, interested in what the brain can tell us about mental health and well being, are also taking notice. Indeed, the brain's circuitry—its very frequencies and rhythmic oscillations—reveals much about its role in our emotional stability and resilience. Neurofeedback allows clinicians to guide their clients as they learn to transform brain-wave patterns, providing a new window into how we view and treat mental illness. In this cutting-edge book, experienced clinician Sebern Fisher keenly demonstrates neurofeedback's profound ability to help treat one of the most intractable mental health concerns of our time: severe childhood abuse, neglect, or abandonment, otherwise known as developmental trauma. When an attachment rupture occurs between a child and her or his primary caregiver, a tangle of complicated symptoms can set in: severe emotional dysregulation, chronic dissociation, self-destructive behaviors, social isolation, rage, and fear. Until now, few reliable therapies existed to combat developmental trauma. But as the author so eloquently presents in this book, by focusing on a client's brain-wave patterns and "training" them to operate at different frequencies, the rhythms of the brain, body, and mind are normalized, attention stabilizes, fear subsides, and, with persistent, dedicated training, regulation sets in. A mix of fundamental theory and nuts-and-bolts practice, the book delivers a carefully articulated and accessible look at the mind and brain in developmental trauma, what a "trauma identity" looks like, and how neurofeedback can be used to retrain the brain, thereby fostering a healthier, more stable state of mind. Essential clinical skills are also fully covered, including how to introduce the idea of neurofeedback to clients, how to combine it with traditional psychotherapy, and how to perform assessments. In his foreword to the book, internationally recognized trauma expert Bessel van der Kolk, MD, praises Fisher as "an immensely experienced neurofeedback practitioner [and] the right person to teach us how to integrate it into clinical practice." Filled with illuminating client stories, powerful clinical insights, and plenty of clinical "how to," she accomplishes just that, offering readers a compelling look at exactly how this innovative model can be used to engage the brain to find peace and to heal. 8 pages of color illustrations

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Customer Reviews

“[A] major breakthrough in the treatment of developmental trauma . . . [A] must-read for clinicians . . . [A] must-read for individuals whose lives have been hijacked by the fear-driven brain.” . . . [P]rovides a clear defined presentation of what developmental trauma is and how neurofeedback helps to form new neural connections, soothing regulation and emotional stability. . . . I can say, as a trauma therapist, who uses neurofeedback as one of many treatment modalities, Sebern Fishers’ methods are tried and true. I use these methods and find them extremely effective. - Psychology Today, Dr. Diane Brain Health

“The writing is excellent. [Sebern Fisher] helps explain why and how developmental trauma devastates and also why and how it is different than single-incident trauma or traditional post-traumatic stress. . . . She has taken on the mountain of the human brain and helped us scale it and understand the dragon of fear that resides within for those of us with developmental trauma. . . . Because of her work I know there’s higher for me to climb.” - Heal Write Now

“This is a truly groundbreaking book. Sebern Fisher combines a mastery of neurofeedback with a real knack for applying neuroscience to do nothing less than lay the groundwork for a new, powerful, mind-brain approach to the most serious cases of developmentally-based psychological trauma. Even if you don’t practice neurofeedback, the treasure of precious clinical insights it offers so deepen an appreciation of the brain-mind interaction, that you can’t help but be changed by this book.” - Norman Doidge, MD, author of *The Brain that Changes Itself*

“This book illustrates the masterful use of

neurofeedback in psychotherapy for developmental trauma disorders. A must-read for all clinicians involved in the treatment of trauma spectrum disorders!

—Ruth Lanius, MD, PhD, Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Research Unit, University of Western Ontario

“This is the year, or perhaps the century, of the brain. What more can we ask than to have someone tell us how to change the brain in ways that improve our lives. In this book Sebern Fisher does just that. Over the many years of our many discussions about what works and what doesn’t work in treating mental health problems, she has made a convincing argument that neurofeedback as a direct approach to changing behavioral patterns of the brain is an approach worth putting your money on. A truly wonderful, clinically insightful book.

—Marsha M. Linehan, PhD, Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry and Director of the Behavioral Research and Therapy Clinics, University of Washington

Sebern F. Fisher, MA, is a psychotherapist and neurofeedback practitioner in private practice who specializes in attachment issues. She trains professionals nationally and internationally on neurofeedback, neurofeedback and attachment disorder, and the integration of neurofeedback with psychotherapy. She lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

I am in recovery from Developmental Trauma and Dissociative Identity Disorder and reading this book has been so helpful for me. It explains why I haven’t seen any real progress in reduction in PTSD symptoms even though I’ve had very good therapy. What Fisher is sharing is important information for anyone working with folks with developmental trauma. Don’t let not having access to neurofeedback put you off if that’s the case, the information in this book is still very important, and you can achieve much brain training by reading Les Fehmi’s book "The Open-Focus Brain: Harnessing the Power of Attention to Heal Mind and Body" and doing the exercises on your own at home. I have seen many of the changes that Fisher details that clients experience with neurofeedback with doing Fehmi’s Open Focus exercises, so don’t write off Fisher’s book as a therapist or client if you don’t think that neurofeedback is a possibility for you. This book helped me to understand why I’ve seen a massive reduction in PTSD symptoms in seven weeks of Open Focus brain training that I haven’t seen in months of therapy. It helped me to understand that with these symptoms, direct work with the limbic system is so important, because that’s where the reactivity is. It helped me to understand that everything I’ve done in the past that calmed my Autonomic Nervous System wasn’t sustained, because the ANS is controlled by the Central Nervous System, and my hugely over-active amygdala kept setting off the stress response again

and pushing me back into sympathetic nervous system dominance once again. Fisher's writing also helped me to understand why after weeks of success brain training my brain is now rebelling big time - having never experienced "normalcy", my brain is terrified of it. Now that I know what's happening, I will be able to address it, so this was hugely valuable information for me. Something else important that I gained from this book was an understanding of just how much of my challenge comes from the fact that my mother suffering from unresolved Developmental Trauma herself. I've been focusing mostly on the abuse, but this book shows so powerfully how much we are affected by our mother's brainwave patterns, particularly in the first couple of years of life. I skipped the technical bits on neurofeedback because I don't have access to it where I live, but I still got so much out of the book. Fisher's approach is so wise and compassionate, and her client stories are very inspiring. She really shows how so much of what we consider to be personality traits or mind is actually brain activity, and how if you train the brain to fire differently, so many of the challenging reactions just fall away. You no longer need to wrestle with yourself to change behaviour, the behaviour simply falls away. This book contains so much important information. Many, many thanks to Sebern Fisher for all that you are bringing into the world.

The book is encouraging, easy to read and offers a possible solution for kids and adults who had less than optimal parenting. There may be a solution to wasted potentials. A great alternative to locking more troubled kids up. Check w your doctor then try it and monitor results for yourself. Recommended reading.

An essential book on early life trauma!!! So insightful into the brain. Amazing stories.

I have read many texts lately on neuroscience and developmental disorders, and this is the finest work I have encountered. Just reading the opening chapter will change your view of a child's needs, especially those diagnosed with RAD and other "disorders" that I have come to understand as attachment breaches and dysregulation of the brain. Fisher writes with intense compassion, breathtaking honesty, and professional precision. If you only read one text in this area, this is it.

Content gets 4-5 stars, but presentation gets 2 stars. Almost every page has a phrase like "as we already discussed" or "as we will discuss in Chapter xx" Some of the figure references are incorrect. The writing is a bit verbose, sometimes not as clear as it could be and at times repetitive. Author comes across as an excellent therapist and neurofeedback practitioner, but a weak writer.

My therapist recommended this book as I was considering undertaking neurofeedback training. The case histories and personal experiences of the author are very compelling.

Reading this book has certainly had a profound effect on the way that I view the operation of the human mind and the possibilities that exist for effective treatment options in the remedy of attachment disorders and trauma. The book is well written and easy to read and follow and I recommend it highly to those interested in learning how to provide treatment using neurofeedback. It is a great introduction and practical resource.

Excellent Book. Highly recommend to anyone looking into biofeedback or neurotherapy!

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