

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT FOR THE LAST TIME

Healing Trauma

Many people with ongoing weight and emotional eating struggles have experienced trauma in their lives. We tend to associate the word 'trauma' with violence, abuse, or catastrophic events, but everyday experiences can also fall under the umbrella of trauma, depending on how you experienced them.

If you think you may have unresolved trauma, it's a great idea to seek help. It's very common to want to avoid exploring difficult memories, but healing could be an important step in your journey to permanent weight loss, as well as supporting your emotional wellbeing.

Getting Help

I highly recommend seeking professional help – healing trauma is something you'll want to do with a skilled trauma therapist.

The important thing with therapy is that you don't just try one type of therapy or one therapist and decide it's not for you. There are so many therapists out there. If you decide to try trauma therapy, be willing to meet with different therapists until you find the right fit.

Types of Therapy

Traditional talk therapy can be tremendously helpful, but I suggest that you seek out someone with specialist trauma training. There can often be trauma that is stored in the body that can't be fully resolved with, say, cognitive behavioral therapy alone.

If you're interested in exploring some different forms of therapy, the following pages have some evidence-supported options to consider.

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT FOR THE LAST TIME

Healing Trauma

EMDR

EMDR, or Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, is now a well-established therapy that involves briefly focusing on the trauma memory while being guided to rapidly move the eyes. EMDR therapy changes the way that the memory is stored in the brain, reducing trauma symptoms.

To find an EMDR-trained therapist in your area, visit emdr.com.

Somatic Experiencing Therapy

Somatic Experiencing therapy, pioneered by Dr. Peter A. Levine, involves gently learning to experience and gain tolerance for difficult and suppressed emotions. It offers a method of releasing emotion that is stored in the body.

To learn more and find a Somatic Experiencing practitioner, visit traumahealing.org.

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy is a treatment approach developed by Pat Ogden, PhD. It combines working with the body as well as the mind to address trauma and attachment issues. The therapist helps the client learn to self-regulate and work on things like physical habits and posture to promote healing.

To learn more and find a Sensorimotor Psychotherapy practitioner, visit the Sensorimotor Psychotherapy Institute and click on "Therapist Directory."

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT FOR THE LAST TIME

Healing Trauma

Internal Family Systems Therapy

Internal Family Systems, or IFS, is a therapy that helps people heal by accessing and loving their protective and wounded inner parts. It's based on the idea that, just like members of a family, inner parts have different relationships and roles that may need attention.

To learn more, visit the IFS institute or read *No Bad Parts: Healing Trauma and Restoring Wholeness With the Internal Family Systems Model* by Richard C. Schwartz, PhD.

To find an Internal Family Systems therapist visit the IFS Institute and click on "find a professional" or search the internet for "IFS therapist." Training level ranges from IFS Level 1 (the lowest) to IFS Level 3 (the highest).

Further Reading

If you'd like to educate yourself more on trauma, here are three great resources:

Transforming Trauma: Discovering Wholeness and Healing After Trauma by Dr James S. Gordon, MD

What Happened to You?: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing by Dr Bruce D Perry, MD, PhD and Oprah Winfrey

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma by Bessel van der Kolk, MD