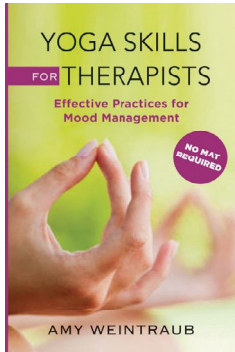


Reviews



Yoga Skills for Therapists: Effective Practices for Mood Management

By Amy Weintraub
New York: W. W. Norton & Company
Review by Elissa Cobb

The words “no mat required” appear boldly on the cover of Amy Weintraub’s new and timely book *Yoga Skills for Therapists: Effective Practices for Mood Management*. They playfully support Amy’s intention to invite psychotherapists to delve, not into the yoga classroom, but into the broader and deeper elements of yoga, in such a way as to support the reader to re-emerge with simple, nondogmatic yogic practices in hand that easily complement any psychotherapeutic modality—an intention that is skillfully and genuinely achieved.

This groundbreaking publication is a well-organized resource of experiential information for those therapists who realize that involving a client’s body and soul in the therapeutic process is essential to his or her self-exploration. Through case studies, scientific research findings, and guided practices, a solid foundation is laid that validates yoga as a safe, highly effective, and easily adaptable path toward profound and lasting psychoemotional healing.

Within its pages, yoga skills for becoming present to oneself, such as breathing, *mantra* (sound), *mudra* (energy-moving hand gestures), imagery, affirmations, and relaxation techniques, are introduced simply and clearly. The reader is encouraged to explore these practices experientially in a way that supports the therapist’s personal growth, as well as his or her ability to transmit these same skills to clients. Weintraub skillfully guides the reader toward the sort of experimentation that deepens understanding of the skills presented and then suggests ways in which to gradually assimilate yoga practices into a clinical setting.

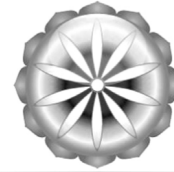
Most importantly, Weintraub highlights yoga philosophy’s central teachings of “self-awareness,” “self-acceptance,” “self-efficacy,” and “self-regulation” as key supports to the personal challenges that are inherent in life and relationship. She also recognizes that many therapists already include similar skills in the therapeutic setting, and suggests building on that familiarity from these new perspectives. The reader discovers that guiding a client toward a felt sense of self, through such “inspirations to heal,” may help shift the process of therapy toward a more empowering and effective one.

Weintraub also acknowledges the potential of yoga practices to “enhance the non-verbal work of therapy, such as building trust in the relationship” between therapist and client; trust that is based on the capacity for self-inquiry and non-judgment on both sides of the therapeutic relationship. However, she writes with great respect for “talk” therapy and its benefits, presenting yoga practices as being complementary to, rather than an alternative for, psychotherapy.

In these ways, *Yoga Skills for Therapists* brilliantly opens a door to the physical and spiritual layers of a client—one that many therapists and counselors have been waiting to walk through. From a place of genuine respect, integrity, and intention, Amy Weintraub offers easily applied foundational yogic practices to enrich the therapeutic experience for both client and practitioner. **YTT**

Elissa Cobb, MA, is the director of training programs for Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy (PRYT). She has more than 25 years of combined practice and teaching experience in body/mind practices. She has a master’s degree in embodiment studies, has developed many of the current PRYT training programs, and has trained hundreds of students. Her book, The Forgotten Body, was published in 2008 by Satya House Publications.

(Reviews continued on page 38)



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