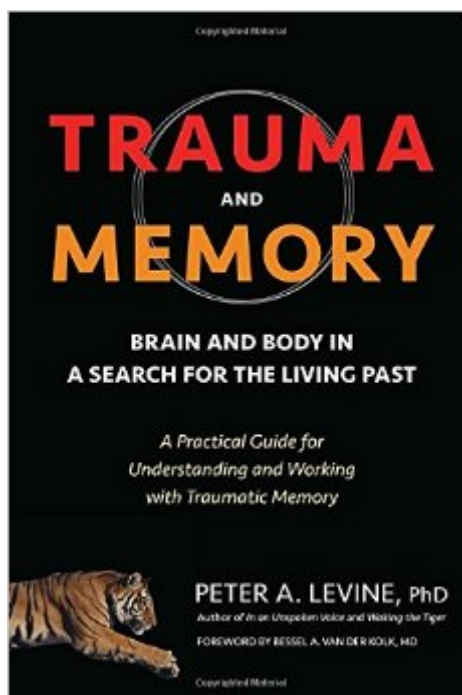


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# Trauma And Memory: Brain And Body In A Search For The Living Past: A Practical Guide For Understanding And Working With Traumatic Memory



## Synopsis

In *Trauma and Memory*, bestselling author Dr. Peter Levine (creator of the Somatic Experiencing approach) tackles one of the most difficult and controversial questions of PTSD/trauma therapy: Can we trust our memories? While some argue that traumatic memories are unreliable and not useful, others insist that we absolutely must rely on memory to make sense of past experience. Building on his 45 years of successful treatment of trauma and utilizing case studies from his own practice, Dr. Levine suggests that there are elements of truth in both camps. While acknowledging that memory can be trusted, he argues that the only truly useful memories are those that might initially seem to be the least reliable: memories stored in the body and not necessarily accessible by our conscious mind. While much work has been done in the field of trauma studies to address "explicit" traumatic memories in the brain (such as intrusive thoughts or flashbacks), much less attention has been paid to how the body itself stores "implicit" memory, and how much of what we think of as "memory" actually comes to us through our (often unconsciously accessed) felt sense. By learning how to better understand this complex interplay of past and present, brain and body, we can adjust our relationship to past trauma and move into a more balanced, relaxed state of being. Written for trauma sufferers as well as mental health care practitioners, *Trauma and Memory* is a groundbreaking look at how memory is constructed and how influential memories are on our present state of being.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What do you do when "talk therapies" don't work? Could it be because your traumatic experiences are trapped deeper in the mind, in emotional and procedural (body) memory? In this groundbreaking book, Peter Levine, the creator of Somatic Experiencing, applies his 45 years of clinical experience with trauma survivors to the investigation and understanding of traumatic memory. Whether you are a healer or a survivor, this book is incredibly useful. I was especially drawn to the chapter "The Hero's Journey." Using case examples, Levine explains the processes that a survivor must go through, especially the push and pull of integrating traumatic memories into a narrative conception of self. (Having been born prematurely, I was deeply moved by his work with a child who had a medically difficult birth, and showed signs of trauma). The body holds on to our traumas, seeking resolution from those moments when our nervous systems were overloaded and our survival instincts could not respond adequately at the time. Like the heroes and heroines of myth, we must embark on a dark and mysterious journey into the deepest parts of ourselves. Healing, the boon of the journey, is not for the faint of heart. Throughout, though, Levine emphasizes the inherent drive for survival, even flourishing, inherent in all beings (and he even backs it with neuroscience!). Survivors are not "victims," nor "failures." The body may act as if a survivor has failed, trapping him in a feedback loop of trigger and response. But ultimately, we survived. We will triumph. Thus Levine writes about survivors with great warmth and encouragement. For me, this book explained so much of my own healing journey, and why certain therapies and modalities have not worked.

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