



Sept 2022

Volume 22 Number 4

## **Treating Trauma with Energy Psychology, Edited by Catherine Folkers**

### **BOOK REVIEW by John Freedom<sup>1</sup>**

1. Research Chair, Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology

Advanced Integrative Therapy is a comprehensive energy psychology technique which integrates psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, exposure and imaginal therapy with a holistic, body centered, energetic approach. It was developed by Asha Clinton, PhD. AIT rapidly and deeply treats traumatic symptoms such as disturbing emotions, negative beliefs and attitudes, addictions, compulsions, obsessions, dissociation, physical abreactions, and spiritual challenges.

Along with other EP modalities, it posits that virtually all psychological issues, as well as many physical ones, have their roots in trauma. AIT is unique in that it utilizes “energy testing” (manual muscle testing) to guide the treatment and treats issues by facilitating the flow of energy through the body’s energy centers (chakras). Since its inception, AIT has developed a small but devoted following of practitioners, who laud both the reported speed and thoroughness of its treatments.

Up until recently there had been no published research on AIT. Last year psychotherapist Elizabeth Pace published a case study entitled “Efficacy of Advanced

Integrative Therapy in Treating Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Preliminary Case Report,” which appeared in the September 2021 issue of the *International Journal of Healing and Caring*. Tabatha Bird Weaver also conducted a case study, entitled “The use of Advanced Integrative Therapy with C-PTSD and intergenerational trauma transmission: A case study,” which was published in the November, 2021 issue of *the Energy Psychology Journal*.

Greg Brown, professor of psychiatry and colleagues at UNLV School of Medicine recently conducted a pilot study of assessed clinician perceptions of AIT using a cross-sectional survey. This included clinician demographics and observed responses to AIT treatment based upon reported Subjective Units of Distress (SUD), associated emotions, and somatic sensations. Over 80% of the respondents reported using AIT with their clients within the past six months. Seventy-seven per cent of the sessions were used to clear patterns of negative events, rather than a single event. Over 75% of events were identified as childhood-related or otherwise chronic. The average pre-AIT intervention SUD score was reported as  $8.3 \pm 2.7$  out of 10, which in 92% of cases, dropped to either 0 or 1 following a single session of AIT. The authors conclude, “*The findings suggest that additional client-based assessments and randomized clinical trials with known therapies as a control are warranted to continue the systematic observation of AIT.*”

AIT is being used to treat, not just individual trauma, but also ancestral, prenatal and inter-generational traumas. Pace notes, “*Intergenerational trauma is defined as trauma that is passed down from those who directly experienced an event to their subsequent generations. A research study in mice paired an electric shock with a certain smell, the offspring of the mice in the study were still averse to the smell, with no*

*presence of the electric shock up to two generations later. .... It is reasonable to posit that some of our clients' most baffling clinical presentations may have their roots in intergenerational trauma, which can make such a client difficult to treat. These clients are not 'in denial,' recalcitrant, or unwilling to 'do their work' in treatment, but they can often be treated as such by clinicians who do not understand why their symptoms do not improve."*

Now there is a new book, "Treating Trauma with Energy Psychology," (TTwEP) edited by Catherine Folkers with chapters by AIT clinicians Folkers, Marcia Guimares, Georgia Howorth-Fair, Vann Joines, Susan Josephson, Tony Roffers, Nancy Smith, Glenn Soberman and Gina Verseman. Each chapter presents one or more case histories along with commentary. The book is well written and visually appealing, and the case studies reported are insightful.

The authors discuss treating a variety of mental health conditions including phobias, panic attacks, psychogenic illness, and complex PTSD. The results they describe are impressive. They report successfully treating phobias in one session; successful treatment of Crohn's disease; and one co-author used the "C" word in discussing her "cure" of a woman with bipolar disorder. The authors state that AIT tends to work more "deeply" and "rapidly" than traditional talk therapies. Treatment consists of bringing unconscious conditioned responses up to conscious awareness, and then de-conditioning them and reframing associated limiting beliefs using the AIT Trauma Protocols. Several of the authors report incorporating Robert Goulding's Redecision Therapy as well as other therapies.

AIT appears to be a thorough and comprehensive therapy, and these case studies make for fascinating reading. In *Case: John: A Psychospiritual Journey*, Glenn Soberman reports treating a man with anxiety, panic attacks, abandonment and insecure attachment issues. The client had a long history of accidents, illnesses and surgeries which were treated with the AIT Trauma Protocol. Soberman also treated him for both past life and ancestral traumas using AIT, IFS (Internal Family Systems) and Non-Dual Mindfulness. He notes:

*“Connecting inwards is a resource that can help us experience joy and peace even though we still may experience anxiety, PTSD or depression. Reconnecting to our true nature gives us hope and resilience as we see the Light at the end of the tunnel, present in the here and now.”*

While we are accustomed to hearing glowing reports of new therapies, especially from practitioners. As a researcher, I had some issues with TTwEP. The book discusses only apparent “successes,” and does not mention failures or limitations. Also, none of the case studies used pre and post assessments; not even SUDS. Gina Verseman states, *“Nancy and I both believe that our work is the impetus for her increasingly secure sense of self, improved relationships with others, and overall physical health, and her new opportunities in her career.....”* This may well be true, but how can we really know whether any therapy is more effective than other modalities, without objective assessments? Both clients and clinicians are susceptible to placebo effects. Psychotherapists, like all human beings, can be influenced by confirmation bias.

These issues notwithstanding, *Treating Trauma with Energy Psychology* makes for fascinating clinical reading, and makes an important contribution to the literature on trauma treatment. We look forward to future research and reports from the AIT community.

## References

- Brown, G., Batra, K., Hong, S., Sottile, R., Bakhru, R. & Dorin, E. (2022). Therapists' Observations in Reduction of Unpleasant Emotions Following Advanced Integrative Therapy Interventions. *Energy Psychology Journal*, 14(1). doi 10.9769/EPJ.2022.14.1.GB
- Folkers, C. (Editor). (2022). *Treating Trauma with Energy Psychology*. Outskirts Press. <https://www.amazon.com/Treating-Trauma-Psychology-Catherine-Folkers/dp/1977244386>
- Pace, E. (2021). Efficacy Of Advanced Integrative Therapy In Treating Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Preliminary Case Report. *International Journal of Healing and Caring*, 21(2)35-53. <https://ijhc.org/tag/volume-21-number-2/>
- Weaver, T. B. (2021). The use of Advanced Integrative Therapy with C-PTSD and intergenerational trauma transmission: A case study. *Energy Psychology: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, 13(2), 23–38. doi:10.9769/EPJ.2021.13.2.TBW

## Bio

John Freedom is the Research Chair for the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology. John trained in EMDR with Francine Shapiro in 1995, Thought Field Therapy with Suzanne Connolly in 1996 and EFT with Gary Craig in 1998. I have been practicing EFT ETC for over 20 years. He has served on ACEP's (Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology) Board of Directors 2006-12, and currently serves on the Board of Trustees for EFTi; and he is an executive director of FREA: Finding Recovery and Empowerment from Abuse. He holds certifications in NLP, EFT, EMDR and Havening, and incorporate rhythm, movement and somatic awareness in my work with "others." He is the author of "Heal Yourself with Emotional Freedom Technique" published by Hodder & Stoughton, London; and has led trainings and workshops throughout the US and in Europe

## TERMS OF USE

The International Journal of Healing and Caring is distributed electronically as an open access journal, available at no charge. You may print your downloaded copy of this article or any other article for relaxed reading. We encourage you to share this article with friends and colleagues.

C/O International Journal of Healing and Caring  
31907 South Davis Ranch Rd.  
Marana, AZ 85658

Email: [ijhcjournal@earthlink.net](mailto:ijhcjournal@earthlink.net) Website: <http://www.ijhc.org>

copyright © 2022 IJHC. All rights reserved.

DISCLAIMER: <http://ijhc.org/disclaimer>