



Healing the Mind through the Power of Story: The Promise of Narrative Psychiatry

By Lewis Mehl-Madrona

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Psychiatry that recognizes the essential role of community in creating a new story of mental health

- Provides a critique of conventional psychiatry and a look at what mental health care could be
- Includes stories used in the author's healing practice that draw from traditional cultures around the world

Conventional psychiatry is not working. The pharmaceutical industry promises it has cures for everything that ails us, yet a recent study on antidepressants showed there is no difference of success in prescribed pharmaceuticals from placebos when all FDA-reported trials are considered instead of just the trials published in journals. Up to 80 percent of patients with bipolar depression remain symptomatic despite conventional treatment, and 10 to 20 percent of these patients commit suicide.

In *Healing the Mind through the Power of Story*, Dr. Mehl-Madrona shows what mental health care could be. He explains that within a narrative psychiatry model of mental illness, people are not defective, requiring drugs to “fix” them. What needs “fixing” is the ineffective stories they have internalized and succumbed to about how they should live in the world. Drawing on traditional stories from cultures around the world, Dr. Mehl-Madrona helps his patients re-story their lives. He shows how this innovative approach is actually more compatible with what we are learning about the biology of the brain and genetics than the conventional model of psychiatry. Drawing on wisdom both ancient and new, he demonstrates the power and success of narrative psychiatry to bring forth change and lasting transformation.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Lewis Mehl-Madrona combines an emerging modern understanding of the power of story to change minds and brains with a traditional recognition of the shaping power of story.” (*Dr. Brian Boyd, author of On the Origin of Stories*)

“This book will revolutionize how we think about psychological healing, giving us new tools to achieve harmony and balance in all aspects of our lives.” (*Hyla Cass, M.D., author of 8 Weeks to Vibrant Health*)

“... *Healing the Mind Through the Power of Story* is an excellent account of a relatively new perspective of mental health treatment. Mehl-Madrona's explanations of the need for alternative treatments to medications and specific treatment goals for patients with serious mental disorders are well presented. The only concerns brought about by this approach to mental health are public opinion and compliance. The world still lives by the promise of a pill as the cure for any disease, and it is still difficult to get people to accept alternatives to that paradigm, especially in psychology.” (*American Psychological Association, February 2011*)

“This wonderful book is deep, moving, honest, educational, and will open your mind to the power of storytelling to heal and know more intimately the vastness of our beings. As a physician and indigenous healer, Lewis Mehl-Madrona uniquely blends his knowledge of science and the greater mysteries to help us SEE more clearly.” (*Judith Orloff, M.D., author of Second Sight*)

From the Back Cover

SELF-TRANSFORMATION / PERSONAL GROWTH

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LEWIS MEHL-MADRONA, M.D., Ph.D., is certified in psychiatry, family practice, and geriatrics and worked for years in rural emergency medicine. He is the author of several books, including the bestselling *Coyote Medicine*, is a professor of family medicine at the University of Hawaii School of Medicine and of psychology at Argosy University, and lectures around the world.

About the Author

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