

Physical Therapy for PTSD + other mental health disorders: The Body Keeps the Score

Presenter

Caryn McAllister, PT, DPT

Instructional Level

Multiple

This presentation falls into the following category:

Pediatrics

Geriatrics

Neurology

Cardiovascular Pulmonary

Orthopedic, Manual Therapy, Sports Medicine

Private Practice: business strategies, marketing

Pelvic Health

Pain Management

Course Description

World War I and the polio pandemic both led to a huge influx of individuals requiring care to overcome or adapt to physical challenges. This resulted in physical therapy becoming more mainstream in our society. The emphasis at the time was only on the musculoskeletal system.

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an increased demand for healthcare, this time for both physical and mental health. Over the past few years, we as a society have seen a marked rise in psychiatric disorders including depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Western medicine has long divided physical conditions (which we are generally more accustomed to treating) from psychological ones, which physical therapists have tended to not address.

In this presentation Dr. McAllister will present a current and evolving theory of the mind body connection highlighting the artificial distinction between physical and mental disorders. Using current neurological and psychological research, Dr. Caryn McAllister will emphasize the profound effect the brain, and therefore mind, has on the body. She will prove why physical therapists now must be competent in taking an accurate psychiatric history and addressing mental health disorders in at least a limited fashion to provide optimal physical therapy care as front line health care workers.

Research on depression, anxiety, depression, trauma, epigenetics, somatic therapies, and neuroplasticity will be introduced and case studies will be presented. Attendees will leave this course empowered to be able to recognize, address and better work with patients with mental health disorders. It will open their eyes to the evolution of growth of physical therapy.

Learning Objectives

Identify 3 common psychological disorders seen in patients post Covid 19 pandemic

Be comfortable approaching patients regarding trauma and explaining how healing might be affected due to trauma

State 3 methods that can be incorporated into physical therapy treatments for patients who have undergone trauma

Key References: Minimum of 5 current references

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Jacquart SD, Marshak HH, Dos Santos H, et al.. The effects of simultaneous exercise and psychotherapy on depressive symptoms in inpatient, psychiatric older adults. *Adv Mind Body Med.* 2014;28(4):8-17

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Gladish N, Merrill SM, Kobor MS. Childhood Trauma and Epigenetics: State of the Science and Future. *Curr Environ Health Rep.* 2022 Dec;9(4):661-672. doi: 10.1007/s40572-022-00381-5. Epub 2022 Oct 15. PMID: 36242743.

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Speaker 1 brief bio:

Dr. Caryn McAllister graduated from UCONN and Simmons College with degrees in physical therapy. She has 28 years experience in the field, 16 years experience in clinical research, served as an adjunct professor at Sacred Heart University and Norwalk Community College, and owns High Quality Home Therapy, a multidisciplinary private practice in Stamford, CT. A trauma informed physiotherapist, Caryn specializes in complex medical cases, chronic pain, spasticity, headache and all things neuro.