

Connecting Conversations:

Expanding our understanding to transform our trauma-worlds

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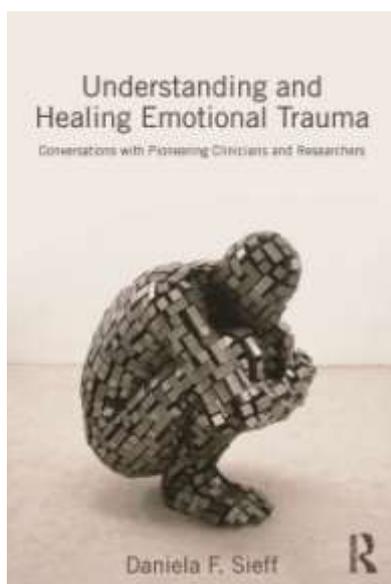
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Chapter Summary

When we are emotionally traumatised we live in an inner world that is fundamentally different to the world in which we would have lived, had we not experienced trauma. This world is organised around the implicitly embodied conviction that aspects of our physical, emotional or mental survival are at risk. It is built upon the distorting foundations of fear, dissociation and shame. Living in a 'trauma-world' leaves us no choice but to experience ourselves and others in ways that create new layers of pain and suffering.

Understanding trauma from a variety of perspectives helps us to experience ourselves and others more authentically. It encourages us to develop an embodied awareness of our unconscious fears, and recognise how they shape our relationships. It emboldens us to reach deep inside our minds and bodies, and reconnect to the dissociated parts of ourselves. It frees us to dismantle the shame-full belief that we are fundamentally inadequate, and relate to ourselves with more clarity, compassion and responsibility. In short, a multi-faceted understanding offers us guidance, support and inspiration as we engage in the challenging inner work required to transform our trauma-worlds.

To illustrate this, insights from different conversations are brought together to address three questions: (1) Why are particular types of childhood experiences likely to leave us traumatised (2) Why does emotional trauma leave us prone to reacting in ways that create new suffering? (3) Why is it hard to make the changes that take us out of our trauma-worlds? The answers that emerge speak not only to these specific questions; they also help us to understand what it means to heal emotional trauma and live a more and vibrant and fulfilling life.



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