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A better understanding of PTSD

We see PTSD in our patients who have suffered unresolved trauma. In this podcast, Ezra Klein interviews Dr Bessel van der Kolk who wrote the book “The Body Keeps the Score”.¹

The key points to help us understand what’s going on for patients with PTSD:

- The effect of trauma lives in both the emotional mind and the body’s physiology.
- Traumatic experiences rewire the brain to cause people to be hypervigilant to threats.
- The slightest hint of a threat sends trauma sufferers into fight or flight long after the perceived threat is gone.
- Over time, hypervigilance and hyperarousal cause physical ailments and hamper the sufferer’s social and emotional function.
- Sufferers tend to be haunted by shame about what they did or didn’t do during the traumatic event.
- Sufferers are so consumed by hypervigilance they cannot connect with other people.
- van der Kolk gives an evolutionary explanation as to why EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) works.

Reference:

1. This Conversation Will Change How You Think About Trauma (2021) [View here](#)

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