

Book Review / Compte rendu

Cook-Cottone, C. (2020). *Embodiment and the treatment of eating disorders: The body as a resource in recovery*. W. W. Norton and Company. ISBN: 978-0-393-73410-2, xxii+342 pp.

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ABSTRACT

Embodiment and the Treatment of Eating Disorders: The Body as a Resource in Recovery by Catherine Cook-Cottone provides over its 13 chapters a theoretical framework and practice recommendations for infusing embodiment in eating disorder treatment via her Embodied Approach to Treating Eating Disorders model. Part 1 of the book provides an overview of the model and Part 2 provides a framework for integrating the model into treatment, using several aspects of embodiment. Cook-Cottone includes numerous resources in the book to support counsellors in integrating this model into practice. For clinicians working with clients struggling with disordered eating or eating disorders, Cook-Cottone's book provides an engaging addition to eating disorders treatment.

RÉSUMÉ

L'ouvrage *Embodiment and the Treatment of Eating Disorders : The Body as a Resource in Recovery* de Catherine Cook-Cottone propose en 13 chapitres un cadre théorique et des recommandations pour la pratique permettant d'intégrer la cognition incarnée dans le traitement des troubles alimentaires par le recours à son modèle d'approche incarnée dans le traitement des troubles alimentaires (*Embodied Approach to Treating Eating Disorders*). La 1^{re} partie de l'ouvrage donne un aperçu du modèle, tandis que la 2^e partie propose un cadre permettant d'intégrer le modèle au traitement, en ayant recours à divers aspects de la cognition incarnée ou *embodiment*. L'auteure cite plusieurs ressources dans son livre pour aider les conseillères et conseillers à intégrer ce modèle à leur pratique. L'ouvrage fournit aux cliniciens qui travaillent auprès de clients ayant des troubles alimentaires un stimulant complément à leur traitement.

Catherine Cook-Cottone's *Embodiment and the Treatment of Eating Disorders: The Body as a Resource in Recovery* presents a new framework for understanding

and treating eating disorders, focused on embodiment, self-care, and mindfulness. Cook-Cottone presents a clear and comprehensive theoretical framework and treatment guide for clinicians. Cook-Cottone acknowledges the body as the home of an individual's experiential world, and through her years of clinical practice with individuals struggling with eating disorders she noticed a separation between her clients' perceptions of self and body. She asserts that clinicians must go beyond understanding eating disorders simply from diagnostic features and offers theoretical and practice frameworks for reconnecting the self to the body through positive embodiment.

Cook-Cottone is a professor of counseling, school, and educational psychology at the University of Buffalo, SUNY. She is also a registered psychologist and a licensed yoga teacher who specializes in the treatment of eating disorders and anxiety disorders and in the development of self-regulation skills. She co-founded *Yogis in Service*, a non-profit organization focused on providing access to yoga and mindfulness as self-care tools. Cook-Cottone has published extensively on the topics of eating disorders, embodiment, mindfulness, self-care, and trauma and has written six previous books. Her rich career, as well as her breadth and depth of expertise, positions her as a leader and innovator in the treatment of eating disorders.

The book, which contains 13 chapters, is divided into two parts. Part 1 includes a theoretical overview of the Embodied Approach to Treating Eating Disorders (EAT-ED) model in five chapters. Part 2 includes a framework for putting the EAT-ED model into practice, with a chapter reviewing traditional treatment approaches and seven additional chapters that focus on distinct elements of the EAT-ED model that can be applied in practice. The end of these seven chapters includes relevant resources for counsellors as well as a practice guide to assist in implementing the content of the chapter into practice.

The chapters that comprise Part 1 of the book offer readers an introduction to embodiment and a comprehensive theoretical overview of the EAT-ED model. In Chapter 1, Cook-Cottone defines embodiment, describes its philosophical roots, and reviews psychological theories of embodiment, connecting embodiment to the presentation and treatment of eating disorders. Chapter 2 contains a detailed explanation of Cook-Cottone's embodied-self model, the foundation of the EAT-ED model, which includes awareness of internal and external influences on embodiment. In Chapter 3, the embodied-self model is applied to eating disorders, which are described as occurring when individuals experience disordered embodiment—or a disconnection between mind and body. Chapter 4 contains an outline of how the body can be used as a resource for recovery through the experience of embodiment. Cook-Cottone discusses self-objectification theory and its role in disconnecting the mind from the body and how biological systems, the senses, and emotions can be used to support the development of positive

embodiment. In Chapter 5, the final chapter of Part 1, existential insight is discussed as an important component of treatment, whereby clients explore meaning and purpose in life that will support their embodiment and their recovery.

In Part 2, Chapter 6 provides an overview of effective treatments for anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder, reviewing foundational knowledge upon which to weave a focus on embodiment. In Chapter 7, mindful self-care is described as a critical component of treatment and includes Cook-Cottone's Mindful Self-Care Scale as part of the practice guide. Chapter 8 contains steps counsellors can use to support their clients in finding meaning and purpose in life, with an in-depth guide to use in session. Chapter 9 includes a discussion of how to support clients in learning to listen to and connect with their bodies, with a practice guide that includes grounding, journaling, and breathing activities. Chapter 10 reviews physical activities that can support embodiment, including mindful relaxation and breathing, yoga, being in nature, and equine therapy, and it includes an embodied practice plan and a progressive muscle relaxation activity. Chapter 11 is a review of mindfulness and self-compassion, with strategies for body appreciation included in the chapter and multiple meditation activities. Chapter 12 contains a discussion on mindful and intuitive eating and provides a mindful eating activity. Finally, Chapter 13 provides a discussion on the importance of cultivating interpersonal relationships that will support embodiment and recovery, with activities that focus on balancing relationships with the self and with others.

I was delighted to see an inclusion of binge eating disorder alongside the discussion of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa throughout Cook-Cottone's book, as it is often treated as separate from the other two eating disorders. As a weight stigma researcher, I also appreciated the incorporation of weight-inclusive and Health at Every Size body appreciation strategies in Chapter 11. Given the connections between social discourses that contribute to both eating disorders and weight stigma, a stronger discussion of weight stigma throughout the book may have strengthened the reader's awareness of the importance of these body appreciation strategies as well as the importance of engaging in eating disorders treatment from a weight-inclusive perspective.

Overall, Cook-Cottone's book is clearly written, fully engaging the reader from start to finish. She supports her EAT-ED model with a comprehensive discussion of the literature, and her practice guides make this book easily accessible to early-career and more experienced counsellors who may be looking to improve their skills in supporting clients with eating disorders.

About the Author

Sarah Nutter is an assistant professor of counselling psychology at the University of Victoria. Her research interests centre on weight stigma and body

image-related issues. Specifically, her research focuses on better understanding the ideological and socio-cultural foundations of weight stigma and the impact of weight stigma in health care. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3306-345X>

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