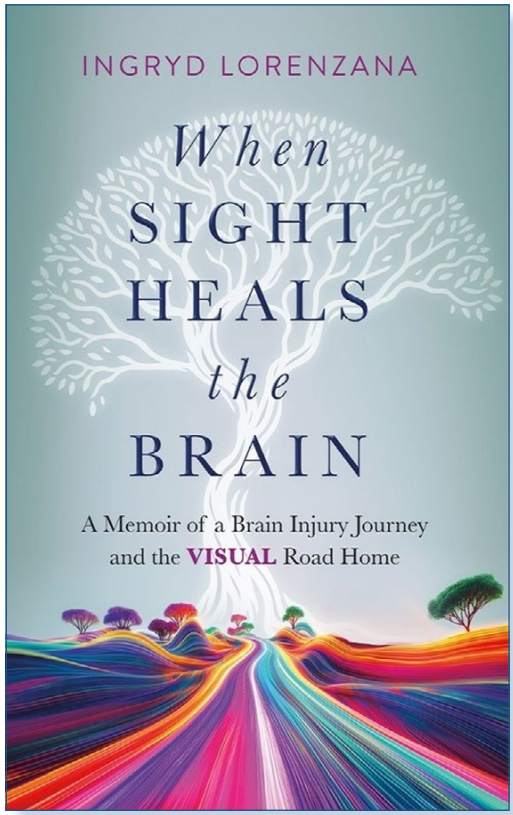
BOOK REVIEW

When Sight Heals the Brain

Author: Dr. Ingryd J. Lorenzana, Optometrist
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When Sight Heals the Brain is a deeply personal account of injury, adaptation, discovery, and hope. Ingryd Lorenzana writes candidly about a life shaped by childhood trauma, a long-unrecognized brain injury, and symptoms that followed her into adulthood. Yet the book is not defined by what happened to her. Its real subject is what she chose to do next: keep searching, keep learning, and remain open to the possibility that healing could continue.

That message matters because recovery rarely follows a straight line. People living with the effects of trauma or brain injury may look capable from the outside while working extraordinarily hard inside. They may build careers, care for others, and become skilled professionals while privately wondering why ordinary experiences require so much effort. Lorenzana understands that contradiction from both sides. She was managing a successful vision therapy practice and helping patients improve while still struggling to make sense of her own nervous system. Her willingness to tell that story without hiding its pain gives the book its credibility and warmth.

I first met Dr. Lorenzana many years ago at a conference where Sue Barry was speaking. She introduced herself much as she recounts in the book. I could see that she was accomplished, thoughtful, and carrying an internal burden that her professional success did not reveal. We talked about developmental and behavioral optometry and about the magnocellular visual pathway, which I have come to view as an important gateway to attention, orientation, and our sense of safety in a moving world. That conversation began a professional friendship I continue to treasure.

I mention our connection because it gives me a close view of the quality that runs through every chapter: Ingryd's determination. Although I am honored to appear among the mentors and colleagues she acknowledges, no mentor could have done the work for her. She remained curious enough to ask new questions, brave enough to revisit painful experiences, and persistent enough to act on what she learned. The credit belongs to the woman who kept moving forward when progress was uncertain.

One of the book's most memorable passages describes how her experience of driving changed as her visual system began to recover. She could feel the road moving beneath her and perceive peripheral optic flow streaming alongside and behind her. What many people experience automatically had become newly available to her. The moment is clinically interesting, but its emotional meaning is even greater. Recovery was

not an abstract score on a test. The world itself felt different: more coherent, more connected, and more alive.

Our later conversations included the Safe and Sound Protocol developed from the work of Stephen Porges, as well as EMDR and brainspotting. Lorenzana describes the profound emotional response she experienced within her first two Safe and Sound sessions. These experiences form part of a larger lesson in the book. Vision does not operate in isolation, and healing does not belong to a single profession or technique. Visual processing, movement, sound, emotion, memory, and autonomic regulation continually influence one another. Her journey invites clinicians to remain curious about those relationships and to listen carefully when a patient's lived experience does not fit neatly within one diagnostic category.

Lorenzana also places her childhood experiences in the context of adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs: potentially traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction that occur before age eighteen. Her account shows how early trauma can persist long after the original events have been pushed aside or forgotten. More importantly, it shows that understanding the source of suffering need not become a sentence to remain trapped by it. Naming what happened can create a starting point for compassion, agency, and change.

This is not a conventional clinical textbook or a step-by-step treatment manual. It is a healing narrative informed by clinical knowledge and by the author's experience as both doctor and patient. That perspective is the book's special contribution. Clinicians are reminded that the person in front of us is more than a collection of findings. Patients and families are reminded that persistent symptoms are real even when they have been overlooked, misunderstood, or normalized for years. Both groups are reminded that improvement may begin when someone finally asks a better question.

The book also describes the six pillars of strength Lorenzana found along the way. Readers will discover those pillars in her own words, but their larger meaning is evident throughout the story: recovery is supported by knowledge, relationships, perseverance, and a growing ability to feel safe within one's own body. Her healing has changed the way she practices. She now brings to her patients not only professional expertise but also the humility and empathy of someone who has personally endured the uncertainty of recovery.

Years ago, my wife and optometry school classmate, Julie Schornack, introduced me to the StrengthsFinder survey. Mine suggested that I probably looked up words for fun, owned too many books, and often felt I never had quite enough information. Guilty on all counts. Those traits may help explain why Ingryd and I connected, but this book helped me recognize something more important: information matters most when it helps another person uncover strengths that trauma has obscured but never erased.

A familiar saying tells us that when the student is ready, the teacher appears. The less familiar continuation is that when the student is truly ready, the teacher disappears. When Sight Heals the Brain honors the teachers and clinicians who appeared along Lorenzana's path, but it ultimately belongs to her. She gathered what each person offered, tested it against her own experience, and made it part of a life and practice that are distinctly her own.

I finished the book moved by its honesty and encouraged by its hope. Lorenzana does not promise an easy cure or pretend that recovery erases the past. She offers something more durable: evidence from one life that the brain can change, that a person can continue to grow, and that help may arrive in forms we did not know to seek. Her story asks us to remain curious, to take suffering seriously, and to resist declaring that a person's best possibilities are behind them.

For clinicians, patients, families, and anyone who has wondered whether meaningful change is still possible, When Sight Heals the Brain offers a compassionate answer. Keep looking. Keep listening. Never give up, and never give in.