



The iRest Program for Healing PTSD:

A Proven-Effective Approach to Using Yoga Nidra Meditation and Deep Relaxation Techniques to Overcome Trauma

By Richard C. Miller, PhD

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Review by Amy Weintraub

Within the pages of this book, psychologist and master yoga and meditation teacher Richard Miller shares the “open secret” of a practice that in 1970 expanded his sense of ease and connectedness with the world as it is, liberating him from long-held burdens. From that first encounter with yoga nidra at the end of a yoga class, Miller understood that his life had changed. As a yoga scholar, researcher, and teacher, he has blazed a trail, introducing yoga nidra, renamed as Integrative Restoration (iRest) to the military and other settings, and into mental health treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The iRest system adapts a

practice that has been in use for 4500 years for use in the treatment of PTSD as well as a multitude of other imbalances in the body-mind.

The iRest Program for Healing PTSD is written in the first person, as though spoken directly by a non-judging, compassionate teacher to “you.” The “you,” of course, is anyone experiencing PTSD, people who may have no background or even interest in meditation.

There are forty-one practice sessions, each building toward the next. Miller suggests that readers record each guidance in their own voices and offers complete permission for the practitioners to change the words so it sounds as natural as possible. Purchase of the book also comes with access to online recordings of the practices.

In the excellent chapter that describes PTSD and how it develops, Miller includes a self-test for determining whether you are experiencing PTSD. The next chapter defines iRest yoga nidra, includes current research on the efficacy of the protocol, and outlines a ten-step method that Miller calls “the ten tools of iRest.” Each of the tools can be practiced independently to address specific conditions, like, for example, insomnia, or combined for the full effect of “experiencing your wholeness.”

Miller outlines the core principles of iRest that give the ten tools the power to heal. He suggests, for example, that practice be “little and often.” Even a few minutes of iRest every day can make a difference in reducing symptoms.

Instructions include simple tools to work with negative feelings, thoughts, and beliefs, using both meditation and writing exercises. He contends, and research backs him up on this, that we begin to shift into more positive self-talk simply by first acknowledging and welcoming the negative.

For the yogin accustomed to reading about yoga nidra in the context of the *kosha* model and other yogic principles, you won't find such language here. Nor will the mental health professional find the language most familiar in describing treatment protocols. Rather, the text flows without jargon or complicated philosophy and directly meets readers experiencing PTSD with words that begin to connect their wholeness, their unsullied sense of Self, beneath the story and the mood. In Miller's words, “Joy is always present, waiting to be experienced in the midst of what is, no matter what is,” even if what is happens to be the symptoms of PTSD.

Compliments are due to the developmental editor, poet, iRest and LifeForce Yoga Practitioner Jami Macarty, who helped make Richard Miller's elegant and sometimes esoteric concepts that are the foundation of yoga nidra fully accessible to the reader who may not be drawn to yogic philosophy.

Although written for people experiencing PTSD, the book is a manual of an ancient but only recently explored PTSD-treatment protocol that all those who serve this population will want to read.

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