

Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood: The Workout Therapy Workbook

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Kate Hays is a translator. She said so herself in the preface to *Working It Out: Using Exercise in Psychotherapy* (Hays, 1999). "My task has been to translate psychological concepts in ways that can be of practical use to people" (p. ix). Having read *Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood: The Workout Therapy Workbook*, I agree with her. Hays is a translator. In fact, she is a very good translator. In her new book, Hays translates "academic" exercise psychology into something practical, a workbook that can help people exercise to improve their mental health.

Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood is in some ways a sequel to *Working It Out*. The two books have a similar purpose (i.e., educating people about the psychological benefits of exercise and how to obtain them) and cover many, although certainly not all, of the same topics. Moreover, there is a substantial amount of the same copy included in both books. However, *Working It Out* was written for mental health professionals and *Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood* is written for nonpractitioners (clients, students).

Hays' newest venture is organized into four sections. The first section, "How Exercise Can Be Your Therapy," introduces the reader to the idea that exercise not only has physical benefits but also psychological benefits. Hays further explains why exercise has psychological benefits (e.g., the endorphin hypothesis), explores exercise motivation (e.g., the stages of change model), and presents the basics on beginning exercise (e.g., the FIT principle). The second section, "How to Be Therapeutic to Yourself Through Exercise," focuses on specific aspects of mental health, including stress and anxiety, depression, self-esteem, and cognitive functioning. The third section, "Maintaining Your Gains," provides strategies for maintaining exercise involvement as well as for avoiding overdoing exercise. In addition, consistent with the author's view of exercise involvement as a possible "gateway" (p. 15) to other positive health habits, the section addresses eating disorders, weight loss, substance abuse, and smoking cessation. The final section, "Taking a Fearless Inventory," focuses on clinical issues (e.g., setting boundaries in therapy).

Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood has three noticeable strengths. The first strength is that Hays, good translator that she is, makes complex theories and research studies surprisingly easy to understand. She is able to simplify the scientific literature without completely losing its complexity. For example, when explaining the endorphin hypothesis, she says the following:

Endorphins are brain chemicals similar to morphine, and like morphine, and other opiates, they may trigger feelings of euphoria and tension relief and increase our pain tolerance. However, the measurement of brain endorphins is difficult, and so we don't yet know the exact biochemical changes. (p. 17)

And when explaining North, McCullagh, and Tran's (1990) meta-analysis, she says this:

In a meta-analysis (an analysis that statistically summarized eighty studies of exercise and depression), North, McCullagh, and Tran (1990) reached the following conclusions. Exercise was a beneficial antidepressant both immediately and over the long term [and] . . . it was most effective in decreasing depression for those most physically and/or psychologically unhealthy at the start of the exercise program. (p. 86)

The second strength of Hays' book is that there are numerous "experientially-derived" case studies in each chapter. Hays is a practicing clinical sport and exercise psychologist, and she used her clinical expertise to develop case studies that illustrate crucial concepts. The case studies also make the book a fun read. For example, the case study of Conrad illustrates the importance of goal setting in relapse prevention.

When I first began talking with forty-five-year-old Conrad, he reported a period of a few months during which he had bicycled regularly and enjoyed it immensely. A leg injury brought the biking to a halt. He was feeling extremely discouraged by a ride he'd had a few days before I talked with him: he found he could only ride a block before he became winded and his legs began to ache. He seemed to be waiting until, in some magical way, he would be transported back to his pre-injury self. (p. 130)

The third strength of *Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood* is that there are several exercises included in each chapter. The exercises serve to give life to Hays' desire that readers "will find this adventure [using the Workbook] interesting, informative, and action inspiring" (p. 4). For example, at the close of the chapter on women's issues, the reader is asked to

Write a "dialogue" between you and Exercise (or Physical Activity) (or Sports). Think of exercise as if it were alive, an actual being. See what it has to say to you—as well as what you want to say to it. As if you were writing a movie script, listen very carefully inside your head to "hear" this dialogue between parts of yourself. (p. 173)

In summary, as Shane Murphy said on the back cover, *Move Your Body, Tone Your Mood* "provides the reader with a remarkably clear guide to using workouts and physical activity to get rid of emotional stress and optimize mental functioning." The references include a mix of primary and secondary sources (45% are from primary sources) and a mix of recent and "classic" studies (15% were published since 2000). The coverage of motivational perspectives is fairly comprehensive, although I was somewhat surprised not to find mention of self-efficacy theory. The coverage of the mental health benefits of exercise is also thorough.