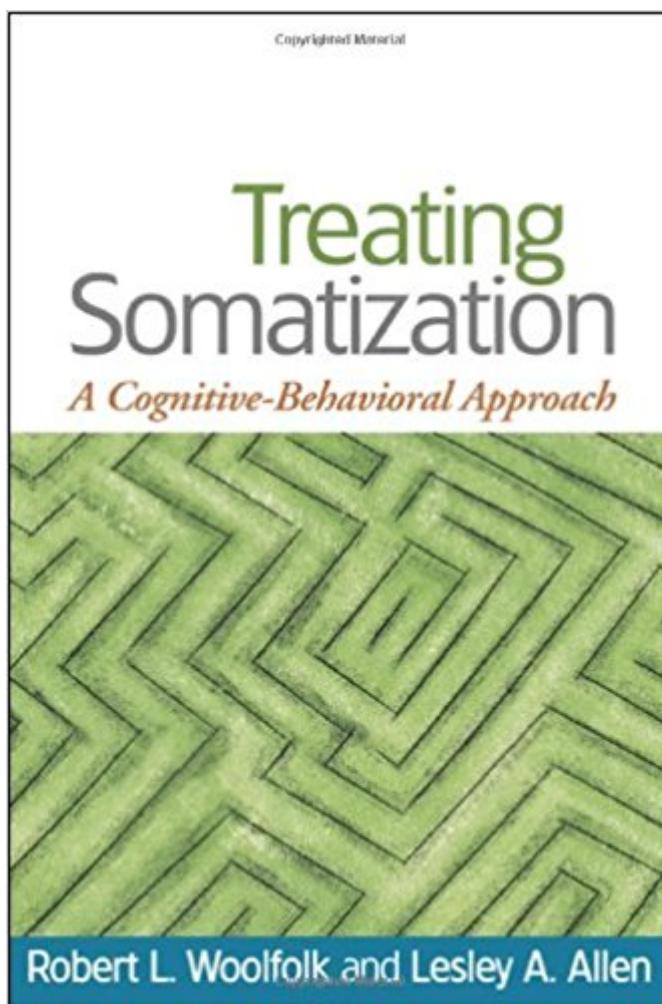


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# Treating Somatization: A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach



## **Synopsis**

This lucidly written guide presents an innovative approach for treating somatization disorder and related problems, such as fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, and chronic fatigue syndrome. The authors' program integrates cognitive-behavioral techniques with strategies to build emotional self-awareness and interventions to help patients understand and alter their illness behavior. Systematic yet flexible, it is supported by controlled clinical research. The book reviews the conceptual underpinnings of the approach, discusses its ongoing testing and refinement, and offers clear-cut guidelines for assessment and treatment. Special features include illustrative case material, many pointers for practice, and reproducible appendices that provide a 10-session mini-manual and helpful handouts and forms.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"In this important volume, two leading scientist-practitioners offer a lucid account of the clinical features and etiology of somatization, and also provide a detailed, step-by-step guide to their new, empirically supported treatment. This scholarly yet highly practical book sets a new standard in the treatment of somatization. It is essential reading for all clinicians and clinical trainees who treat patients with somatization problems, whether in the form of somatization disorder or as a feature of other clinical conditions."--Steven Taylor, PhD, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia, Canada "Somatization, somatoform disorders, medically unexplained and functional somatic symptoms; whatever we call them, they are among the largest and most neglected

problems in medicine. Yet there are very few practical guides to assist practitioners. This lucid and scholarly text not only offers a valuable overview of the topic, but also provides detailed guidance on a management approach of proven efficacy. This book will be helpful to students and experienced practitioners alike."--Michael Sharpe, MD, University of Edinburgh, UK "Woolfolk and Allen have written a unique and detailed book that is clearly rooted in theory and empirical findings.

Conceptual, assessment, and treatment issues are outlined within a concise and coherent framework that lends itself to practical application. Complete with a 10-session treatment manual, this book is a 'must' for clinicians, interns, residents, and clinical graduate students who are treating people suffering from physical symptoms without identifiable physical cause."--Gordon J. G. Asmundson, PhD, University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada "Woolfolk and Allen bring optimism and rigor to the treatment of a misunderstood group of patients who have mistakenly been regarded as untreatable by many physicians and therapists. Starting with a remarkably clear foundation built on theory and a comprehensive review of the literature, the authors provide a straightforward, step-by-step blueprint for their therapeutic approach. The book is exemplary in its eclectic yet critical integration of diverse perspectives and its jargon-free style. This is a book with equal appeal and value for both experts and beginners. Experienced clinicians will find Woolfolk and Allen's work refreshing, inspiring, and informative. At the same time, the book's clinical utility, accessibility, and clarity also make it an excellent choice for beginning therapists, including graduate students in psychology and social work and psychiatric residents."--James L. Levenson, MD, Virginia Commonwealth University "I like this book enormously. The therapeutic approach is comprehensive, innovative, and clearly derived from vast clinical experience. The treatment itself is presented in a vivid and accessible way that enables the reader to learn and apply it in his or her own clinical practice. This work represents a major advance in our ability to treat patients suffering from this prevalent and difficult problem."--Arthur J. Barsky, MD, Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School "This is the book healthcare professionals have been waiting for! The authors' integrative conceptual model addresses emotional aspects, such as alexithymia, demoralization, and social role theory, while also incorporating classical cognitive and behavioral ideas. They increase our understanding of patients with medically unexplained symptoms in a manner that is comprehensive, profound, and a pleasure to read. However, the core strength of this book is the treatment manual. The authors' deep knowledge of basic processes, together with an unbelievable amount of clinical experience, underpin their helpful descriptions of how to proceed when treating these patients. The breakthrough approach in this book will help healthcare professionals provide effective support for a major patient population, while reducing treatment

costs substantially."--Winfried Rief, PhD, Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy, University of Marburg, Germany"A well-crafted, practical guide for psychotherapists of patients with somatization disorders. Woolfolk and Allen provide the reader with a manageable literature review on aspects and correlates of somatization. The scope of the book, from historical presentations of symptoms to present day epidemiology of DSM-IV-TR and ICD-10 diagnoses, offers hands-on and academic training to the reader....It contains 37 pages of appendices detailing homework assignments, worksheets, self-report measures, and a 10-session manual for delivering affective cognitive behavioral therapy (ACBT)....A useful guide to help psychotherapists navigate the challenges and potential obstacles inherent in the treatment of somatization disorders. The ACBT techniques and the clinical accounts of patients with somatization disorders detailed by the authors offer the behavioral health provider empirically supported methods of helping patients with somatization disorders lower impairment and increase quality of life." (Psychiatry 2006-10-15)"The success of Treating Somatization is in elucidating the complexities of the emotional and cognitive experience of people with somatization disorders. It also provides hope that the techniques of a treatment model that is growing more and more familiar can help not only the patients but also the often-frustrated clinicians faced with the challenge of helping people with an unexplained disorder." (Psychiatric Services 2006-10-15)"A major contribution...lucid, comprehensive, and eminently practical....Draws on a wide-ranging combination of conceptual theory, empirical findings, and clinical experience....Taking a biopsychosocial approach, the authors present a wide-ranging review of the relevant influences of stress, emotion, and social learning on the process of somatization. Even clinicians familiar with each of these areas will find their review concise, informative, and enlightening....Woolfolk and Allen's primary contribution consists of their systematic, carefully crafted, and eclectic treatment program....Both a scholarly and a pragmatic book. Its insights will reinforce and sharpen the technique of skilled clinicians, whereas the range of its scholarship will help direct the preparation of students." (PsycCRITIQUES 2006-10-15)

Robert L. Woolfolk, PhD, is Professor of Psychology and Philosophy at Rutgers University and Visiting Professor of Psychology at Princeton University. He has published many papers and several books on psychotherapy and psychopathology, including *Stress, Sanity, and Survival* and *The Cure of Souls: Science, Values, and Psychotherapy*. A practicing clinician for more than 30 years, Dr. Woolfolk has sought in both his work with patients and his scholarly endeavors to integrate the scientific and humanistic traditions of psychotherapy. Å Lesley A. Allen, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Robert Wood Johnson Medical

School at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She has authored or coauthored numerous journal articles and book chapters on somatoform disorders. Dr. Allen is actively involved in clinical work, teaching, and supervising. She is currently Principal Investigator on an ongoing program of clinical research funded by the National Institute of Mental Health.

As a clinical psychologist, I run into somatoform disorders regularly, but there are few good resources for treating these individuals. This book is clear, straightforward, and not too long/dense. I like the approach and descriptions.

If you are a therapist interested in treating patients with somatic symptoms, this book will prove valuable and instructive. The authors do a great job of explaining how to approach these sensitive clients and treat their stress which is exacerbating the somatic symptoms. It instructs how to do deep breathing, muscle relaxation, somatic journals, etc. and the intervention program is empirically supported. (If you have been diagnosed with somatization disorder, don't expect this book to be an easy read or that it was designed to help sufferers. It has graduate-level psychology/physiology wording that may be overwhelming or difficult to understand.)

This is the best book on the topic that I have encountered to date: clear, well organized, with patient examples, and helpful. It's unsaid truth includes that no one knows definitively how to cure somatization, but given that, this is a pretty darned good approach. If you find any better book, I'd love to know.

Clearly written for the professional, but gives good explanation and outline for the lay person who is dealing with a loved one with Somatization.

This is a great book that gives a nice, research-based approach to the treatment of Somatization in patients in primary care. However, due to the nature of the book, it is very much based on a one-sided approach (CBT) and provides limited information on other methods of treatment.

Complete books on this subject are quite rare... This one is very clear, interesting and useful, thank you very much !

Since most people who write soma books don't actually suffer from Soma disorders, taking what

they say to heart can be difficult. Lucky for you, you've got a real live sufferer right here telling you it's not worth the read. When I was diagnosed with soma two years ago, my life flipped upside down. I went from being a promising, happy-go-lucky college student to a depressed alcoholic on the verge of breakdown. I lost every friend I had, lived in constant pain, and prayed for the end. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (or CBT) was my first avenue of choice for treatment, and unfortunately, it was also the least effective. I don't fault the author for his one sided CBT approach, but the fact that SOMA has general prognosis of "very poor", coupled with a life expectancy of about 35 for sufferers, makes it almost pointless to read up on and explore. Let's just be honest, if you've got Soma, you probably won't live very long. It's not because the disorder kills you, no, it's sicker than that. Your lifestyle escape will do you in; the alcohol abuse, the drug abuse, the suicide, these are all norms for people with Soma. You don't live, you exist, and those who don't actually suffer are rarely qualified to write books or distribute information. AVOID this and all other Soma books UNLESS THEY ARE WRITTEN BY SOMEONE WITH SOMA!!!

These quacks give ridiculous explanations and "treatment" for what they call "medically unexplained" symptoms and somatization. The only problem is that they are medically explained. For example there are approximately 4,000 articles in peer reviewed medical journals showing frank physical pathology (disease) in ME (aka CFS).

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