



Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology)

By Louis Cozolino

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The story of why psychotherapy actually works.

That psychotherapy works is a basic assumption of anyone who sees a therapist. But why does it work? And why does it matter that we understand how it works?

In *Why Therapy Works*, Louis Cozolino explains the mechanisms of psychotherapeutic change from the bottom up, beginning with the brain, and how brains have evolved?especially how brains evolved to learn, unlearn, and relearn, which is at the basis of lasting psychological change.

Readers will learn why therapists have to look beyond just words, diagnoses, and presenting problems to the inner histories of their clients in order to discover paths to positive change. The book also shows how our brains have evolved into social organs and how our interpersonal lives are a source of both pain and power. Readers will explore with Cozolino how our brains are programmed to connect in intimate relationships and come to understand the debilitating effects of anxiety, stress, and trauma.

Finally, the book will lead to an understanding of the power of story and narratives for fostering self-regulation, neural integration, and positive change.

Always, the focus of the book is in understanding underlying therapeutic change, moving beyond the particular of specific forms of therapy to the commonalities of human evolution, biology, and experience.

This book is for anyone who has experienced the benefits of therapy and wondered how it worked. It is for anyone thinking about whether therapy is right for them, and it is for anyone who has looked within themselves and marveled at people's ability to experience profound transformation.

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Editorial Review

Review

“*Why Therapy Works* is a tour de force. Too often today the public thinks that one can read a book or watch a documentary and be transformed psychologically. Unfortunately, that is not how the human mind works. Humans require other minds for change and change is hard. We are ‘embodied and embedded’ in an interpersonal matrix. To understand the human experience and create change, we must move from a single-skull understanding to an intersubjective context of two or more minds. Louis Cozolino explains this phenomenon in a manner easy to digest, taking the reader from the evolutionary heritage of human psychology to an understanding of the experience of psychotherapy applied in common clinical circumstances.” (Drew Pinsky, MD, Internist/Addictionologist and Host of Dr. Drew on HLN)

“[A] wonderful read. . . . Cozolino’s exploration of neurological, evolutionary, and psychodynamic understandings of human distress will appeal to an audience far wider than the psychotherapeutic community . . . All good books, in this domain, inform and challenge the reader. Few, however, entertain and engage the reader as well as Cozolino does. . . . I came away from reading this book more knowledgeable about the current state of neuroscience and its applicability to psychotherapy.” (PsycCRITIQUES)

“From understanding brain programming and evolution to navigating the difficulties of anxiety and trauma, *Why Therapy Works* addresses a wide range of human behavior and phenomena from a psychological perspective. Students in the field will find this work helpful and illuminating, while those curious about the often mysterious mechanisms of therapy will find answers to their questions. . . . The book flows naturally and could easily be read in one sitting given its clean and accessible writing. . . . [U]seful for students in the field of psychology and those looking to determine if therapy is right for them.” (American Reference Books Annual)

“[A] valuable source for showing how academic concepts can be applied in therapeutic treatment. Cozolino’s distinguished career as both a professor and mental health clinician qualify him as an expert in bridging the gap between theory and practice. In terms of accessibility, the book is a quick read that covers a lot of ground in a short space. With its helpful (and often humorous) overviews of key theories, plus its innovative fusion of biology, behavior, and human evolution, it will no doubt prove beneficial to both lay readers and mental health practitioners.” (PsychCentral)

“Written for the layperson, Louis’ exposition will appeal to many therapists as a great addition to their knowledge of neurobiological factors at play in psychotherapy.” (The Neuropsychologist)

“[A]n interesting read for anyone who has wondered about the mechanics of therapy and why it seems to work, no matter the therapeutic approach.” (Greater Good)

“*Why Therapy Works* underscores the importance of understanding psychotherapy’s mechanisms of action beyond the conventional therapeutic philosophies and metaphors. . . . With his rich, personalized commentaries, unassuming analyses, and purposeful characterization of evidence-based science as ‘another metaphor’ (one that offers the best ‘nonshaming explanation’ for human struggle), Cozolino has . . . achieved a thorough, bottom-up explanation of the mechanisms of psychotherapeutic change.” (Somatic Psychotherapy Today)

“[A]n authoritative guide. . . . Anyone interested in therapy and the brain will find much compelling information here [A]n intriguing look at how anxiety, stress, and trauma affect the brain and . . . how psychologists can help their patients ‘connect and heal.’” (Booklist)

“There are so many important concepts and ideas, that I found myself underlining and highlighting sections. I was intrigued with Cozolino’s concept that we can change our brain. And, his explanations about attachment and healing are excellent. . . . [H]e offers his own experiences to illuminate his ideas. This makes him human, believable, and likeable. . . . I look forward to rereading this book. It will be useful to review reference-specific issues. I recommend it to both colleagues and students.” (The Milton H. Erickson Foundation Newsletter)

“[W]ill be useful for anyone seeking to better understand the inner workings of therapy.” (Publishers Weekly)

“A beautiful book about the art and science of psychotherapy, focused on the process of attachment and interpersonal attunement. Louis Cozolino shows how our brains are fundamentally wired to function together with those of others in complex social systems, and that most forms of human suffering are the result of a breakdown in interpersonal synchrony, which therapy can help to repair. Written both for general readers and students of therapy, this book highlights what we have learned about the neurobiology of fear, shame, and relationships to eloquently demonstrate how psychotherapy can heal old hurts and restore self-leadership, love, and the capacity to feel fully alive.” (Bessel van der Kolk, MD, Medical Director, Trauma Center at Justice Resource Institute; Professor of Psychiatry, Boston University School of Medicine)

About the Author

Louis Cozolino, PhD, is a professor of psychology at Pepperdine University and a private practitioner. He is the author of *The Healthy Aging Brain*, *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships*, *The Neuroscience of Psychotherapy*, and *The Making of a Therapist*. He lives in Los Angeles, California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Winston Craig:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these individuals survives, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated that for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a reserve your ability to survive raise then having chance to stand than other is high. To suit your needs who want to start reading the book, we give you this *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains* (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) book as beginner and daily reading book. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

Lisa Hegland:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them household or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent all day every day to reading a reserve. The book *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains*

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Austin Barnes:

Reading can be called a head hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book specifically the book entitled *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains* (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) your head will drift away through every dimension, wandering in each aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will become your mind friends. Imagine every single word written in an e-book then become one application from conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get previous to. The *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains* (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) giving you one more experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful data for your better life on this era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

John Harrison:

A lot of people said that they feel weary when they read a guide. They directly felt it when they get a half element of the book. You can choose the book *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains* (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) to make your own reading interesting. Your own personal skill of reading expertise is developing when you are similar to reading. Try to choose an easy book to make you enjoy you just read it and mingle the feeling about the book and examining especially. It is to be very first opinion for you to like to have a book and go through it. Besides that the e-book *Why Therapy Works: Using Our Minds to Change Our Brains* (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology) can be your brand-new friend when you're experience alone and confuse with what must you're doing of that time.

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