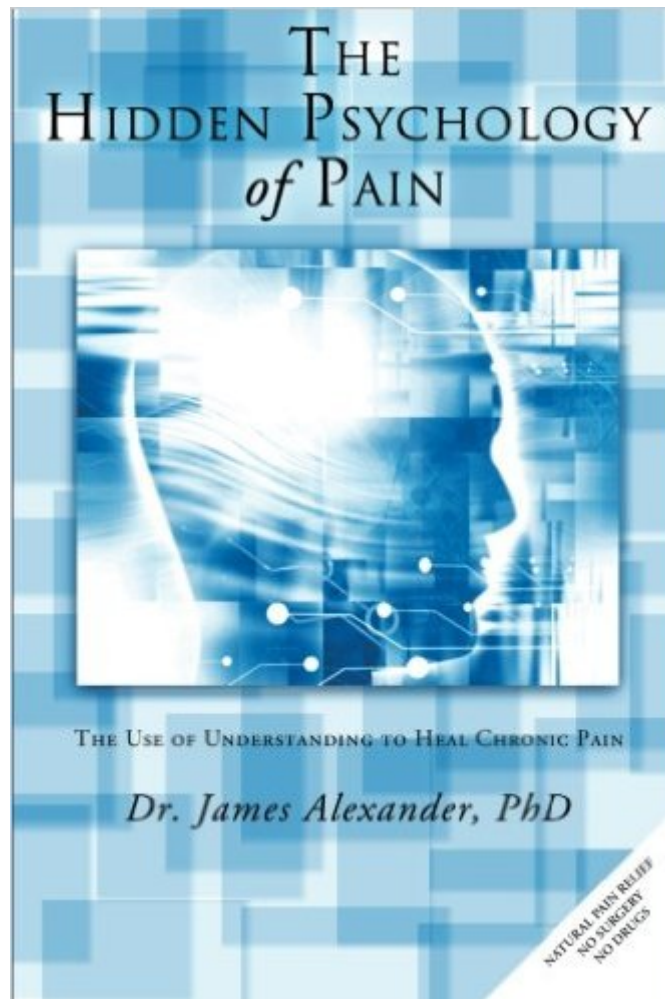


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# The Hidden Psychology Of Pain: The Use Of Understanding To Heal Chronic Pain



## Synopsis

Chronic pain has been correctly described as the invisible crisis at the heart of contemporary life. Despite stunning advances in other areas of medical science, no similar breakthrough in the treatment of chronic pain has resulted from an exclusive focus on the body. Dr James Alexander's young life was redefined by a tragic car accident in his late teens, and the chronic physical and emotional trauma inspired him to become a psychologist. Now pain-free, Dr Alexander has dedicated the last three decades of his life to helping others overcome similar challenges, specializing in the treatment of chronic pain and psychological trauma. His success is proof that recovery from chronic pain is possible, and this guide offers a valuable resource for working toward that goal. The recovery from chronic pain requires that we revisit and challenge the outdated attitudes and practices that have been used with little result. With the proliferation of medical and psychological research, for the first time we are at a point in history where these notions of pain recovery can be validated by research-based evidence. For too long, Dr Alexander feels, we have been looking in all the wrong places. Specifically, the problem lies at the core of our culture, which still treats the physical and nonphysical aspects of the human as separate experiences. This innovative program involves a journey of self-discovery, a new way to approach medical and psychological care of chronic pain, and advice on the most effective types of help to pursue.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dr. James Alexander is a licensed psychologist with a private clinical practice in Lismore, New South Wales. After surviving a near fatal accident in his late teens, he spent 20 years living with

chronic pain. The physical and emotional trauma he suffered inspired him to become a psychologist. He has spent over 30 years helping others, specializing in the treatment of chronic pain and psychological trauma. Dr. Alexander feels we have been looking in the wrong places when it comes to treating chronic pain. He addresses the core issue of treatment in our culture which treats the physical and non-physical aspects of the human as separate experiences. Through a journey of self-discovery Dr. Alexander offers a new way to approach medical and psychological care of chronic pain by linking physical pain with the unconscious mind. In chapters 1 through 3, Dr. Alexander discusses the psychological and physical perspectives on pain and the Western philosophy of medicine. He addresses the 'split' between psychology and medicine and the history of holistic health care. In chapters 4 through 7 he discusses various types of chronic pain and misconceptions which have developed over time. He elaborates on conscious and unconscious pain as well as conditioning and cultural influences. In chapters 8 and 9 Dr. Alexander offers self-help strategies for individuals to become proactive in their recovery. Chapters 10 and 14 he discusses depression, trauma, anxiety and stress with alternative approaches in treating them. Chapters 11 and 12 are methods of working with unconscious pain and trauma. Chapter 13 addresses sleep problems and ways to improve sleep.

I found that Dr James Alexander's *The Hidden Psychology of Pain* (Balboa Press: 2012) offered me many insights into the origins of my own TMS because it's based on his own experience, which is similar to mine, where his TMS originated from an old injury after a head on crash left him badly injured and trapped in his car followed by episodes of chronic pain triggered by emotional issues. I particularly like its subtitle too: 'The Use of Understanding to Heal Chronic Pain', which seems to echo and reinforce Dr John E. Sarno's admonition in *Healing Back Pain* to think 'psychologically' about a knowledge-based cure for chronic pain. One thing I really like about this book is that it builds on Dr Sarno's theories while integrating them with the latest discoveries in neuroscience. Dr Alexander also gives a whole list of different psychotherapeutic strategies for resolving chronic pain issues, such as Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) and Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR). Lots of charts and statistics too for the us Western scientific materialists. I'm biased of course because since I started reading it, I haven't been able to put it down. The material in this book is really current and up to date. Thanks Dr. Alexander. After reading Dr. Alexander's book, I was able to see how my terrible accident in 1989 really was the trauma behind my subsequent TMS episodes in 2001 and 2007. When I fell 25 feet while rock climbing and shattered my left heel, broke my nose and fractured the occipital lobe of my skull, I had to crawl through the

mud and rain to get to my car and drive myself to ER. Talk about trauma! It took me 6 months of PT before I could walk again without crutches. However, when I called my parents for emotional support, they basically abandoned me.

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