RESEARCH: IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION OF IREST FOR COMBAT-RELATED PTSD

"Transforming Trauma: A Qualitative Feasibility Study of Integrative Restoration (iRest) Yoga Nidra on Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder" L. Stankovic, MA RYT

Reviewed by Amy Weintraub

In this qualitative study, not only does the author suggest what works in the iRest protocol developed by Richard Miller, PhD, but he also examines what modifications might enhance the effectiveness for this population of mostly Viet Nam era veterans living with PTSD.

With the cooperation of a community mental health agency in the San Francisco Bay Area treating vets and the supervising psychologist, Stankovic lead an 8-week series of Integrative Restoration sessions, a protocol which was first used with active duty soldiers suffering from PTSD at Walter Reed Army Hospital in 2006.

iRest is a form of yoga meditation, adapted from Swami Satyananda Saraswati's yoga nidra. The meditative self-inquiry practice moves through ten stages that include awareness of body sensation, breath, emotions, thoughts & beliefs, and joy. The eleven completers of the initial sixteen who began the study reported "reduced rage, anxiety, and emotional reactivity and increased feelings of relaxation, peace, self-awareness and self-efficacy."

What most impressed me about this well-written study in the International Journal of Yoga Therapy is the clear explanation of Miller's combat trauma adaptions of the protocol and the rationale behind them. This is the first time I've seen in print such a thorough comparison of iRest as a treatment for PTSD to other therapeutic modalities like Cognitive Behavior Therapy and
Exposure Therapy. The article includes many direct quotes from participants. In a section the author calls, "Lessons Learned," he carefully analyzes the participants' responses and makes suggestions for future implementation of the protocol, data collection and post-study follow-up.

For anyone who uses relaxation techniques, mindfulness meditation, yoga nidra or iRest with a population living with combat-related PTSD or would like to, this article may be a tremendous resource.

This study can be found in the current issue of the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, #21, 2011. For more information visit [www.iayt.org](http://www.iayt.org)

Visit Amy’s website: [Life Force Yoga](http://www.iayt.org)

To learn more about iRest Yoga Nidra, visit [www.irest.us](http://www.irest.us)