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**Israeli Pride**



Prof. Edna Foa

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**Israeli PTSD expert on Time's list**

**Prof. Edna Foa, clinical psychologist who developed treatment methodology for post-traumatic stress disorder following second intifada, named one of world's 100 most influential people. 'There were people who hadn't functioned 30 years and were able to function within two months,' she tells Ynet**

Yitzhak Benhorin

**WASHINGTON** – While Israeli politicians were conspicuously missing from this year's Time 100, the weekly US magazine's prestigious annual list of the year's most influential people, Israeli academia made its mark with Prof. Edna Foa, an clinical psychologist who made the list for the specialized therapy she developed to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after the [second intifada](#) broke out.

"The truth is, I was insulted," Prof. Foa told Ynet, after Israeli media reported that [there were no Israelis on the Time 100](#) this year.

Foa's achievement is particularly impressive in light of the fact that she is only the second person ever to make the list from the field of psychology. "I understand that usually politicians, military officials and cultural figures are chosen for the list, but I am the second person from the field on the list," she explained.

Foa, who teaches at the University of Pennsylvania, graduated for Bar-Ilan University. Though her career in researching PTSD led her overseas, it wasn't until a visit to [Israel](#) in 2000, just as the second intifada started, that she was able to refine her treatment method. It was then that she decided to switch her focus post-rape trauma to combat-related PTSD.

The treatment method she developed is called prolonged exposure, or PE, and focuses on identifying thoughts and feelings that trigger the highest levels of fear among patients, and then exposing them to these triggers. The treatment includes surfacing memories related to the trauma and physical exposure to the places and circumstances that will help ease the symptoms of the difficult experience.

**Short treatment with high success rates**

The magazine explains its choice in Prof. Foa: "The US military — which isn't easily wowed — is embracing PE."

In the US, there are half a million veterans from Vietnam alone who suffer from PTSD, and another 300,000 or so veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Foa's methodology has seen great success in both the US and Israel, and she divides her time between the two countries.

"In Israel, I work with the military and the Defense Ministry, and teach psychotherapists how to treat our soldiers. I do research in Israel, work with Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University, and hold seminars two or three times a year. There are already hundreds of people who work with my treatment method in Israel," Foa said to Ynet.

"It is a short-term treatment that that has been proven effect," explained Prof. Foa. "It is a treatment done over eight to 15 sessions with an 80-85% success rate. The patients are soldiers from the [Yom Kippur War](#), the [First Lebanon War](#), and terror victims. There were people who didn't function for 30 years and within two or three months started functioning wonderfully."

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