

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (P.T.S.D.)

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What is PTSD?

PTSD IS AN ANXIETY DISORDER that can occur after one has been through a traumatic event.

A traumatic event may be sudden like a natural disaster, a rape, being abused, a crime, a car accident or combat experience. The trauma may have continued over a longer period of time, as with domestic violence, childhood abuse or neglect, sexual abuse, living in a war zone.

It has been argued that women who experience abuse are in a similar position to hostages and like them suffer from PTSD

How PTSD does develop?

People, who have lived through a traumatic event that causes them to fear for their lives, see terrible things & feel helpless. Strong emotions caused by the event create changes in the brain that may result a PTSD. It isn't clear why some people develop PTSD and other don't.

Source: WWW.ISTSS.ORG

Trauma, PTSD & Relationship violence

There is a relationship between the experience of a traumatic event, PTSD and domestic violence. In fact, intimate partner abuse happens more than you may think. National estimates indicate that, in a period of one year, 8 to 21% of people in a serious relationship will have engaged in some kind of violent act aimed at an intimate partner. Relationship violence has also been found among people who have experienced certain traumatic events or [have PTSD](#).

Separate from PTSD, a connection has been found between the experience of certain [traumatic events](#) and relationship violence. In particular, studies have found that men and women who have experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional neglect in childhood may be more likely to be abusive in intimate relationships as compared to people without a history of childhood trauma.

In addition, people with PTSD have also been found to be more likely to be aggressive and engage in intimate partner abuse than people without a PTSD diagnosis. The connection between PTSD and violence has been found for both men and women with PTSD.

How Are They Related?

Several studies have been conducted in an attempt to better understand what may lead people with a history of trauma or PTSD to engage in aggressive and violent behaviors. In studies of U.S. veterans, it has found that [depression](#) played a role in aggression among people with PTSD. People who have both depression and PTSD may experience more feelings of anger and, therefore, may have greater difficulties controlling it.

In line with this, a couple of studies have found that violent and aggressive behavior, especially amongst men, may be used as a way of releasing tension associated with other unpleasant emotions stemming from a traumatic event, such as shame, guilt or anxiety. While aggressive and hostile behavior may temporarily reduce tension, it, of course, is ineffective in the long run –both in regard to relationships and dealing with unpleasant emotions.

Despite these findings, it is important to note that just because a person has experienced a traumatic event or has PTSD does not mean that they will exhibit violent behavior. There are many factors that contribute to aggressive behavior and much more research is needed to identify the specific risk factors for aggressive behavior among people exposed to traumatic events or who have PTSD.

What helps is available for PTSD?

When one has PTSD, dealing with the past can be hard. Instead of telling others how you feel, you may close up. Some symptoms can be treated under Medical supervisor but these days there are good treatment available for PTSD. CBT is one type of counseling but **EMDR** is also used for PTSD. Recovering from PTSD is a process of healing. It can take time but with professional help and family / community support can help heal the process.

In dealing with Domestic Violence, sensitization has to start with women themselves as they need to realize that they are being abused and should not go through it in silence

EMDR:

EMDR is a comprehensive integrative psychotherapy approach. It contains elements of many effective psychotherapy in structured protocols that are designed to maximize treatment effects.

EMDR is an information processing therapy & uses an eight phase approach to address the experiential contributors of a wide range of pathology.

During treatment various protocol and procedures, are used to address the entire clinical picture.

One of the procedural elements is “dual stimulation” using bilateral eye movement. Each lobe of the brain is stimulated alternately in a rhythmic pattern. As well as using eye movement, the same result can be achieved by tapping the clients hands or by auditory cues alternating between left and right through a set of headphones.

When a person has experienced traumatic events, the body usually goes into a fight/freeze response

During the reprocessing phases the element attends momentarily to past memories, present trigger or anticipated future experiences while simultaneously focusing on a set of external stimulus. At that time, clients generally experience the emergence of insight or new associations. The clinician assists the client on appropriate material before initiation of each subsequent set.

One of the main purpose of therapy is to address the unresolved issued triggered by early experience.

EMDR can be integrated into any methodology-- by targeting memories, patients can develop a more adaptive response to the trauma in the present.

In desensitising painful memories EMDR allows the patient to shift to a more positive view of themselves in relation to the past event.

It is very important to pay close attention to the words and images the patients use to express their feelings.

In my work with women who have undergone severe trauma, they are relieved to be able to recognise that that their intense feelings and responses both within the abusive relationship and after they have left, are natural reactions to trauma.

The role of the therapist in EMDR is often one of 'bearing witness'. It is an engaging role in that the unusual proximity to the patient enables one to notice even the slight emotional and physical changes and can result in deeper empathy.

THERAPIST ATTITUDE

People come from different cultures and backgrounds; it is very important to adapt one's technique to the patient's needs.

A therapist's attitude should be one of respect, willingness, and open-mindedness to other cultures.

Willingness to open up:

Being willing is not enough; the therapist has to transmit it to your patient.

Therapist position:

Though I am an authority in my field, I am a stranger to your culture. I am willing to learn and I hope you are willing to teach me. With this approach, one creates equality.

Regard and respect:

The therapist has to show it in a way the patient can perceive it. i.e. In the first session, ask the patient to teach you how to pronounce the basic ritual formulation of human contact in his/her native language.

The Therapeutic Relationship

When you work with people from different cultures you will need more time to build up trust and a good working alliance.

For most clients therapy is not only an unknown world but also an unknown concept.
(i.e. seeing a therapist one must be crazy / shame)

Educate about therapy (field Mental Health)

- Rules
- Roles
- Expectations
- Confidentiality

TRAUMATIC MEMORIES

- Understanding of how the trauma has impacted on the psychic chore: a factoring of the soul & spirit of the torture survivor.
- Negative beliefs : who am I / I don't exist / I am damned / damaged for life/ I live but I'm dead / They have erased my soul/ I am a ghost.
- This stage focuses on promoting psychological organization to restore sheltered assumptions about themselves and the world.
- Reestablishing trust and identity affected by torture.
- Allow plenty of tunic for closure & grounding after processing session.
- Last part of therapy focuses on re-integrating survivor into a social life and establishing meaning in the support groups and social networks around them.

COUNTER TRANSFERENCE

The therapist can be Overwhelmed with a sense of helplessness and despair

May experience symptoms in your own bodies: tension, headaches and extreme tiredness with bodily pain.

The way to a better life after abuse
is through discovering that you belong in the world.
You can love and be loved.
With each new experience of respect and love
Your heart will become stronger,
Your nightmares fewer,
And your faith in a good life will grow greater

Thank You