Trauma Matters: The Connection Between Addiction, Mental Health and Trauma

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Crisis=Danger & Opportunity

Levels of Violence

- Childhood
- Adolescence
- Adult
- Street (workplace and community)
- Consumer Culture
- Media
- War
- Planet
Global Violence

- Violence is a leading cause of death among people aged 15-29

Source: World Health Organization
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

International Homicide Rates
(Rate per 100,000 in 2006)

“The death and disability caused by violence make it one of the leading public health issues of our time.”
World Health Organization

Source: World Health Organization, 2006; FBI 2006; Statistics Canada; Australian Bureau of Statistics
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Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

Helen Keller

Two Kinds of Suffering

- Natural
- Created
Definition of Trauma

The diagnostic manual used by mental health providers (DSM IV-TR) defines trauma as, “involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one’s physical integrity; or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate.”


Definition of Trauma (cont.)

“The person’s response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness or horror (or in children, the response must involve disorganized or agitated behavior).”

Definition of Trauma

Trauma occurs when an external threat overwhelms a person’s internal and external positive coping resources.


Violence Against Women

Violence against women is so pervasive that the United Nations has addressed and defined violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

(United Nations General Assembly, 1993).
Moral Challenges

- 19th century - slavery
- 20th century - totalitarianism
- 21st century – brutality against women and girls

Traumatic Events

**Trauma can take many forms:**

- Emotional, sexual or physical abuse
- Neglect
- Abandonment (especially for small children)
- Extremely painful and frightening medical procedures
Traumatic Events (cont.)

- Catastrophic injuries and illnesses
- Rape or assault
- Muggings
- Domestic violence
- Burglary
- Automobile accidents

Traumatic Events (cont.)

- Immigration
- Natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornados, fires, volcanoes)
- Terrorism such as September 11, 2001
- Witnessing violence such as a parent harming another parent
**Traumatic Events (cont.)**

- Loss of a loved one and severe bereavements (even of a pet)
- Combat/war
- Torture
- Victim of trafficking
- Kidnapping
- Intergenerational (cultural) trauma

**Historical Trauma**

- Across generations
- Massive group trauma
- Examples include: Native Americans, African Americans, Holocaust survivors, Japanese internment survivors, Aboriginal (First Nation)
Traumatic Events (cont.)

Of all these forms of trauma, women are at greater risk of interpersonal abuse than men.

Trauma-Informed Services

• Take the trauma into account.
• Avoid triggering trauma reactions.
• Adjust organization so that trauma survivors can access and benefit from services.

(Harris & Fallot)
Core Principles of Trauma-Informed Care

- Safety (physical and emotional)
- Trustworthiness
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment

(Bfallot & Harris, 2006)

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Becoming Trauma Informed Creates a Culture Shift.

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A Culture Shift: Core Values of a Trauma-Informed System of Care

- **Safety:** Ensuring physical and emotional safety
- **Trustworthiness:** Maximizing trustworthiness, making tasks clear, and maintaining appropriate boundaries
- **Choice:** Prioritizing consumer choice and control
- **Collaboration:** Maximizing collaboration and sharing of power with consumers
- **Empowerment:** Prioritizing consumer empowerment and skill-building

Source: Roger Fallot, Ph.D.

A Culture Shift: Scope of Change in a Distressed System

- Involves all aspects of program activities, setting, relationships, and atmosphere (more than implementing new services)
- Involves all groups: administrators, supervisors, direct service staff, support staff, and consumers (more than service providers)
- Involves making trauma-informed change into a new routine, a new way of thinking and acting (more than new information)

Source: Roger Fallot, Ph.D.
A Culture Shift: Changes in Understanding and Practice

- Thinking differently as a prelude to acting differently
- Thinking differently initiates and sustains changes in practice and setting
- Acting differently reinforces and clarifies changes in understanding

Source: Roger Fallot, Ph.D.

Process of Trauma

TRAUMATIC EVENT
Overwhelms the Physical & Psychological Systems
Intense Fear, Helplessness or Horror

RESPONSE TO TRAUMA
Fight or Flight, Freeze, Altered State of Consciousness, Body Sensations, Numbing,
Hyper-vigilance, Hyper-arousal

SENSITIZED NERVOUS SYSTEM
CHANGES IN BRAIN
CURRENT STRESS
Reminders of Trauma, Life Events, Lifestyle

PAINFUL EMOTIONAL STATE

RETREAT
ISOLATION
DISSOCIATION
DEPRESSION
ANXIETY

HARM TO SELF
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
EATING DISORDER
DELIBERATE SELF-HARM
SUICIDAL ACTIONS

HARM TO OTHERS
AGGRESSION
VIOLENCE
RAGES

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The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

- Collaboration between
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Kaiser Permanente HMO in California
- Largest study ever
- 17,000 adult members participated

ACE Study (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Before age 18:
- Recurrent and severe emotional abuse
- Recurrent and severe physical abuse
- Contact sexual abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
ACE Study
(Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Growing up in a household with:

- An alcoholic or drug-user
- A member being imprisoned
- A mentally ill, chronically depressed, or institutionalized member
- The mother being treated violently
- Both biological parents not being present

(N=17,000) © S. Covington, Ph.D., 2012

ACE Study
(Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Results
ACEs still have a profound effect 50 years later, although now transformed from psychosocial experience into organic disease, social malfunction, and mental illness.

- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Injection of illegal drugs
- Obesity

Higher ACE Score
Chronic Health Conditions

- Heart disease
- Autoimmune diseases
- Lung cancer
- Pulmonary disease
- Liver disease
- Skeletal fractures
- Sexually transmitted infections
- HIV/AIDS

ACE Study
(continued)

Men 16% Sexual Abuse
Men 30% Physical Abuse
Women 27% Sexual Abuse

(Felitti and Anda, 2010)
ACE Study
(continued)

Population Studied:
• 75% white
• 39% college (36% some)
• 18% high school grads

(Felitti & Anda, 2010)

ACE Study
(continued)

Women 50% more likely than men to have a score of 5 or more.

(Felitti & Anda, 2010)
ACE Study (continued)

If a male child has six or more “yes” answers, his risk of becoming an IV drug user increases by 4,600% compared to a boy with a score of zero.

(Felitti & Anda, 2010)

Adverse Childhood Experiences Five-State Study 2010

• Collaboration between CDC and state health departments of AR, LA, NM, TN and WA.

• 26,229 adults were surveyed
ACE Scores and Impact

- Adverse childhood experiences are underlying factors for:
  - Chronic depression
  - Suicide attempts
  - Serious and persistent mental health challenges
  - Addictions
  - Victimization of rape and domestic violence

Source: Ann Jennings, Ph.D.

Adverse Childhood Experiences
(www.ACEStooHigh.com)
(www.cdc.gov/ace)
ACE Study (continued)

“I see that you have…
Tell me how that has affected you later in your life.”

(Felitti & Anda, 2010)

Women in Prison
Childhood Traumatic Events
Largest Effect-Mental Health

- Psychotropic medication
- Mental health treatment
- Attempted suicide
- Traumatic stress

(Messina & Grella, 2005)
Women in Prison (cont.)
Childhood Traumatic Events
Largest Effect-Mental Health

• 980% increase in odds if exposed to 7 CTE’s

(Messina & Grella, 2005)

ACE Study
Walla Walla, WA
(www.ACEStooHigh.com)

• Wow. Are you okay?
• What’s going on?
• 1 – 10 with anger
Washington High School (cont.)

2009 – 2010 (Before new approach)
  • 798 suspensions
  • 50 expulsions
  • 600 written referrals

2010 – 2011 (After new approach)
  • 135 suspensions
  • 30 expulsions
  • 320 written referrals

Critical and Interrelated Issues
  • Substance Abuse
  • Mental Health
  • Trauma
  • Physical Health
  • Crime
Changes in Understanding: The Centrality of Trauma

Incarceration ← Homelessness

Violence and Trauma

Substance Abuse ← Mental Health Problems

Substance Abuse

Mental Health Problems

HIV/AIDS

Other Health Problems

Trauma

Homelessness

Source: Vivian Brown, Ph.D.

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Level of Burden

“Burden” defined as the total number of problem conditions:

- Use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- Homeless
- Co-occurring mental health problem
- Significant health disorder
- HIV/AIDS
- Cognitive impairment
- History of childhood or adult abuse

Source: Vivian Brown, Ph.D.

Areas of Separation

- Training
- Treatment
- Categorical Funding
Key Elements (Staff and Clients)

- Learn what trauma/abuse is
- Understand typical responses
- Develop coping skills

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

- Compassion fatigue
- Burnout
- Vicarious traumatization
Gender Differences

- As children, boys and girls suffer similar rates of abuse
  - Girls - sexually abused
  - Boys - emotional neglect or physical abuse.
- In adolescence, boys are at greater risk if they are gay, young men of color, or gang members.
  - Young men - people who dislike or hate them.
  - Young women – relationships; from the person to whom she is saying, “I love you.”
- Adulthood
  - Man - combat or being a victim of crime
  - Woman – relationship; the person “I love you.”
Men, Violence & Trauma

- 75 percent of student suspensions, expulsions, grade failures, special-education referrals, school-violence casualties, and all other assaults are for boys
- 75 percent of teenage suicides are boys
- 70 percent of all suicides are boys/men
- 80 percent of the homeless are boys/men

(Lyme et al., 2006)

Men, Violence & Trauma (cont.)

- 80 percent of homicide victims are men
- 93 percent of prison inmates are men
- 99 percent of executed prisoners are men (in the last decade, 700 men and 10 women)

(Lyme et al., 2006)
How Men Respond to Trauma

- Men respond differently to similar events:
  - “No big deal”
  - “Just get over it”
  - “Suck it up”
  - “Don’t be a wimp”
  - “Never let them see you sweat”
  - “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps!”
  - “Suffer in Silence”

- But the real reason is.....

“Real Men Can Handle Anything!”
Gender-Responsive Treatment

• Creating an environment through:
  • site selection
  • staff selection
  • program development
  • content and material
• that reflects an understanding of the realities of the lives of women and girls (men and boys), and
• addresses and responds to their strengths and challenges.

Trauma-specific Materials for Women

- Beyond Trauma (Stephanie Covington)
- Healing Trauma (Stephanie Covington)
- Seeking Safety (Lisa Najavits)
- TREM (Maxine Harris)

Trauma-specific Materials for Men

- Helping Men Recover (Stephanie Covington)
- M-TREM (Roger Fallot)

Definition of Recovery

The definition of recovery has shifted from a focus on what is deleted from one’s life (alcohol and other drugs, arrests for criminal acts, hospitalizations) to what is added to one’s life (the achievement of health and happiness).

(Miller & Kurtz, 2005)
What Makes a Difference?

- Creating a safe environment
- Listening to her/his story
- Empathy

Sanctuary
What is Sanctuary?

- Place of refuge/protection
- Shelter
- Oasis
- Place of safety

Transformation

Trauma & Addiction (constriction)  Healing & Recovery (expansion)
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