The Fundamentals and Treatment of Trauma

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Objectives

As a result of this workshop you will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of trauma to include post-traumatic stress disorder as defined in the DSM-5 and the neurobiology of trauma.
- Apply evidence-based therapeutic techniques when working with trauma survivors.
Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being (SAMHSA, 2014).

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What is trauma: DSM-5

- Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury or sexual violation

- Causes clinically significant distress or impairment in the individual’s social interactions, capacity to work or other important areas of functioning

- 4 symptom clusters
  1. Re-experiencing
  2. Avoidance
  3. Negative thoughts/mood
  4. Arousal
Neurobiology of Trauma

HPA Axis

Fight Flight Freeze

Normal, involuntary, automatic, and biological response to trauma
Effects of Stress Hormones

- Impairment in rational thought
- Irritability
- Emotional numbing
- Tonic immobility or “rape paralysis syndrome”
- Unexpected reactions (laughing, positive mood)

- Disorganized/fragmented memory of event

- A word on alcohol and memory
Evidence-based Interventions
Trauma Treatment

- Evidence-based interventions include but are not limited to Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Prolonged Exposure (PE), Trauma-Focused CBT (TF-CBT)

- TF-CBT: a structured, short-term treatment model (8-25 sessions) for children/adolescents and their caregiver

- PE: exposure therapy (in vivo and imaginal) combined with breathing/relaxation exercises; also structured and short-term (8-15 sessions)

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Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

- Developed by Patricia Resick, PhD, Kate Chard, PhD, and Candice Monson, PhD
- Endorsed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Defense and the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies as a best practice treatment for PTSD
- Consists of 12 sessions, manualized, assignment-heavy
- **Main goals**: clients feel their feelings about the trauma/s and balance their beliefs

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CPT: A timeline

**Intake:**
- Client reports a trauma hx
- Assess for PTSD and other disorders
- Educate client on PTSD and CPT

**Sessions 2-3:**
- Determine the client’s willingness/ability to participate in CPT
- CPT contract
- Begin therapy (12+ sessions)

**Ongoing**
- Consult, consult, consult & debrief, debrief, debrief

**Aftercare**

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CPT: Important Concepts

- Just world belief
- Assimilation
- Accommodation
- Over-accommodation
- Stuck points

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CPT: Important Concepts

1. Safety
2. Trust
3. Power/control
4. Esteem
5. Intimacy
CPT: Sessions 1-2

- **Session 1: Introduction & Education**
  - Therapist does most of the talking
  - Client is overwhelmed at the end – be prepared for this
  - First HW assignment: Impact Statement, begin Stuck Point log

- **Session 2: Meaning of the Event (Impact Statement)**
  - Client reads Impact Statement while therapist listens for additional stuck points
  - ABC sheet education
  - Second HW assignment: Complete ABC sheets daily + one on the most traumatic incident

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Session 2a: Optional session for Traumatic Bereavement

- Introduced at end of session 2 in lieu of ABC worksheets
- When to use:
  - Ct. witnessed death of a loved one
  - Ct. experienced unexpected & traumatic death of a loved one
  - Ct. experiencing survivor guilt
  - Ct. may have killed others (combat)

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CPT: Session 3

- Session 3: Identification of Thoughts & Feelings (ABC sheet)
  - Review ABC sheets to ensure client has the hang of it
  - Review ABC sheet on traumatic incident
  - Assign written Trauma Account
  - Third HW assignment: write trauma account with as many details as possible and client’s thoughts/feelings during event

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CPT: Sessions 4-5 (Trauma Accounts)

- **Session 4: Remembering Traumatic Events** (account/s)
  - Client reads Trauma Account aloud in session
  - Client and therapist identify additional stuck points
  - Fourth HW assignment: Second Trauma Account

- **Session 5: Remembering Traumatic Events**
  - Client reads second account aloud in session
  - Identify differences between first and second account, focusing on thoughts/feelings
  - Introduce Challenging Questions worksheet
  - Fifth HW assignment: complete CQ worksheet on one SP daily

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CPT: Sessions 6-7

- **Session 6: Challenging Questions**
  - Shift in therapist bx: Ct. now begins to ask & answer Socratic questions for themselves
  - Focus also shifts to over-accommodation
  - Introduction to Patterns of Problematic Thinking
  - Sixth HW assignment: Patterns of Problematic Thinking worksheet

- **Session 7: Patterns of Problematic Thinking**
  - Introduce the Challenging Beliefs worksheet
  - Introduce first of five themes: Safety
  - Seventh HW assignment: Challenging Belief worksheet daily, read Safety module and complete a CB worksheet as necessary

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CPT: Sessions 8-12

- Session 8: Safety Issues
- Session 9: Trust Issues
- Session 10: Power/Control Issues
- Session 11: Esteem Issues
- Session 12: Intimacy Issues & Meaning of the Event
  - Client reads aloud a new Impact Statement focusing on what the event means to them now and on their current beliefs in the five topic areas above.
  - Therapist reads original Impact Statement to client.

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CPT: Aftercare

- At last session, schedule an appointment 1-2 months in the future.
- Client is to continue using CPT skills (worksheets included)
- At follow up, therapist and client can decide how long before next appointment.
- Some programs have monthly, drop-in aftercare groups
For More Information: CPT

- Official website: http://cptforptsd.com/
- CPT training package order form: https://www.newpaltz.edu/media/idmh/idmh_cpt_training.pdf
- Center for Deployment Psychology:
  - http://deploymentpsych.org/treatments/cognitive-processing-therapy-cpt
  - http://deploymentpsych.org/online-courses/cpt
- MUSC online course (free): https://cpt.musc.edu/
- National Center for PTSD:
  - http://www ptsd.va.gov/
- Sign up for their newsletter from the main site

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For More Information: PE

- Center for Deployment Psychology: [http://deploymentpsych.org/treatments/prolonged-exposure-therapy-ptsd-pe](http://deploymentpsych.org/treatments/prolonged-exposure-therapy-ptsd-pe)
For More Information: TF-CBT

- TF-CBT Therapist Certification Program: https://tfcbt.org/
- MUSC online course (free): https://tfcbt.musc.edu/


