

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) |

Victimology



Forensic
Psychology



Criminology

VICTIM ADVOCACY

- ❖ shelter & counseling
- ❖ legal advice
- ❖ education
- ❖ direct aid to victims
- ❖ support during court proceedings
- ❖ information on compensation programs

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

– a mental health problem that some people develop after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event.

HISTORY OF PTSD

Nostalgia (1678) – Switzerland



Battle Shock (1905) – Russia



Shell Shock (1917–1919) – WWI



Combat Exhaustion (1939–1945) – WWII



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (1980) – DSMIII

PTSD AND TBI (TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY)

TBI occurs from a sudden blow or jolt to the head.

TBI and PTSD can result from the same traumatic event.

TBI and PTSD share similar mental and emotional symptoms. However, physical symptoms are different.

TBI symptoms:

- dizziness
- nausea
- lethargy
- insomnia
- vision problems
- sensitivity to noise or light



IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN A TRAUMATIC
EVENT, PLEASE SEE A MEDICAL
PROFESSIONAL EVEN IF YOU SEEM TO
BE OKAY.

CAN THIS LEAD TO PTSD?

- ❖ Close combat
- ❖ Witnessing a murder
- ❖ Attempted rape
- ❖ Being in a car accident
- ❖ Rape
- ❖ Surviving a flood
- ❖ Burglary
- ❖ Unexpected death in the family

Retired military officer Bradley served 6 years in Vietnam out of his twenty-year-long career. When in Vietnam, he survived numerous battles, buried many friends, and watched countless villages burn. Upon leaving the military, he still battles nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety, sudden mood changes and depression. He feels distant and misunderstood. The memories of war still feel fresh and he suffers. This is a classic example of war-related PTSD.

Ashley comes home from work, and finds that her apartment has been broken into. Her front door is open, everything is a mess, and her valuables are missing. She has been burglarized. Weeks later, she still feels afraid. She can't sleep, she is constantly on edge, especially in her own home. She doesn't feel safe unless there are people around her. As a result, she moves to a new apartment, but her fear and anxiety do not go away. This is another example of PTSD.

MILITARY-RELATED PTSD

Combat/visual PTSD

- ❖ Primarily affects military personnel
- ❖ First-hand experience (i.e. killing, being shot at, torture, etc)

Secondary exposure

- ❖ Primarily affects medics
- ❖ Treatment of wounded soldiers, performing autopsies, bedside assistance, etc.

Tertiary exposure

- ❖ Primarily affects bystanders, civilians, refugees from war zones
- ❖ Witnessing just as much violence and stress as military members in combat.

CRIME-RELATED PTSD

Can result from experiencing, witnessing or even learning of any violent crime.

Estimated risks of developing PTSD:

- ❖ rape – 49%
- ❖ severe beating or physical assault – 31%
- ❖ other sexual assault – 23.7%
- ❖ shooting or stabbing – 15.4%
- ❖ sudden unexpected death of a family member or loved one 14.3%
- ❖ witness to a murder or assault – 7.3%

CRISIS EVENT RELATED PTSD

- ❖ Natural disaster
- ❖ Manmade disaster
- ❖ Extreme stress
- ❖ Accident

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graph TD; A[PTSD Symptoms] --> B[Intrusive]; A --> C[Avoidance Phenomena]; A --> D[Hyperarousal]
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PTSD Symptoms

Intrusive

Avoidance
Phenomena

Hyperarousal

INTRUSIVE SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

- ❖ flashbacks
- ❖ nightmares

AVOIDANCE PHENOMENA IN PTSD

- ❖ avoidance of close emotional ties with family, colleagues, and friends
- ❖ numbness
- ❖ diminished emotions
- ❖ ability to only complete routine mechanical activities
- ❖ lethargy
- ❖ boredom
- ❖ coldness (emotionlessness)
- ❖ situational avoidance

ESPECIALLY APPARENT IN CHILDREN

HYPERAROUSAL SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

- ❖ acting as if continually threatened by the trauma that caused the illness
- ❖ irritability
- ❖ trouble concentrating
- ❖ memory issues
- ❖ insomnia
- ❖ poor work quality
- ❖ poor relationship maintenance
- ❖ anxiety
- ❖ alcohol and drug abuse

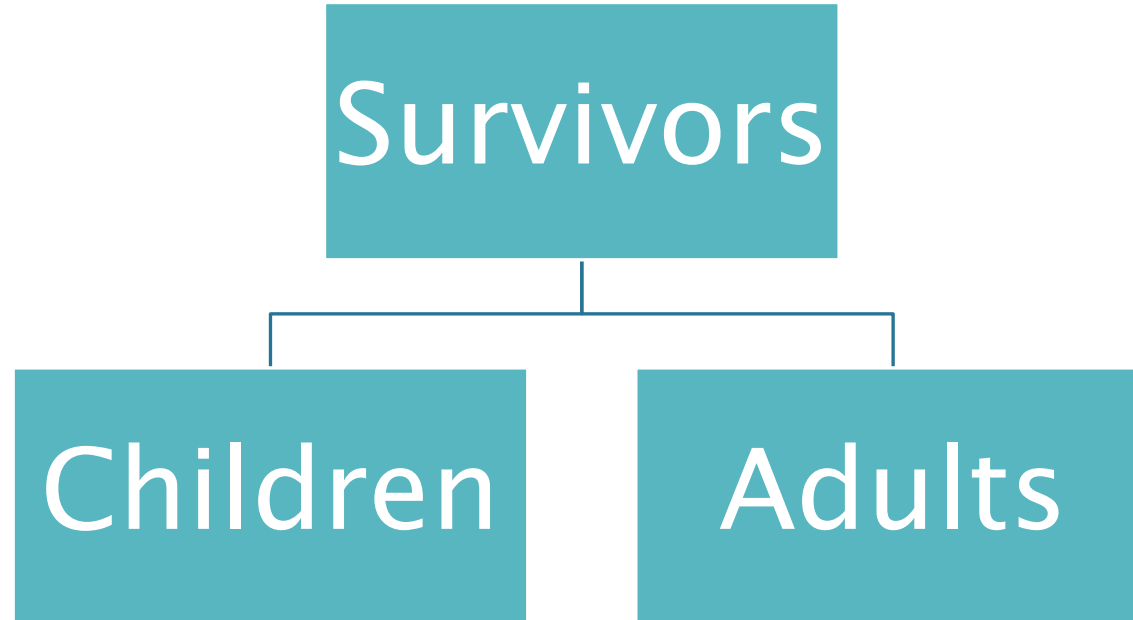
COMPLEX PTSD (C-PTSD)

– psychological disorder similar to PTSD which results from repetitive prolonged trauma involving harm or abandonment by a caregiver or other interpersonal relationships with an uneven power dynamic:

- ❖ parent–child relationship
- ❖ husband–wife relationship
- ❖ teacher–student relationship
- ❖ kidnappings
- ❖ hostage situations
- ❖ slavery
- ❖ prisoners of war
- ❖ concentration camp survivors
- ❖ defectors of cults or cult–like organizations

SYMPTOMS OF COMPLEX PTSD

- ❖ Prolonged feelings of terror, worthlessness, and helplessness
- ❖ Deformation of one's identity and sense of self



SYMPTOMS OF COMPLEX PTSD IN CHILDREN

- ❖ Attachment issues
- ❖ Biological problems
- ❖ Affect or emotional regulation difficulties
- ❖ Dissociation
- ❖ Behavioral control problems
- ❖ Cognition issues
- ❖ Self-concept difficulties

SYMPTOMS OF COMPLEX PTSD IN ADULTS

- ❖ Difficulties regulating emotions
- ❖ Variations in consciousness
- ❖ Changes in self-perception
- ❖ Changes in perception of the perpetrator
- ❖ Changes in relations with others
- ❖ Loss of or changes in belief system
- ❖ Sense of hopelessness and despair
- ❖ Loss of sense of reality

WAYS TO COPE

- ❖ Find someone to talk with you about how you feel and what you are going through. Keep the phone number of a good friend nearby to call when you feel overwhelmed or panicked.
- ❖ Allow yourself to feel pain. It will not last forever.
- ❖ Spend time with others but make time to spend time alone.
- ❖ Take care of your mind and body. Rest, sleep, and eat regular healthy meals.

WAYS TO COPE

- ❖ Reestablish a normal routine as soon as possible, but don't overdo it.
- ❖ Make daily decisions which will help to bring back a feeling of control over your life. Exercise, though not excessively, and alternate with periods of relaxation.
- ❖ Undertake daily tasks with care. Accidents are more likely to happen after severe stress.
- ❖ Recall the things that helped you cope during trying times and loss in the past, and think about the things that give you hope, and turn to them on bad days.



GET HELP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

WAYS TO HELP

- ❖ Be patient
- ❖ Be available
- ❖ Be understanding
- ❖ Be supportive
- ❖ Listen
- ❖ Do not judge
- ❖ IT IS NEVER THEIR FAULT

ALTHOUGH PROFESSIONAL THERAPY IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, THERE HAVE BEEN CASES WHEN THE SURVIVOR MANAGED TO OVERCOME THEIR TRAUMA THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

REFERENCES

- ❖ <https://www.nimh.nih.gov> – National Institute of Mental Health
- ❖ <https://historyofptsd.wordpress.com>
- ❖ <https://www.ptsd.va.gov> – US Department of Veterans Affairs
- ❖ <https://victimsofcrime.org>