



PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA



Children and Adolescent Survivors of Disaster



LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS

- **People Want To Get Involved**
- **Prevention/Preparation is Limited**
- **Community is Powerful**
- **Lack of Consistency in Intervention**
- **Politics Gets In The Way**
- **People At Risk Are Often Not Well Served**

TOTALLY UNPREPARED

- **Even When We Are Educated, Alerted, and Prepared.**



PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

- **EARLY PERSPECTIVES**
- **----COMBAT RELATED DISORDER**
- **----WEAKNESS VS. PHYSICAL INJURY**



SIGMUND FREUD and the NEO-FREUDIANS


- **UNCONCIOUS**
- **DEFENSE MECHANISMS**
 - **REPRESSION**
 - **SUPPRESSION**
 - **FUGUE**
 - **IDENTIFICATION**
 - **RATIONALIZATION**



EARLY NEURO-BIOLOGICAL MODELS

- **Fight or Flight Model**
 - **Walter Cannon 1914**

- **Alarm and Resistance**
 - **Hans Selye 1936**



1940-1950'S PENFIELD

- **BRAIN DYNAMICS**
- **STORAGE AND IMPACT ON BEHAVIOR**



1960-1970'S THEODORE BENSON

- **AUTONOMIC RESPONSE TO STRESS**
- **REVERSAL OF STRESS RESPONSE**
- **RELAXATION RESPONSE**



1990-2000'S BRUCE PERRY

- **BIOCHEMISTRY OF TRAUMA**
- **PARADIGM OF BRAIN INJURY**
- **FREEZE-WITHDRAW MECHANISM**
- **CHILD TRAUMA ACADEMY**



TRAUMATIC STRESS



KEY INGREDIENTS

- **INTENSITY**
- **POTENTIAL FOR HARM**
- **FEAR/TERROR**
- **CONTROL**
- **VISUAL IMAGES**
- **POTENTIAL**
- **FRAME**



CLUSTERS OF PTSD SYMPTOMS



INTRUSIVE RECOLLECTIONS

- **DREAMS**
- **FLASHBACKS**
- **THOUGHTS**



PERSISTENT AVOIDANCE

- **CUES**
- **SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES**
- **PROTECTION**



EMOTIONAL NUMBING

- **SPECIFIC AND GENERAL**



PERSISTENT AROUSAL

- **HYPER-VILIGANCE**
- **INCREASED STARTLE RESPONSE**
- **SLEEP DIFFICULTIES**
- **IRRITABILITY**
- **ANXIETY**
- **PHYSIOLOGICAL HYPERACTIVITY**
- **COGNITIVE IMPARMENT**



Persistence

- **Memory includes sensory message and sequence**
- **Trauma “imprints” the sequence...especially with the developing brain**
- **Repetitive threat sensitizes the sequence**



FREEZE/WITHDRAWAL RESPONSE

- **DEFEAT**
- **DISSOCIATION**
- **DIFFERENT MECHANISM**
- **EMOTIONAL MEMORY**



SPECIAL CASES

- **CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**



LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR

- **Connections and Repetitions**
- **Creation of Neural Pathways**
- **At Risk**

KEY RESPONSES OF CHILDREN

- **FEAR**
 - **Unknown**
 - **Future**
 - **Safety**
- **ALERT**
- **HPYER-VIGILANCE and ACTIVITY**
- **WITHDRAW/AVOIDANCE/DISSOCIATIVE STATE**
- **DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY**



DEVELOPMENT DEPENDENT RESPONSES

- **INFANTS**
 - **Linked to Mother**
 - **Excessive Crying, Eating, Sleeping**
 - **Apathy Failure to Thrive**

DEVELOPMENT DEPENDENT RESPONSES

- **Toddlers**
 - **Aggression**
 - **Avoidance**
 - **Regressive Behavior**
 - **Withdrawal and Dissociation**
 - **Repetition**



DEVELOPMENT DEPENDENT RESPONSES

- **School Age Children**
 - **Anxiety and Depression**
 - **Hyper-vigilance**
 - **Loss of Interest**
 - **Fear (Old and New)**
 - **Impaired Learning**



DEVELOPMENT DEPENDENT RESPONSES

- **Adolescents**
 - **Identity Disorders**
 - **Eating Disorders**
 - **Acting Out**
 - **Substance Abuse**
 - **Numbing and Hypo-responsiveness**
 - **Self-Mutilization**



CRITICAL INCIDENT DE-BRIEFING



Community Intervention

- **Safety**
- **Return To Normal**
- **Re-Building Community (Stronger)**
- **Memorials**



CRITICAL INCIDENT DE-BRIEFING

- **BRIEF (1-3 SESSIONS)**
- **NON-CLINICAL**

Phase 1

- **INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION**
 - **NO THERAPY OR DIAGNOSIS**
 - **NO RECORDS**
 - **NO BAGGAGE**
 - **REQUIRED ACROSS U.S.**
 - **PREVENTATIVE**



Phase 2 ELICITING FACTS

- **WHAT HAPPENED**
- **SEQUENCE**
- **INVOLVEMENT**
- **SMALL DETAILS**



Phase 3 : ELICITING THOUGHTS

- **THOUGHTS DURING THE EVENT**
- **THOUGHTS NOW**
- **WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED**
- **NONSENSE THOUGHTS**



Phase 4 : ELICITING FEELINGS

- **WORST THING**
- **FEELINGS AT SAFE ENVIRONMENT**
- **FEELINGS NOW**
- **VENTILATION**
- **SOMETHING OR NOTHING**



Phase 5 : Reaction

- **PERSONAL IMPACT OF THE TRAUMA**
- **LEARNING**
- **MAKING SENSE OUT OF RANDOMNESS**
- **SPIRITUAL APPLICATION**

Phase 6 : Symptoms

- **During the Crisis**
- **3-5 Days After**
- **Current**
 - **Changes...better or worse is a good predictor**



Phase 7 : Teaching

- **Stress reduction Techniques**
- **Support groups**
- **Self-help**
- **Normal symptoms**



Phase 8 : Re-Entry

- **Referral**
- **Contact Information**
- **Termination**