

ENHANCING GROWTH FROM TRAUMA

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What to expect...

- Confidentiality and trust
- Different perspectives on 'trauma'
- The debriefing debate in context
- Stoicism: Techniques for use in crisis intervention
- Trauma resolution and growth
- Identifying and assessing positive psychological changes

Introduce yourself

- Name
- Affiliation/Occupation/Interest
- Professional expectations
- Why you're *really* here...
 - » Theoretical, Practical and/or Legal interest?

What is 'trauma'?

- A serious injury or shock to the body
- A mental disorder or illness requiring treatment
- Shattered assumptions (Janoff-Bulman, 1989, 1992)
- Thwarted, repressed intention (Gerbode, 1985)

Trauma? It depends on who...

- Psychiatrist: Cause of disorder or mental illness
- Clinical Psychologist: Similar
- Counsellor/Psychotherapist: According to discipline
- Psychoanalyst (esp. Freudian): Subconscious conflicts
- Emergency/military/medical/aid services: career threat

Psychiatry & Trauma

- Insanity
- Soldier's Heart
- Railway Spine
- Shell Shock - WWI
- Combat fatigue - WWII
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder - Vietnam War

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (1980)
- PTSD:
 - Intrusions
 - Avoidance
 - Arousal
 - Social and domestic disruption

What is therapy?

- memory - “tell me enough to diagnose you”
- medication - “here’s how to feel better”
- manipulation - “I’ll tell you what to do; you do it”

What is treatment?

- Symptoms
- Diagnosis
- Changing scores and impressions

Medication

- Medical model
- Diagnostic categories based on symptoms
- Specific therapies to reduce symptoms
- Reduction in symptoms = successful treatment

Natural Resilience

- **Modern**
 - Oklahoma City, 1995
 - Columbine, 1999
 - New York City, 2001
- **40+ years ago...**
 - WW1, 1914-18
 - The Blitz, London, 1942
 - Aberfan, South Wales, 1966

Posttraumatic Growth

*A new paradigm of
psychological trauma..?*

- Enhanced sense of self
- Enhanced quality of relationships
- Existential/spiritual interest

Psychology and Trauma

- Freud: Association
- Pavlov: Classical conditioning
- Skinner: Operant conditioning
- Bandura: Social Learning theory
- Rogers: Unconditional Positive Regard, empathy and congruence

Freud

- Subconscious
- Chain of events lost to consciousness
- Trace from the most recent back to the original trauma

Pavlov

- Dogs salivating to cues
- Meat
- Meat and bell - bell alone
- Meat and light - light alone

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eo7jcl8fAul>

Skinner

- Operant conditioning
- Positive reinforcement
- Negative reinforcement
- Punishment
- Schedules of reinforcement

Rogers - Conditions for Success

- Two people in psychological contact
- Client is incongruent (anxious, vulnerable)
- Therapist is congruent (integrated)
- Therapist shows unconditional positive regard
- Therapist experiences empathy
- Therapist communicates UPR and empathy

Bandura

- Social Learning Theory
- Learn vicariously
 - Witnessing
 - Empathising
 - “That could happen to me”

Traumatic Incident Reduction

- Person-centred (vs. medical model)
- Theory-led (Freud, Pavlov, Skinner, Rogers)
- Traumatic network: Sequences and root incidents

Triggering (and the 'Trauma network')

- Recall someone's irrational behaviour/overreaction
- Could triggering explain it?
- What about other times with other people?
- Recall a time you overreacted...
- Does 'triggering' explain it?
- How do you feel about your overreaction now?

Psychological Change

- Eudaimonism vs Hedonism
- Psychological well-being (PWB) vs Subjective well-being (SWB)
- Is all change good?

Christopher, 2004

The difference between normal development-inducing stress and pathological stress is determined by:

1. the organism being sufficiently biologically healthy to make use of the resources;
2. whether cognitive schema are available to transform stress and anxiety into learning, meaning, and adaptive behavior; and
3. whether social relationships are complex, responsive, and flexible enough to adequately dampen stress arousal.

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Growth Following Adversity and Its Relation with Subjective Well-Being and Psychological Well-Being

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Studies have shown that posttraumatic growth is associated with greater well-being. However, it is not clear whether posttraumatic growth is related to subjective well-being (SWB) or psychological well-being (PWB). Whereas SWB is derived from the hedonistic tradition, PWB is derived from the eudaimonic tradition. In a sample of 125 college students who had experienced a distressing event, we found evidence that growth is related to PWB rather than SWB.

Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth

- Create conditions? (internal locus)
- Influence from the outside? (external locus)
- Basic psychological needs and evolutionary psychology (Christopher, 2004)

Alice Miller

- *For your own good; Thou shalt not be aware*
- Therapy as abuse
- Repressed traumatic histories
- Overachievers, idealists and those compelled to repeat, including political leaders, psychotherapists, teachers, parents...
- Memory or Medication?

Memory

- Phenomenological
- Organismic
- Subjectively 'real' (*my truth*)
- Shaped by survival
- The Body Keeps the Score

Basic Psychological Needs

- autonomy
- relatedness
- competence

Mindfulness

- Attending in the present moment.
- cf. Dissociation - Anxiety - Depression
- Grapes... “Eat the first grape. Make a decision to find the second grape interesting. Take 5 minutes to eat it. How do the 2 experiences differ?”

Stoicism

- Ancient 'philosophy of life'
- Maintain tranquility
- Fewer negative emotions
- Increased chance of taking delight in life

Maintaining Tranquility

- Negative visualization
- Internalizing goals
- Self-denial

Negative Visualization

- “What’s the worst that can happen?”
- Hedonic adaptation
- Desire what we already have
- Contemplate loss
- Enjoy its existence

Negative Visualization

- Contemplate your own death
- Live each day as if it were your last
- Entitled to nothing

Negative Visualization

- Think of a highly-prized possession (e.g., car, house, job, trophy, toy, gadget)
- Get a sense of its presence - affection - tell it what it means to you
- Lose it. The 'final time' has already passed...
- Know it's still there...

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Stoicism (revisited)

- Negative visualization
- Internalising goals
- Self-denial

Internalizing Goals

- Compete only with yourself
- Make maximum effort your goal
- Strive to improve

Self Denial

- Denial as an opportunity to appreciate having
- Self-denial brings opportunities under self-control
 - know you can survive
 - prepare for the worst
 - increased appreciation

Grief Therapy

“Victims of loss and tragedy differ widely in their reactions: Some benefit from therapeutic intervention; most do not and should not be coerced by mental health professionals into emotionally correct responses.”

(Irvine, 2009, p. 219)

Crisis Intervention

- Shattered assumptions (Janoff-Bulman, 1992)
- Organismic Valuing Process (Joseph & Linley, 2004)
- Self-determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000)
- Existential concerns (Frankl, 1946; Tillich, 1952; Yalom, 1970)

Crisis Intervention

- Self-determination Theory
 - Autonomy
 - Relatedness
 - Competence

Crisis Intervention

- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- You do not have to say anything...
- Who are you? (info); What was your role? (fact); When did you first realize this was serious? (thought); What was the worst moment for you? (reaction); How has this affected you? (symptoms); Here are some options for you (teaching); Anything you want to ask before we leave? (re-entry).
- AUTONOMY?

Crisis Intervention

- Confrontation (Caplan, 1964)
- Community-based intervention (Teresa Descilo, Miami, FL.)
- “Get the guys back on the trucks” (Mitchell, 1992)
- Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA)
- RELATEDNESS? COMPETENCE?

Crisis Intervention

- “..a healthy, constructive form of anxiety that corresponds with an awareness of personal freedom and the consequences and responsibilities that accompany decisions. Existential therapists view existential ***anxiety as a catalyst for growth.***”
- (Davis: http://www.ehow.com/facts_5675928_existential-anxiety_.html)

with regard to the pain...

- Where is it? - ok/alright/good/thank you
- What size is it? - ok...
- What shape is it? - ok...
- What colour is it? - ok...
- What texture is it? - ok...
- From 0-10 what score would you give it? - ok...
- *To relief and realisation... “How does this pain seem to you now?”*

tell me...

- something you like about - ok
- something you don't like about - ok
- *To relief and realisation...*
- something good about..... - ok
- something not good about..... - ok
- *To relief and realisation...*
- *For information only. To be used only under supervision of a certified TIR trainer*

“Tell me something you
could do...”

—TO RELIEF AND REALISATION

- Tell me something you enjoyed learning
- Tell me something you would like to improve
- Tell me something you would like to know
- Tell me something that was a pleasant surprise
- Tell me something you like about your life

– to relief and realisation...

- Tell me something you have wanted to do
- Tell me something you have achieved
- Tell me something you could still become
- Tell me something you could be better at
- Tell me something you used to enjoy
- Tell me something that is real
- Tell me something that is important
- Tell me how life could be better
- Tell me something you might prepare for
- Tell me something you might have overlooked
- Tell me something you could now appreciate