Best Practices in Trauma-Specific Treatment

ABSTRACT THIS COURSE

This course offers you the unique perspective of examining how specific behavioral disorders, such as substance use disorders, eating disorders, depressive disorders, and anxiety disorders, are impacted by trauma.

You will receive an overview of best practices in trauma treatment, including some trauma-specific interventions like Trauma Addictions Mental Health and Recovery (TAMAR) Treatment. Various approaches to treatment will be discussed.
After taking this course, you should be able to:

- Describe the pervasive effects of trauma and the importance of using a trauma-informed care approach for anyone seeking treatment services.
- Summarize the tools available for screening and assessing trauma.
- Identify and apply best practices for trauma-specific treatments.
- Summarize the tools available for family engagement, empowerment, and collaboration using a trauma-informed care approach.

A Trauma-Informed Care Approach

Experiencing trauma can impact a person on many levels (i.e., on a cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral level) (Aronson et al., 2017; Van der Kolk, 2014). As such, it is vital that treatment for trauma be accessible and holistically based for all persons seeking care.

Accordingly, when you approach treatment with a trauma-informed care (TIC) approach, and you are well-versed in the various methods of evidence-based and manualized treatments for trauma, you help to make a significant influence in the health and wellness of the people impacted by trauma, their families, and their communities (SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Care, n.d.).
Definitions and Terms

- **Dose response**
- **Traumatic stress vs. stress**
- **Acute stress disorder**
- **Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**
- **Posttraumatic growth/resilience**

In this course, you will encounter some words or phrases that you may have heard before, some you may have never heard, and some that you have heard but may not know the meaning of. Here is a brief overview of some words and phrases that are important when working with people with trauma-related disorders.

Click each term.

---

**Trauma and Chronic Health Conditions**

The aforementioned ACEs Study, which was conducted by lead researcher Dr. Vincent Felitti, revealed a never-before-articulated theory about early childhood trauma and its link to chronic health conditions later in life. The study followed individuals with chronic health conditions, showing that the majority experienced at least more than one ACE (Felitti et al., 1998). These individuals were more likely to have diabetes, lung cancer, autoimmune disorders, as well as chronic pain (Felitti et al., 1998).

Theories linking the body’s response systems, including hormonal responses to stress over long periods, show how emotional responses can create a lifetime of “living in trauma” by the body (Van der Kolk, 2015).
Trauma and Mental Illness

Trauma co-occurs with anxiety, depression, PTSD, and substance use disorder. As a behavioral health provider, being attuned to root causes of commonly co-occurring mental illnesses can assist your assessment and treatment planning.

Take a minute to watch a brief video about Anna, a girl who was sexually abused at a young age, and later misdiagnosed and mistreated by several providers within the behavioral healthcare system.

Courtesy of National Empowerment Center. www.power2u.org

which left her feeling isolated, afraid, and ashamed.

---

Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care

For assistance in viewing and/or navigating this module, click the "Help" button located in the upper right corner.

© 2018 Relias LLC. All rights reserved.

RELIAS
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After taking this course, you will be able to:

- Define at least 3 types of trauma and the pervasive impact that trauma has on a person’s development.
- List 4 essential components of a trauma-informed approach.
- Provide at least 2 examples of how and when you should use a trauma-informed approach to those you support.

Meet Janine

Janine, a 32-year-old female of African-American descent, walks into the county mental health and substance abuse services local out-patient clinic in her community in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She has received services here on 6 previous occasions, never sticking with any of the treatment provided for more than a few months. She has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, a severe alcohol use disorder, and is a drug user. Janine has been hospitalized as well for behavioral health issues in the past. She has two 5-year-old children who live with a foster family.
While learning about Janine's history, it was revealed that Janine lost her twin girls to foster care after they were found living with her in an abandoned building. It was reported that Janine had been attacked and raped in front of her children. At one point, Janine reported that she was able to stay clean for 5 months.

The Many Types of Traumatic Events or Experiences

- Sexual abuse/assault
- Physical abuse/assault
- Emotional abuse/psychological maltreatment
- Neglect
- Serious accident, illness, or medical procedure
- Witness to domestic violence
- Victim/witness to community violence
- School violence/bullying
- Natural/manmade disasters
- Forced displacement
- War, terrorism, or political violence
- Military trauma including the impact of deployment-related stressors
- Victim/witness to extreme personal/interpersonal violence