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Welcome!

People who have experienced traumatic events often struggle with upsetting emotions, frightening memories, or a sense of constant danger. Many, many people are exposed to trauma in their lives. How it is handled is the key to healing.

Early intervention is essential in preventing the development of chronic mental health problems associated with trauma. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is a highly regarded therapy approach that provides the support necessary to confront the traumatic memory in a controlled and safe environment. It is used to identify, challenge and modify biased or distorted thoughts and interpretations about the traumatic event and its meaning. While most of the research supports this treatment for children, it can be beneficial for adults with acute trauma as well, such as rape victims, violence victims, soldiers returning from combat, and survivors of natural disasters.

At SBHI, we offer a range of treatments for trauma survivors including TF-CBT. Many of our therapists have had extensive training in treating trauma and can help with the journey of healing, whether from a long past experience or a recent one. ■

Sue McGatha
President and CEO

Story of Survival

“Childhood trauma had numbed me into a depression I could not escape. I could not sleep and, when I did, I had pervasive nightmares full of anxiety and helpless feelings. I became hypervigilant in my everyday life, focusing more on the safety of my surroundings than the experience of living.

When something would remind me of the trauma, I would separate from myself and felt like I was floating above my body, watching life rather than participating in it.

Functioning in normal life became difficult and I could not focus at work. I began having anxiety in unfamiliar social situations and began isolating myself to avoid unnecessary stress.

After family members watched me struggle for years, they recommended counseling and that is how I found SBHI. Through therapy and a plan specifically designed for me, things have improved. The nightmares are less frequent and I have become more of a participant in life rather than an observer. I feel more hopeful now.” ■

SBHI is partially funded by the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board for Montgomery County and the Preble County Mental Health and Recovery Board.

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Quick Links...

**National Institute of
Mental Health**
www.nlm.nih.gov

SAMHSA
www.samhsa.gov

**Nat'l Alliance for the
Mentally Ill**
www.nami.org

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Everyone experiences stressful events which can affect them emotionally and physically. Their reactions are usually brief and they recover quickly. Someone who experiences a catastrophic event or recurring events that are highly stressful can develop ongoing problems known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

PTSD can develop after experiencing an event that involved a threat to one's own or another's life or physical well-being and that person responded with intense fear, helplessness, or horror. It can be a severe, ongoing emotional reaction to an extreme psychological trauma.

Symptoms include:

- Disturbing memories such as flashbacks of the event and nightmares
- Emotional numbing like difficulty concentrating and memory problems
- Anxiety and increased emotional arousal like irritability, overwhelming guilt or shame, trouble sleeping, and being easily startled

The symptoms may come and go. One may experience more symptoms during times of high stress. For example, hearing a car backfire could make one relive combat experiences or other gunshot experiences.

There are many kinds of trauma. The most common originate from combat exposure, rape, abuse, assault, and physical attack. However, anything that threatens safety and is out of one's control can trigger trauma responses. ■

Frequently Asked Questions

PTSD:

What symptoms do children have that are different from adults?

Children may also show some of the following symptoms:

- worry about dying at a young age
- loss of interest in activities
- physical symptoms like headaches and stomach aches
- trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- irritability and anger outbursts
- acting younger than their age
- repeating behavior that reminds them of the trauma



Frequently Asked Questions...

How is PTSD treated?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can appear to be an overwhelming and complex condition to treat. However treatment using Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) can achieve success in a relatively short period of time and includes the following treatment elements:

- Psycho-education about PTSD so the client, and supportive family members, can fully understand the dynamics of this disorder and realize that their reactions, feelings and behaviors are normal and not much different than those of many others who have had similar experiences.
- Understanding and naming feelings is another component of this treatment. Learning to accurately identify and express feelings helps to put the trauma in perspective with appropriate expression of feelings as a form of relief.
- Stress management and relaxation are taught so that the client can learn to regulate their stress level and mood. Most clients find this to be a very helpful component of their treatment.
- The client, in close collaboration with the therapist, develops a “trauma narrative”. This is typically a written story about their life before, during and after the trauma. This life story helps the client to recognize that they had strengths and capabilities prior to the trauma and that they can recover these qualities. The therapist also examines the content for distorted thinking, inaccurate perceptions and other errors that can be corrected. Once corrected the client often alters their perspective about the trauma and comes to terms with the things that happened to them. Sharing this story with supportive family members is often an aspect of this stage. This can be very healing.
- When needed, a safety plan is developed to reduce the likelihood of a re-occurrence of the traumatic experience.
- When appropriate, medication may be prescribed to address pervasive symptoms of the trauma including anxiety and depression.

How do I cope?

- Follow your health care professional’s instructions. Remind yourself that it takes time to heal. Following your treatment plan will help move you forward.
- Take care of yourself by getting enough rest, eating a balanced diet, exercising, and taking time to relax. Remember that caffeine and nicotine can worsen your anxiety.
- Don’t self-medicate by turning to alcohol or drugs to numb your feelings. This can lead to more problems and prevent real healing.
- Stay connected with your support system. Just spending time with loved ones can offer healing and comfort.
- When you feel anxious, take a brisk walk or delve into a hobby to refocus or break the cycle. ■

Check Out Our Website...

Our website, www.sbhihelp.org, has a wide range of carefully selected information on mental health and substance abuse issues. In addition to articles on many subjects, you will find links to related websites, plus information specifically for healthcare and social service providers.

Information about our emergency and outpatient services, and the latest information in mental health and substance abuse are also available. ■

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.sbhihelp.org
FOR MORE INFORMATION

We owe a debt of gratitude to the **Samaritan Health Foundation**, for without the Foundation's generous support, our newsletter would not be possible. ■

Sincerely,

Susan Elias
Director of Development
Samaritan Behavioral Health



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Mass Trauma and the Impact on Haiti

Find out what can be done to support friends and family members who are suffering beyond the disaster zone.

Learn more...

<http://news.health.com/2010/01/14/how-will-haitians-cope/>



Of One Mind

Empowering Ohioans to become active in the fight against stigma and promote access to services for mental illness, alcohol & drug addiction.

Learn more...

<http://of-1-mind.org/>



The GlassBook Project

A National effort to reshape how people generally think about and respond to survivors and individuals with mental health concerns.

Learn more...

<http://www.glassbookproject.org/>

