Substance Abuse and Sexual Violence: The Need for Integration When Treating Survivors

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Objective
- To understand the necessity for therapeutic strategies in clients with co-occurring Substance Use Disorders and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and/or other mental health issues as a result of histories of sexual violence.

Topics of Discussion
- Prevalence of Sexual Violence
- Impact of Trauma on Survivors
- Strategies and Challenges of Integrated Treatment
- Successful Models of Integrated Treatment
- Resources

Prevalence of Sexual Violence
- Fewer than ___ % of children are abused by strangers.
- 1 in ___ girls and 1 in ___ boys will be sexually victimized before age 18.
- 1 in ___ rape victims is under age 12; 10% of all are under age ___.
- ___% of sexual assaults were perpetrated by a non-stranger.

Impact of Trauma on Survivors
- DSM IV-TR Criteria for PTSD:
  - Exposure to a traumatic event
  - Traumatic recollections are persistently reexperienced
  - Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma
  - Persistent symptoms of increased arousal
  - Duration > 1 month
  - Each of the above results in sig. distress or impairment

Why is this relevant to you?
- Victims of sexual assault are 13 and 26 times more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs, respectively.
- Studies suggest that 55 - 99% of female substance abusers report victimization.

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Impact of Trauma on Survivors

- Trauma effects a person's well-being through a variety of issues:
  - Physical
  - Mental Health
  - Emotional
  - Economic
  - Social
  - Spiritual

Impact of Trauma on Survivors (Long Term Effects of Sexual Trauma)

- Physical Illnesses
- Blame-Responsibility
- Fear
- Depression
- Self-Identity/ Self-esteem
- Anger
- Inability to Trust
- Role Boundary
- Confusion
- Grief
- Issues of Power/Control
- Social Skills
- Family Script
- Sexual Intimacy
- Concerns
- Addictions/ Self-Abuse

Impact of Trauma on Survivors

- There are common coping mechanisms used by survivors of sexual trauma
  - i.e. creating chaos, spacing out, hiding behind someone, promiscuity, avoiding intimacy, abusing others, suicide attempts, and substance abuse just to name a few.

Impact of Trauma on Survivors

- Discuss:
  What coping mechanisms used by survivors overlap with what you see in those with Substance Use Disorders?

Strategies of Integrated Treatment

- Client integration and empowerment
- Assessing structures and practices
- Promoting a shift in thinking
- Systems "boundary spanning" strategies: interagency planning groups and co-location of services

Strategies of Integrated Treatment

- Training and education
- Supervision
- Pilot work

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Strategies of Integrated Treatment

- Services should be:
  - Infused with knowledge about the roles that sexual violence and victimization play.
  - Designed to minimize the possibilities of victimization and re-victimization.
  - Hospitable and engaging for survivors.
  - Facilitating recovery.

- Services should:
  - Operate on an empowerment model.
  - Respect a person's choice and control over recovery.
  - Be based on a relational collaboration between the person seeking services and the service provider.
  - Emphasize the person's strengths.

Challenges of Integrated Treatment

- Discuss:
  What challenges, if any, do you foresee with addressing trauma issues in substance abuse treatment?

- Challenges for clients/consumers:
  - Safety issues (emotional and physical)
  - Shame and guilt
  - Trust that the service provider can help
  - Fear of consequences (i.e. DJO, P & P, etc.)

- Challenges for service providers:
  - Philosophical differences
  - Resistance at the service level
  - Resistance at the administrative level
  - Limited resources
  - Consistent participation in trauma groups can be difficult
  - Staff turnover
  - Change is difficult

Integrated treatment services need to be:

- Trauma-Specific
  - Interventions designed to address the specific behavioral, intrapsychic, and interpersonal consequences of exposure to sexual, physical and prolonged emotional abuse.

- Trauma-Informed
  - Should endeavor to do no harm to avoid re-traumatizing survivors or blaming them for their efforts to manage their traumatic reactions.

Substance Abuse and Sexual Violence:
Recognizing Both when Treating Survivors
Successful Models of Integrated Treatment

♦ Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM)
♦ Seeking Safety
♦ Addictions and Trauma Recovery Integrated Model (ATRIUM)
♦ Triad Women’s Group
  ♦ Also Triad adolescent program

Resources

♦ Kruse, S. (1999). Triad Women’s Project: Triad pilot groups: Results of statistical analysis. Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida.

Resources

♦ Creating Trauma Services for Women with Co-Occurring Disorders: web address is www.prainc.com/wcdis/pdfs/CreatingTraumaServices.pdf
♦ Turning Point Services: web address is www.turningpointservices.org
♦ Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) provides a national hotline
  www.RAINN.org