

Missouri Institute of Mental Health

Presents

*Helping Clients Maintain Recovery During
Traumatic Catastrophes and Pandemics*

Presenter

Mark Sanders, LCSW, CADAC

COVID – 19 Pandemic The Early Days

- *NCAA cancels March Madness (March 11)*
- *Cost of chicken wing drops dramatically*



- *NBA postpones its season (March 12)*
- *Basketball fans experience withdrawal*

Impact of COVID – 19 a Week Later

Hoarding

- *Toilet Paper*
- *Hand Sanitizer*
- *Medication*
- *Groceries*
- *Drugs and alcohol*

Impact of COVID - 19 Pandemic

- *World wide disaster*
- *Wide spread infection*
- *Daily death count increase*
- *No vaccine or known treatment*

(Carty, 2020)

Impact of COVID – 19 Continued

- *Businesses and school closings*
- *Rise in unemployment*
- *Healthcare and first responders overwhelmed*
- *Uncertain end date*

(Carty, 2020)

Impact of COVID – 19 Continued

- *24 hour news cycle*
- *Not enough ventilators and masks*
- *Communities of color hit hard*
- *Drug use increases*
- *Can trigger traumatic stress symptoms*

"COVID – 19 is a pre-traumatic experience that can trigger past traumatic stress disorders."

Bessel van der Kolk

Traumatic Stress Disorders that can be triggered by COVID

- *Acute Stress Disorder*
- *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*
- *Complex Trauma*
- *Historical Trauma*
- *24 – 7 – 365 terror*

Risk Factors for Traumatic Stress Disorders Triggered by Catastrophes and Pandemics

- *Trauma before the trauma*
- *Geographic nearness*
- *Lack of support*
- *Difficulty expressing feelings*

Risk Factors Continued

- *Isolation*
- *Prolonged exposure*
- *Threat to our safety and safety of our loved ones*

Protective Factors

Strategies to prevent acute stress from becoming PTSD

- *Support*
- *Rest, sleep, water, nutrition*
- *Stress Management*
- *Support*
- *Counseling*

Protective Factors

- *Support*
- *A Survivor Mission*
- *Early Intervention*
- *Community*
- *Helping Others*

Protective Factors Continued

- *Reduction of news watching*
- *Reduction of alcohol, illicit drugs and caffeine*

Paradoxically

- *People are spending more time with their family*
- *Opportunities to go on an extended meditation retreat!*
- *Elimination of clutter*
- *Some pets are happier*
- *As a world we will come to learn how much work can be done from home*
- *Creativity increase*
- *Outstanding achievements will occur!*

In 1665, University of Cambridge temporarily closed due to the Bubonic Plague. Sir Isaac Newton had to work from home, and he used this time to develop Calculus and the Theory of Gravity.

*REDUCING ISOLATION
AND RELAPSE PREVENTION
DURING CATASTROPHES
AND PANDEMICS*

September 11 Memorial



Hurricane Katrina



Rat Park

Drug Addiction Research Education

30 DAYS



The Rat Park Experiment Drug Addiction Study

Environmental and Social Issues Resource Center™
Worldwide



Reducing Isolation and Relapse Prevention

- *Social isolation does not have to mean emotional isolation*
- *“The opposite of addiction is connection.”*

Reducing Isolation and Relapse Continued

- *The use of technology and virtual face to face connections to decrease isolation*
 - *www.AA.org*
 - *www.NA.org*
 - *www.smartrecovery.org*

Reducing Isolation and Relapse Continued

- *Talk by phone or facetime with 3 people in recovery everyday*
- *Movement*

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THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

BRAIN, MIND, AND BODY
IN THE HEALING OF TRAUMA



BESSEL VAN DER KOLK, MD

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New Yorkers on What Helped after 9/11

- *Acupuncture*
- *Massage*
- *Yoga*
- *Movement*
- *Dance*



** Bessel van der Kolk*

Reducing Isolation and Relapse Prevention Continued

- *List your five primary relapse triggers*
 - *Write them down*
 - *Your own words*
 - *Out loud*
- *During COVID-19, have you noticed any new triggers?*

Reducing Isolation and Relapse Prevention Continued

Marriage and partnerships during COVID – 19

- *Being quarantined with individuals we have unhealthy relationships with can be bad on our health and trigger relapse.*

Characteristics of Addictive Relationships

- *Lots of drama*
- *Smothering*
- *Extreme jealousy*
- *Obsessive*
- *Abuse*
- *Poor boundaries*
- *"Unfair arguing"*
- *You stay in spite of adverse consequences*

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

- *Both are whole*
- *Each is growing and encouraging the other to grow*
- *They each have a separate life outside of the relationship*
- *Each is able to spend time alone*
- *Healthy boundaries*
- *No abuse*
- *"Fair arguing"*

*Maintain friendships during
COVID – 19 virtually*

Virtual Friendship

When men don't have contact with male friends it can do as much damage to our health as smoking a pack of cigarettes per day or drinking a pint of alcohol per day.

Virtual Friendship Continued

Women friendship and stress

Every woman needs

- *A friend that you're very comfortable with*
- *An older wise woman*
- *A do you remember when friend . . .*
- *A confidant – "She knows where the body is buried."*
- *A good listener*
- *A friend you can count on in crisis*
- *A friend in the same situation as you*

Mental Health During COVID – 19

- *50% of Americans say COVID – 19 is impacting their mental health*

Kaiser Family Foundation

- *A federal emergency hotline for people experiencing emotional distress reported a 1000% increase in April*
- *Talkspace has a 65% increase in clients*
- *Suicide and overdose increase since COVID – 19*
- *Loss of jobs impacting mental health and substance use*

Reducing Isolation and Relapse Prevention Continued

- *Opportunity to meditate and practice stillness*
- *Engage in activities that help with recovery, mental health and immune health*
 - *Gratitude*
 - *Laughter*
 - *Thank you*
 - *Forgiveness*
 - *Meditation*
 - *Love*

Relapse Prevention Continued

COVID – 19 as a pre-traumatic experience

- *Lack of predictability (create a schedule)*
- *Immobility (fight/flight) Get moving!*
- *Numbing (keep moving)*
- *Loss of sense of time (sunlight, stay current)*
- *Feeling unsafe (touch, hugs, talk, private space)*

Relapse Prevention Continued

- *Use technology to help with the trauma of family recovery*
 - *Extended time together can be stressful*
 - *Domestic violence can increase during crisis periods*
 - *Family enmeshment*
 - *Child abuse*
- *Create boundaries at home*

Relapse Prevention Continued

- *H.A.L.T. during COVID-19*

- *H = Hungry*

- *A = Angry*

- *L = Lonely*

- *T = Tired*

Relapse Prevention Continued

- *Dealing with fear and panic*
 - *“Love is stronger than fear”*
 - *Help someone*
 - *Breath*
 - *Mindfulness*

USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT ONGOING RECOVERY

*Factors to consider
Telehealth Options
Benefits and Limitations*

Factors to Consider

- *Telehealth is an important tool, but consider these factors*
 - *Client's capability and willingness to participate*
 - *Examine options*
 - *Review agency policy and procedures*
 - *Identify how service will be documented, billed and supervised*
 - *Pay attention to privacy issues*
 - *Get training on telehealth practices*

Varieties of Tele-health

- *Telephone*
- *Facetime*
- *Skype*
- *Zoom*



Counselor Self-Care During the Pandemic

- *Laughter – less news, more comedy*
- *Centering rituals*
- *Pay attention to secondary trauma*

Counselor Self-Care Continued

- Use of Zoom
 - *Friend and family reunions*
 - *Lunch with co-worker*
 - *Lunch with your department*



Counselor Self-Care Continued

- *Opportunity to go on an extended meditation retreat*
- *Take lunch and a break every day*
- *Movement*
- *Dance – the craziest dance you can think of, in the mirror!!!*

*Evidenced Based and Creative
Strategies to Address Traumatic
Stress Disorders Caused by
Catastrophes and Pandemics*

PTSD

- *The person has been exposed to a traumatic event*
- *Recurrent and intensive distressing recollections of the event*
- *Efforts to avoid conversations, activities, places and people that bring up memories of the event*
- *Difficulty falling or staying asleep, nightmares, flashbacks*

Treatment

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Exposure Therapy,
EMDR, Cognitive Processing Therapy*



PTSD vs. Complex Trauma

The background is a solid dark blue. In the upper left, there are several curved, overlapping bands of lighter blue, creating a sense of movement or waves. In the upper right, there is a dark blue, angular shape that looks like a stylized arrow or a piece of fabric. The text is centered in the lower half of the image.

With PTSD exposure to a specific traumatic event is required

Complex Trauma Includes Multiple Layers and Years of Traumatic Experiences

- *Neglect*
- *Abandonment*
- *Multiple placements*
- *Parental substance abuse*
- *Adult emotional unavailability*
- *Multiple losses*
- *Exposure to domestic violence*
- *Abuse*

Most Common Symptoms of Complex Trauma

- *Difficulty regulating emotions* 65%
- *Difficulty with impulse control* 63%
- *Negative self-image* 62%
- *Difficulty concentrating (ADD)* 60%
- *Aggression (Conduct Disorder)* 56%
- *PTSD* 12%
- *Substance Abuse* 10%

Treatment

Cognitive Behavioral Treatment, Anger Management, Mindfulness Meditation, ARC Model etc.,

Historical Trauma

A cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma

- Brave Heart, 2000



Historical Trauma Features

- *Loss of culture*
- *Survivor guilt*
- *Depression*
- *Traumatic stress symptoms*
- *Numbing*
- *Low self esteem*

Historical Trauma Features Continued

- *Historical unresolved grief*
- *Substance use*
- *Suicidal ideations*
- *Traumatizing others at the micro and macro levels*

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"Mighty Be Our Powers reminds us that even in the worst of times, humanity's best can shine through."

—ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU,
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 1984

**HOW SISTERHOOD,
PRAYER, AND SEX CHANGED
A NATION AT WAR**

MIGHTY BE OUR POWERS

A MEMOIR

LEYMAH GBOWEE
— CAROL MITHERS

WINNER
of the
NOBEL PEACE
PRIZE

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

"An astonishing book... about suffering and dignity, death and resurrection, one of my favorite books in years. It is lovely and tough and tender beyond my ability to describe and left me in tears of both sorrow and laughter." —Anne Lamott, author of *Grace (Eventually)*

Tattoos on the Heart

THE POWER OF
BOUNDLESS COMPASSION



Gregory Boyle
Founder of Homeboy Industries

Winner of the 2011 PEN Center USA Literary Award for Creative Nonfiction

The Healing of Historical Trauma

- *Awakening and Collective Commitment*
- *Mass Mobilization*
- *Personal and Collective Mourning*
- *Forgiving the Unforgivable*
- *Return to culture*
- *Achieving a new harmony*
- *Cultural revitalization and celebration*

White and Coyhis

24 -7 - 365 Terror

An Existential Concern

How long do African American and Latino males live?

Dispelling the Myth

- *500 – 700 murders annually*
- *40,000 annual births in Chicago*
- *2.7 million residents*

Dispelling the Myth Continued

- *9 million residents of Cook County*
- *112 murders in Englewood over last 20 years*
- *73 thousand residents of Englewood*
- *Life expectancy of African American men in Chicago is age 70. Hispanic Latino males age 73*

The background features a dark blue triangle in the top right corner. The rest of the background is filled with several overlapping, wavy bands of lighter blue, creating a sense of movement and depth. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

*3 Waves of Trauma Informed
Treatment*

First Wave

- *Psychodynamic Approaches*
Judith Hermann
- *Safety*
- *Remembering and mourning*
- *Reconnection*
 - *Finding a survivor mission*
 - *Striving to reach your potential*

Second Wave

- *Cognitive Behavioral Therapies*

Third Wave

- *Experiential Approaches*



September 11th survivors were asked what helped them most with their trauma

- *Acupuncture*
- *Massage*
- *Yoga*
- *Movement*



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That's all Folks!