

Developments in Traumatic Disorders

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“Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy
cheeks,
And given my treasures and my rights of
thee
To thick-eyed musing and cursed
melancholy?...
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars;
Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed;
Cry ‘Courage! To the field!’”

Shakespeare— King Henry IV

“...dreams of the fire and falling down of
houses”

...still unable to sleep “ without great terrors
of fire”

Samuel Pepys’ Diary
(About the Great Fire of 1666)

“I am not quite right within, ...
an effect of the railway shaking...
I’m curiously weak— weak as if I were
recovering from a long illness.”

Charles Dickens 1865

(Railway Accident at Staplehurst in Kent)

Mnemonics: NIH

- Numbing
- Intrusive thoughts
- Hyperarousal

Trauma-Related Paradigms

- Cumulative Effect of Lifetime Trauma
- Intergenerational Transmission
- Trauma and Violence/Conduct Disorder
- Vicarious Traumatization
- Trauma-Related (Survivor) Behaviors

Vicarious Traumatization

- Described by McCann and Pearlman (1990)
- An adverse reaction experienced by therapists characterized by profound changes in behavior and personality.
- Characteristics: Beliefs, expectations, and assumptions about the world are changed under the weight of secondary traumatization.

Vicarious Traumatization (cont'd)

- Therapists affected by VT may develop diminished esteem for other people or the human race in general.
- They may become suspicious of others, distrustful, cynical, bitter and pessimistic.
- Insidious onset may not be recognized for a long time.
- Treatment: preventive (conference-type)

Lateralized Amygdala Response

- Prevents extinction of Fight/Flight (LeDoux, 1995)
- Connects with hippocampus in contextualizing the threat
- Part of the extended system of face recognition (Haxby, 2002)
- Functions as a “hold” pattern on social approach while cortex--assesses danger

Amygdala (cont'd)

- In PTSD = exaggerated response of amygdala (heightened unconditioned emotional response) (Pittman, 2000)
- In PTSD = *de novo* conditioned response is acquired more readily (Orr, in press)
- In PTSD = subliminal presentation of fearful facial expression = activates right amygdala but not the prefrontal cortex

Learning Curve Of A Team

- Harvard Business School Study: Among cardiac surgeons, the longer team members had worked together, the better the outcome irrespective of the seniority of the member.
- K. Anders Ericsson: The most important talent is the talent to practice itself (willingness rather than enjoyment of practice).

For additional information regarding
this subject, please contact Dr. Novac
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