



Unveiling Military Trauma Treatment Trends

Don Hipp, LPC-S
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CACE CAMAFLAUGE

Unveiling

A Military Veteran's Trauma Journey



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Case Study: Cace Camouflage

Cace, a 22-year-old Hispanic female veteran, enlisted right after high school. Her upbringing was marked by turmoil, with her biological father leaving when she was six and his whereabouts remaining unknown

ACE's

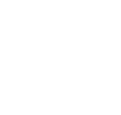


Cace Study: Cace Camouflage

Raised by her single mother with multiple boyfriends, none of whom connected with Cace, she witnessed one boyfriend's domestic violence against her mother. Joining the military provided an escape from her chaotic home life.

ACEs





Cace's preexisting attachment issues can affect her relationships with fellow soldiers >>>

TRUE

FALSE

Decorative elements: a plus sign on the left, a plus sign on the right, and a 3x3 grid of dots at the bottom left.

Cace Study: Cace Camouflage

Cace, a combat infantry soldier in the Army, completed two tours in Afghanistan and 52 missions. Despite a significant concussion from an IED, she downplayed her symptoms and returned to duty after a week.

TBI

A black and white illustration of a soldier in full combat gear, including a helmet and camouflage uniform, holding a rifle.



Cace's experiences in combat are typical for a soldier and unlikely to have any long-term effects on her mental health? >>>

TRUE

FALSE

+

+

•••••

Impact on Cace's Mental Health

The experience of **CACE CAMOUFLAGE** can have profound effect leading to **MENTAL HEALTH** conditions such as **PTSD, ANXIETY** and **DEPRESSION**

A photograph of a soldier in full camouflage gear, including a night vision device, positioned in a dark, wooded area at night. The scene is illuminated by a blue light, possibly from a night vision device or a moon, creating a somber and tense atmosphere.



Impact on Cace's Mental Health

Witnessing Domestic Violence
 Girls who have witnessed domestic violence are 50x more likely to end up in an abusive relationship


Chronic Trauma
 The more trauma you have the more likely you will become a chronic alcoholic

Attachment Issues
 Relationships are unsafe

PTSD


anxiety

mental health



Trauma Healing Through the Senses Bessel A. Van der Kolk, M.D.

Unveiling Trauma: Insights



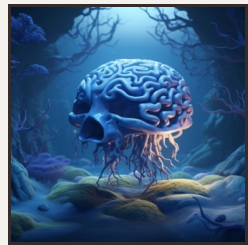


Neurobiology of Trauma

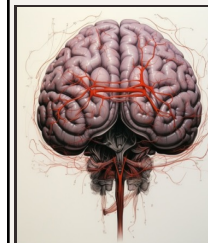
Amygdala

Hippocampus

Prefrontal cortex



Pattern of Stress



Dr. Bruce Perry

Chaotic, Severe, prolonged, uncontrollable

Results in stress response system that is reactive and overreactive and leaves individual vulnerable

Predictable, moderate, controllable

Results in resiliency and a stronger stress response system

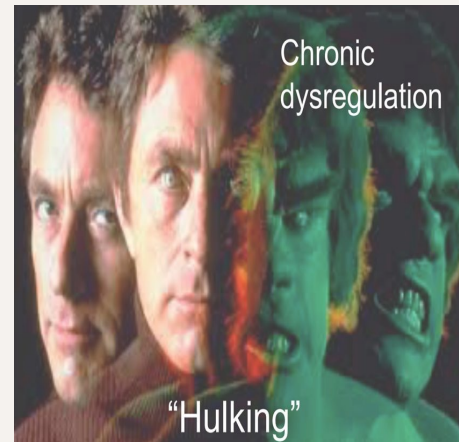


What happens in the brain because of Trauma?

Overwhelming Fear or Speechless Terror

Dr. Vanderkolk

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Impact on Neural Networks

Heightened **hypervigilance** **flashbacks**, and **emotional dysregulation**.

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Brain Functioning


Left Side of Brain
Cognitive part of the brain

Helps you think in sequences

Problem solve

Communicate to others

Understand this is now and that was then



Right Side of the Brain
Emotional Brain

Lables things according to how you feel

Does not have a sense of time of yesterday and tomorrow.

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Trauma Memories and Regular Memories are the same? >>>

TRUE

FALSE

⋮

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Understanding Traumatic Memories

Trauma Memories are different than ordinary memories



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Understanding Traumatic Memories

The Trauma is over, but the memory lives on



When individuals **struggle** to deal with traumatic **memories**, bits and pieces of the whole **experience** stick around as **intense** strong feelings, flashbacks, body reactions, and bizarre actions.

↓
Unable to process those **tough memories**, it's like they can't **handle** new experiences either. Feels like their personality just **hits a wall** and they can't **grow** anymore

Paraphrased: (L'Automatisme Psychologique, 1889)

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Understanding Traumatic Memories

All traumatized people seem to have the evolution of their lives **halted**: they are “attached to an **insurmountable obstacle**” (1919)

Paraphrased: (L'Automatisme Psychologique, 1889)

Living in Trauma Time



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Understanding Traumatic Memories

As the days **TURNED** into weeks
and then months, **Cace....**

Barriers

Hit a Wall

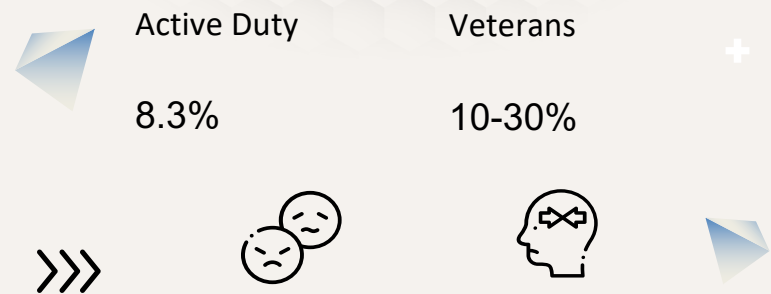
Disconnected

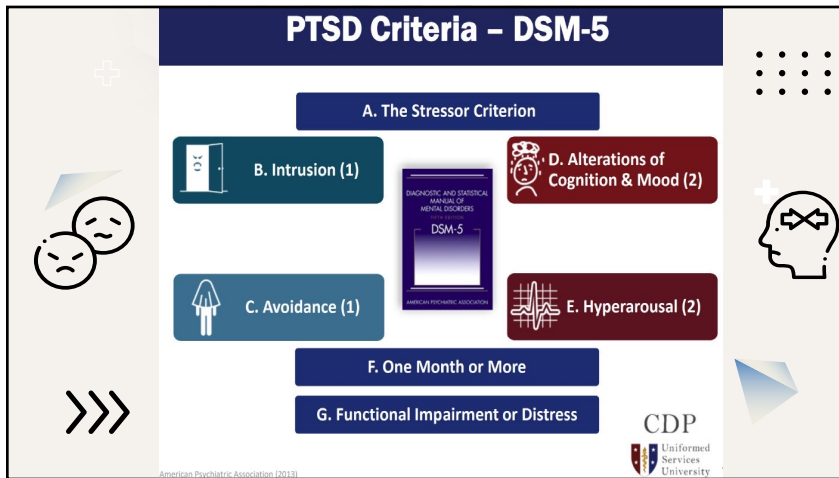
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Unveiling Military Trauma and PTSD

Estimated Prevalence of PTSD





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- ### Who are most likely to get PTSD?
- Predisposition to mood disorders
 - Difficulty dealing with change
 - Adverse childhood experiences
 - Prolonged duration of trauma
 - Lack of supportive relationships
- Kate Chard

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Moral Injury

Moral injury is psychological trauma from actions or inactions that violate a person's ethical code, occurring when an individual feels a moral transgression has taken place.



 veteranmentalhealth.com

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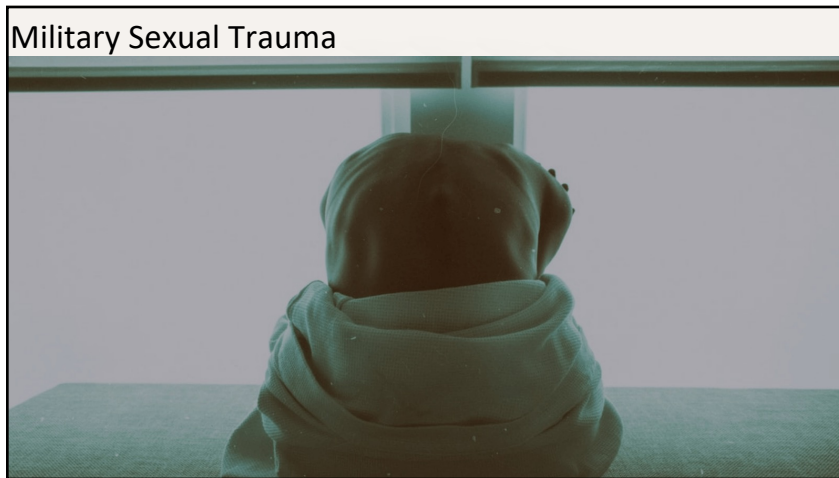
Diagnosis of Moral Injury

Treatment for Moral Injury

Evidence-Based Treatments
Spiritual Approaches
Importance of Social Support



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Military sexual trauma only >>>
affects women in the armed forces?

TRUE

FALSE

+

+

•••••

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How is Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Defined?


The VA defines "military sexual trauma" (MST) as sexual assault or harassment experienced during military service, including any involuntary or coerced sexual activity




What is Veterans Health Administration Doing?

- ❖ Universal screening
- ❖ Free MST-related care (medical and mental health)
- ❖ National MST Support Team, to continue improving VHA's response to MST




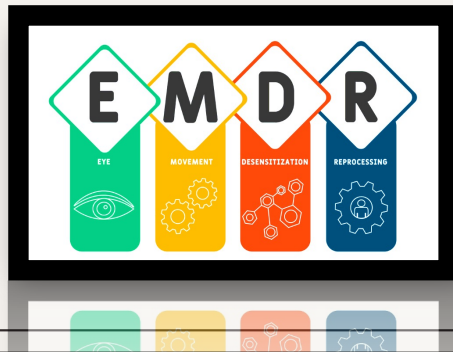


Unveiling Evidence-Based Therapies for treating veterans



The VA supports three therapies for PTSD:
Prolonged Exposure (PE), EMDR, and CPT.

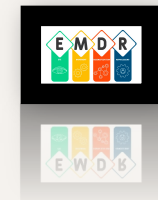
A photograph of a man in a grey sweater sitting on a light blue couch, looking down at a military helmet he is holding in his hands. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.



What is EMDR?

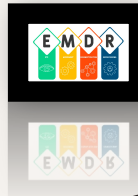
EMDR is not:

- A silver bullet
- A rigid, scripted procedure
- An instant remedy
- Easy or straightforward
- A way to delete memories
- A technic to recover lost memories
- Hypnosis





“The goal of EMDR treatment is to rapidly metabolize the dysfunctional residue from the past and transform it into something useful.”



Francine Shapiro, Founder




Cognitive Processing Therapy



Top -Down Processing


Processing information from the senses with higher level mental processes using our experiences and expectations

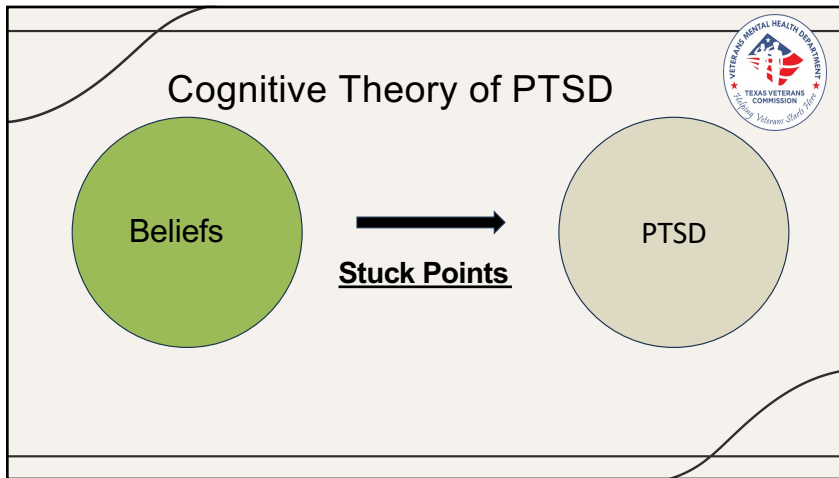


Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) is...

- A brief, evidence-based treatment
- Mainly cognitive and may or may not involve a written record
- A specialized protocol within cognitive behavioral therapy

Kate Chard, 2021





Activating Event A "Something happens"	Belief/Stuck Point B "I tell myself something"	Consequence C "I feel something"
I build a porch and the railing comes loose.	"I can never do anything right."	Anger at myself and sadness
Are my thoughts above in column B realistic or helpful? <i>No. It wouldn't hold up in a court of law, because I do some things right.</i>		
What can I tell myself on such occasions in the future? <i>"There are some things that I do all right. It is not true that I 'never do anything right.'"</i>		



Examples of Getting Stuck

- Other people were killed because I messed up.
- I don't deserve to live when other people lost their lives.
- If I let other people get close to me, I'll get hurt again
- I must be on guard at all times.
- No civilians can understand me.



Limitations of Talk
Therapy





Prolonged
Exposure

Medications are not important for
the effective management of >>>
trauma-related conditions?

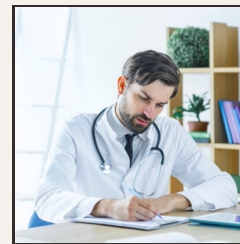
TRUE

FALSE






Medications for Trauma-Related Conditions



Listening to Prozac



Combination Therapy

In most cases, a combination of medications may be necessary to address trauma-related conditions.

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**Other Interventions for Military Personnel and Veterans:
Addressing Trauma-**

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VA evidence-based clinical practice
recommendations for Treatment of PTSD

We recommend
We suggest
There is sufficient evidence for
We suggest against
We recommend against

Center for Deployment 2024

Key Questions

1. What are the safety issues
2. What treatment approaches are safe and effective in treating PTSD
3. Effectiveness and safety of other treatments for PTSD, such as animal assisted therapy, recreational therapy
4. Effectiveness of CBT ?
5. Effectiveness of therapies delivered via telehealth

Clinical Practice Recommendations

For treating PTSD, the use of individual, manualized, trauma-focused therapies like CPT, EMDR, and PE is recommended.

Strong for

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Clinical Practice Recommendations


The evidence is insufficient to support or oppose the use of the following somatic therapy.

Neurofeedback

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Neurofeedback is one form of Biofeedback

What is Biofeedback?

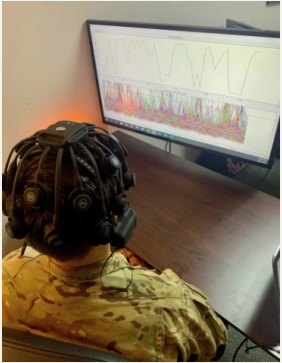


Is a way to measure brainwaves

The RATE of BRAINWAVE FIRING is related to our state of arousal

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Special Operations Wing Offers
Neurofeedback Capability



Self-regulation
Relaxation
Mood Stabilization

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Neurofeedback

It requires good therapeutic skills and belongs the hand of professionals

Unwanted effects are also possible (NOT without side effects)

Training is a MUST with modern neurofeedback

Neurofeedback is a tool and not a substitute for therapy

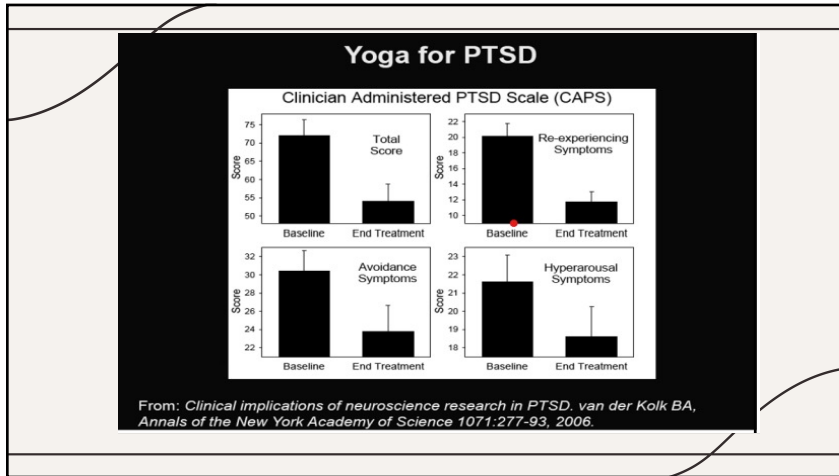
Thanks to Beemedric Folks

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The evidence is insufficient to support or oppose the use of the following mindbody interventions.

Creative Art therapies (e.g., music, dance, music, art) and yoga

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The Potential of the Non -Verbal

The Power of Percussion Play



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Wounded warriors 'SOAR,' find strength through music therapy



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VA Clinical Practice Recommendations

Video teleconferencing to deliver treatment when other options are not available



Strong for

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VA Clinical Practice Recommendations

Cannabis or cannabis derivatives for the treatment of PTSD



Strong Against

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Psychedelics

Party Drug or Therapy Intervention

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People want to feel connected



Touch Starved

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Conclusion

The journey of Cace camouflage is complex

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Thanks!

Do you have any questions?
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