OLDER ADULTS AND TRAUMA

May 25, 2016

“How Do we Respond”
Agenda

- 9:00 – 9:15  Welcome
- 9:15 – 11:15  Understanding trauma
- 11:15 – 12:00  Q & A with Raul Almazar
- 12:00 – 12:30  Grab lunch/break
- 12:30 – 2:30  Strategies for TI Approach in Older Adults
- 2:30 – 3:00  Next Steps
The Three E’s in Trauma

Events

Events/circumstances cause trauma.

Experience

An individual’s experience of the event determines whether it is traumatic.

Effects

Effects of trauma include adverse physical, social, emotional, or spiritual consequences.
Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

Collaboration between Kaiser Permanente and CDC

17,000 patients undergoing physical exam provided detailed information about childhood experiences of abuse, neglect and family dysfunction (1995-1997)
ACE Categories

**ABUSE**
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

**NEGLECT**
- Physical
- Emotional

**HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION**
- Mental Illness
- Mother treated violently
- Divorce/Separation
- Incarcerated Relative
- Substance Abuse

[http://acestoothig.com/got-your-ace-score/](http://acestoothig.com/got-your-ace-score/)
The Science on ACEs . . .

“New lens through which to understand the human story”

• Why we suffer
  • How are persons in the human services and aging systems treated, supported and empowered toward personal wellness
• How we parent, raise and mentor children and treat one another
• How we might better prevent, treat and manage illness in our medical care systems
• How we can recover and heal on deeper levels
• A hurt that must be healed
ACE Pyramid

Mechanisms by Which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan
Types of Trauma

- Sexual Abuse or Assault
- Physical Abuse or Assault
- Emotional Abuse or Psychological Maltreatment
- Neglect
- Serious Accident, Illness, or Medical Procedure
- Traumatic Grief or Separation
- Victim or Witness to Extreme Personal or Interpersonal Violence

- Victim or Witness to Domestic Violence
- Victim or Witness to Community Violence
- Historical Trauma
- System-Induced Trauma and Retraumatization
- Natural or Manmade Disasters
- Forced displacement
- War, Terrorism, or Political Violence
- Military Trauma

Some of those experiences are being included in subsequent ACE studies, however they were not measured in the original ACE Study.
Traumatic Events:

(1) render victims helpless by overwhelming force;
(2) involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or close personal encounter with violence and death;
(3) disrupt a sense of control, connection and meaning;
(4) confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror; and
(5) evoke the responses of catastrophe.

(Judy Herman, Trauma and Recovery, (1992)
Role changes and functional losses make coping with memories of earlier trauma more challenging for the older adult.
Health Risks & Outcomes

**BEHAVIOR**
- Lack of physical activity
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Drug use
- Missed work

**PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH**
- Severe obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Suicide attempts
- STDs
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- COPD
- Broken bones
Trauma in adults – Mental Health

• More than 84% of adult mental health clients will have trauma histories (Meuser et al, 2004)

• 50% of female and 25% of male clients experienced sexual assault in adulthood (Read et al, 2008)

• Clients with histories of childhood abuse will have earlier first admissions, more frequent and longer hospital stays, more time in seclusion and restraints, greater likelihood of self-injury or suicide attempts, more medication use and more severe symptoms (Read et al, 2008)
Trauma in Adults: Mental Health

Clients with histories of childhood abuse

- Earlier first admissions
- More frequent and longer hospital stays
- More time in seclusion or restraint
- Greater likelihood of self-injury or suicide attempt
- More medication use
- More severe symptoms

(Read et al, 2005)
Trauma in adults – Substance Abuse

- Up to 65% of all clients in substance abuse treatment report childhood abuse (SAMHSA, 2013)
- Up to 75% of women in substance abuse treatment have trauma histories (SAMHSA, 2009)
- Over 92% of homeless mothers have trauma histories. They have twice the rate of drug and alcohol dependence as those without (SAMHSA, 2011)
- Almost 1/3 of all veterans seeking treatment for a substance use disorder have PTSD (National Center for PTSD)
Trauma in older adults

• Approximately one in ten seniors over the age of 60 is abused each year.
• Of those seniors abused, the majority are older women who live in the community rather than in nursing homes or other senior living facilities.
• Elder abuse is grossly underreported, with about 1 of every 23 cases of elder abuse being reported to appropriate protective services.
• Cognitive decline, even mild cognitive incapacity, is a pronounced risk factor for financial capability and therefore a risk factor for financial exploitation.
• Seniors who have been abused are more likely to be institutionalized in a nursing home or to be hospitalized than those not abused.
Trauma in older adults

- Based on a community sample of older adults, about 70% of older men reported lifetime exposure to trauma; older women reported a lower rate, around 41%.

- In a large sample of older adults, greater lifetime trauma exposure was related to poorer self-rated health, more chronic health problems, and more functional difficulties.

- Among a community sample of older women (average age = 70), 72% had experienced at least one type of interpersonal trauma during their lives (e.g., childhood physical or sexual abuse; rape) and higher rates of interpersonal trauma were related to increased psychopathology.
Trauma and suicide

Suicides attributable to Childhood Adverse Experiences

- 2/3rd (67%) of all suicide attempts
- 64% of adult suicide attempts
- 80% of child/adolescent suicide attempts
- Women are 3 times as likely as men to attempt suicide
- Men are 4 times as likely as women to complete suicide

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<th>Death By Suicides</th>
<th>Ohioans Ages 65 and Older</th>
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<td>CY 2008 through CY 2013</td>
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<th>Methods of Suicide</th>
<th>Ohioans Ages 65 and Older</th>
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<th>CY 2013</th>
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<td>Self-Poisoning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanging</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Arms</td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35</td>
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As the population rises . . .

- Over the next 25 years, with the aging of the baby boomers
  - Largest increase in the numbers of people over age 65 in the history of mankind

- What is less well-known is the fact that the numbers of older people with mental illness
  - Increase at a disproportionately faster rate than those in the general population

- This will be, in part, because of higher incidence of depression, anxiety disorders and substance use disorders among people born after the World War II than in those born earlier

- Decreasing social stigma, resulting in a larger proportion of older people being diagnosed with and treated for mental illness

- Increase in the average life span of people with serious mental illness, which is currently 20 years shorter than that in the general population
ACE Study . . .

- As the ACE Study demonstrated, the effects of childhood adversity can continue well into adulthood.
- From hundreds of recent studies, we know that adverse experiences can affect men and women in five key domains of functioning:
- They can:
  - Negatively impact your beliefs about yourself or others
  - Cause health problems
  - Lead to harmful behaviors
  - Create relationship challenges
  - Manifest through emotional difficulties
## The ACE Comprehensive Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverse Childhood Experiences</th>
<th>Neurobiological Impacts and Health Risks</th>
<th>Long-term Health and Social Problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The more types of adverse childhood experiences…</td>
<td>The greater the neurobiological impacts and health risks, and…</td>
<td>The more serious the lifelong consequences to health and well-being</td>
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The Four R’s

A trauma-informed program, organization, or system:

- **Realizes**
  - *Realizes* widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery

- **Recognizes**
  - *Recognizes* signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system

- **Responds**
  - *Responds* by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

- **Resists**
  - *Seeks to actively Resist* re-traumatization.
SAMHSA’s Six Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach

• Safety
• Trustworthiness and Transparency
• Peer Support
• Collaboration and Mutuality
• Empowerment, Voice, and Choice
• Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues
What impacts the work?

Organizational stresses:
• Financial pressures
• Policy compliance
• Social pressures
• Political environment
• Staff turnover

Client stresses:
• Transition & loss
• Illness
• Abuse & neglect
• Financial
• Substance abuse

Staff stresses:
• Caseloads
• Billing requirements
• Compassion fatigue
• Burnout
• Low pay/long hours
Implications

- Know Thyself
- We don’t fix people or their problems
- Be clear as to why you are sharing
- Creating safe space is everyone’s duty
- Use appropriate channels and resources
- Be less judgmental
Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.
Putting it all together

First ask, “What happened to you?”

Then, support a survivor, in 4 difficult sentences:

1. I believe you.
2. Thank you for trusting me enough to tell me.
3. I am sorry that happened to you.
4. I support you whatever you choose to do.

Then, listen and be present. And then, listen and be present some more.

• You’ll experience an urge to take care of the person. That’s normal, because you care. But you must, must, must sit still with it and let the person take care of herself or himself.
• Trauma is (in part) about having control over your body and your choices taken away. Survivors need safe environments where they can take back control.
• Sit still, notice that you care, be kind to yourself, and sit still some more.
• You have given the greatest gift you can give; yourself. Your caring attention.

• And then go take really good care of yourself!