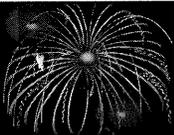




Post Traumatic Stress Disorder “PTSD”



Our Goal:

To equip mediators with perspective that will assist them to carefully observe behaviors, enabling them to better understand a PTSD client’s present behavior in light of that client’s past experiences.



First diagnoses

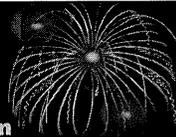
- **Wartime combat survivors 150 years ago**
- **A condition called “Railway Spine” was diagnosed in the 1800s – associated with injuries related to railroad accidents**

Other names:



- World War I: "Shell Shock"
- World War II: "War Neurosis" or "Combat Fatigue"
- Modern era: "Anxiety Disorder" or sub-cat "Stress Disorder"

PTSD is...

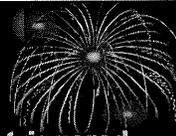


...a condition that arises from **exposure** to life-threatening circumstances, particularly outside the range of normal human experience

Exposure can be:

- personal involvement
- threat of involvement
- observation of someone else's involvement

PTSD behavior...



...is an echo of the past, triggered (but not caused) by the present situation.

There are two general categories:

- Shutting Down
- Fight or Flight

Shutting down



- Their emotional brain seems to paralyze the thinking brain
- Clients are not able to take in new information
- Clients are unable to take appropriate steps
- Defense mechanisms may be displayed

Fight or Flight



Hormones, such as adrenaline, are produced

Results:

- Pupils dilate
- Heart rate increases (to pump oxygen to muscles and brain)
- Glycogen converts to glucose (for energy to run or fight)

3 Common Traits...



...over 150 years, in all descriptions of PTSD:

- 1) Re-experiencing (re-living, flashbacks);
- 2) Numbing; and
- 3) Physiological arousal

PTSD Diagnosis

Can require observation of specific, detailed criteria --

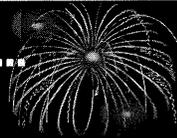
we'll have more on this in another presentation today



PTSD is an "echo"...

...a reflection of something that happened in a client's past.

Familiarity with a client's PTSD history – including medications, which can impact communication and reactions – helps mediators understand how a client's behavior might result from that client's attempt to cope with his or her own unique experience.



The mediator's challenge:

Communicating appropriately

"Seek first to understand, then to be understood."¹

¹Habit 5, 7 Habits of Highly Successful People, Stephen R. Covey

