

ed, and put into a labile state in which it can be transformed or neutralized. The success of the dissociation trauma care process that was applied in Sarajevo (1998 and 1999) empowered the development of a computer version both for home use and psychological consulting. Wars and disasters continue to happen. “Painful memories computer healer” has been developed and modeled on the basis of scientific research and healthy strategies of dissociation from traumatically emotional material; thus, it may assist people in getting healthy states of well-being. This multimedia method will be presented. Its implications are to be discussed among mental health experts.

Keywords: audio-visual reminders; emotions; post-traumatic stress disorder; memories; multimedia

Prehosp Disaster Med

A Home-Based Emergency Intervention for Traumatized Families Under Fire

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The ongoing shelling of Qassam missiles and mortar on the city of Sderot, Israel and the surrounding communities of Gaza for the past eight years have caused a great deal of damage in terms of life and property, and have put >20,000 residents under significant and ongoing threats. A recent study examining the impact of living under these conditions indicated that 28.4% of the area residents suffer from PTSD and 75%–94% of the children experience post-traumatic symptoms. Despite the dire psychological needs of the residents, mental health service utilization has been sparse due to the fact that many residents do not feel safe to leave their homes as well as fear the stigmatization associated with attending public mental-health clinics. In order to resolve this dilemma, a community home-based emergency intervention was developed to be delivered using a mobile unit of professionals who provide mental-health services for traumatized families in their homes. The treatment model incorporates a family systemic approach with trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral technique and narrative strategies. The model will be outlined and an evaluation of its efficacy in reducing post-traumatic symptoms in adults and children and in improving their daily functioning will be presented. Finally, such a model may be useful in providing mental-health services not only during war and terrorist attacks, but also during other major disasters, particularly in developing countries where mental health capacity is limited.

Keywords: emergency intervention; mental health; post-traumatic symptoms; stigmatization; traumatized families

Prehosp Disaster Med

Lessons Learned from Faith-Based Disaster Response following Hurricane Katrina

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Introduction: The purpose of this presentation is to discuss lessons learned from the analysis of a Faith-Based Organization's (FBO) disaster response following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. These lessons can be applied to other non-governmental and governmental organizations whose primary purpose is to respond to disasters. The purpose of the original study was to explore the experience of faith-based disaster responses for the administrative and paid staff of the FBO, volunteers providing FBO services, and the New Orleans residents receiving FBO services.

Methods: A mixed methods approach was utilized for the study. Results of the ethnography and phenomenology methods were extracted for this presentation. Quantitative methods, not included in the presentation, included the administration of the Herth Hope Index, a Hope Visual Analogue Scale, and the Impact of Event Scale-Revised.

Results: The experience of FBO disaster response was similar between those who staffed, volunteered with, and received assistance from the FBO. Participants came to the experience because of their faith, but did not use the experience as a means for proselytizing. All participant groups recognized a need to provide or seek assistance, worked side-by-side, experienced unprecedented devastation, developed family-type relationships, and transformed each other's lives.

Conclusions: Faith-based disaster response is effective and efficient. Faith is integral to their success. A key element to their effectiveness is the ability to make decisions at the operational level without organizational approval. Flexibility in the supply acquisition increased their purchasing power. Administrative skill, without prior disaster response experience, was transferrable to FBO disaster response.

Keywords: disaster response; faith-based organizations; Hurricane Katrina; New Orleans; response

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