VIEWING THE EFFECTS OF NEAR DROWNING USING A TRAUMA LENS

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• BE ABLE TO CRITIQUE THE EXISTING LITERATURE REGARDING PANIC AND DROWNING
• DETERMINE THE POTENTIAL SHORT AND LONG TERM EFFECTS OF DROWNING ON MENTAL HEALTH
• DETERMINE THE BEST WAY TO CONDUCT AN INTAKE INTERVIEW THAT ASKS ABOUT NEAR DROWNING INCIDENTS
OUTLINE

• PREVALENCE RATES
• PHYSIOLOGY
• STAGES OF DROWNING
• DEVELOPMENT OF STRESS RESPONSE
• EXISTING LITERATURE ON NEAR DROWNING INCIDENTS
DROWNING PREVALENCE RATES

• EVERY YEAR 400,000 TO 700,000 DROWN GLOBALLY
• 75% UNDER AGE 9
  • HALF ARE AGES 1-4
  • ADDITIONAL 25% AGES 5 TO 9
• LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 IN BANGLADESH AND CHINA
• SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 IN THE USA, AFRICA

CDC, 2004; Franklin & Pearn 2010; Hastings et al., 2010; Howland, 1996; Saluja et al., 2006; Schwebel et al., 2007
PHYSIOLOGY

STAGES OF DROWNING

- Surprise
- Involuntary Breath Holding
- Unconsciousness
- Hypoxic Convulsions
- Clinical Death

DEVELOPMENT OF STRESS RESPONSE

DEGREE OF LIFE THREAT

• “THE GREATER THE DEGREE OF LIFE-THREAT, THE MORE LIKELY IT IS TO GENERATE A FEAR OF ANNIHILATION AND DEATH ANXIETY.”

CRITERION A

• DIRECT EXPOSURE TO THREATENED DEATH VIA A SUBMERSION INCIDENT

Figley, 1985, p. 151
DEVELOPMENT OF STRESS RESPONSE

• SPEED OF ONSET

• “RAPID ONSET OF TRAUMA IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FORMATION OF INTENSE ANXIETY, LEARNED HELPLESSNESS, AND EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS IN LOCUS OF CONTROL OVER REINFORCEMENTS.”

Figley, 1985, p. 151
NEAR DROWNING SELF-REPORT

• FEELINGS & EXPERIENCES
  • FEELINGS OF STRANGENESS OR UNREALNESS
  • ALTERED PASSAGE OF TIME
  • INCREASED THOUGHT PROCESS
  • MECHANICAL THOUGHTS/MOVEMENTS
  • DETACHMENT FROM THE WORLD
  • SHARP OR VIVID THOUGHTS

Noyes & Slymen, 1978 (as cited in, Branard, 2005, p. 29)
ADAPTIVE RESPONSES TO AN ABNORMAL EVENT

• HYPERALERTNESS AND DEPERSONALIZATION

• “SO LONG AS ANY POSSIBILITY OF RESCUE REMAINS, ENORMOUS ENERGY MAY BE DIRECTED TOWARD LIFE-SAVING ACTIONS. THIS PHASE OF RESISTANCE CEASES WHEN THE INDIVIDUAL, RECOGNIZES THE FUTILITY OF HIS STRUGGLE, GIVES INTO DEATH.”

Noyes & Slymen, 1978 (as cited in Barnard, 2005, p. 30)
ANECDOTE FROM A PSYCHOLOGIST

• “I WAS PLUNGED INTO THE WATER AMONG DARK SHADOWS WITH OCCASIONAL SHAFTS OF LIGHT. I WAS TRYING TO SWIM TO THE SURFACE BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS, AND I SEEMED TO BE STUCK. I NEEDED TO TAKE A BREATH BUT REALIZED I COULDN’T AND THAT I HAD NO PROSPECT OF REACHING THE SURFACE. I REALIZED I MIGHT DROWN AND I BECAME SCARED.”

Ness & Macaskill, 2000
INTERIM SUMMARY
PANIC DISORDER & NEAR DROWNING IN A CLINICAL SAMPLE

Portion of PD Clients with Submersion History

- PD Clients
- Near Drowning
- Phobic of Water

Alkin, 1999
PD & PTSD REACTIONS IN A HEALTHY CONTROL

Muhtz, Daneshi, Braun, & Kellner, 2010
HOW DO WE ASK?

• HAVE YOU EVER HAD A NEAR DROWNING INCIDENT?
• WAS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN YOU WERE UNABLE TO MAKE IT TO AND/OR REMAIN ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER?
  • THIS MAY INCLUDE:
    • BEING TRAPPED/CAUGHT UNDER WATER
    • UNABLE TO SWIM TO THE SURFACE
    • TOO TIRED TO REMAIN ON THE SURFACE
• HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO BE RESCUED WHILE YOU WERE IN THE WATER?
  • THIS MAY INCLUDE BEING RESCUED BY:
    • LIFEGUARD
    • FAMILY MEMBER
    • ACQUAINTANCE
    • SOMEONE YOU DID NOT KNOW
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REFERENCES


