

## Effectiveness of Treatment of Veterans with PTSD: a Critical Review

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** PTSD impacts physiological, neurological, biochemical and epigenetic systems and is experienced largely unconsciously. Measures of treatment effectiveness vary widely but correspond to whether the modality of treatment creates an experience that is dominantly conscious or non-conscious.

**Objectives:** We evaluate the effectiveness of treatments for PTSD in the veteran population based on an analysis of published research.

**Methods:** A literature scan for PTSD, veterans and military personnel was conducted using CINAHL, PubMed, PILOT, Embase, ResearchGate, ScienceDirect, Wiley, PsycINFO, SpringerLink, ProQuest, PsycNET, MEDLINE, VA.com and Cochrane Library.

**Results:** 1. Pathology is widely described but not related to diagnosis, treatment or measures of treatment efficacy. There are no descriptions of pathogenesis and nothing explicit about causation for veteran populations.

2. Measures of treatment effectiveness are varied and inconsistent. Conscious therapeutic treatments like rational or cognitive behavioral therapy experience low efficacy, refractory response is 30-50%, and non-response is high.

3. Soldiers and veterans diagnosed with PTSD benefit less from psychotherapy than non-military populations. 78% of veterans are still in treatment after four years.

4. The research and treatment field is siloed by specialty and lacks a collaborative approach. Treatment of PTSD is hampered because veterans are reluctant to seek help. Also, PTSD is a multisystem response that is idiosyncratic and manifests in many ways.

**Conclusions:** 1. Treatment of PTSD could be more effective if it moved away from a symptom focused diagnostic process toward an ecology-based, systems approach that focuses on wellness. Collaboration across fields is therefore needed, along with effective comparison between studies against common criteria.

2. Approaches that are unconscious such as Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing, Trauma informed Coaching, Virtual Reality and Reconsolidation of Traumatic Memory are highly efficacious but more sparsely studied when compared with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Exposure Therapy.

3. Treatments need to consider efficacy, balanced against refractory responses and risks of exacerbating the condition or harming the patient.

**Keywords:** soldier, VA, DVA, military, trauma, posttraumatic stress disorder, PTSD, PTS

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## **Stress and Coping Strategies among Teachers in Gymnasium Schools**

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** *The present study was intended to describe the sources of stress among teachers, the problems faced by them, the coping strategies they use to solve such situations and the interests in recreational activities.*

**Objectives:** *The objectives were: the identification of stress factors and collecting knowledge on the coping strategies used by teachers from the Romanian-Finnish High School in Bucharest; identifying the interests in recreational activities among the participants and the ways they spend their spare time.*

**Methods:** *A number of 35 teachers participated in revealing the stress factors and the problems faced by teachers at their workplace. To assess teachers' opinions, we used semi-structured interview with open questions, during the month of February 2018.*

**Results:** *Schools should make intensive efforts to design practical ways for teachers and psychologists to promote coping strategies among teachers through educational interventions.*

**Conclusions:** *The study has shown that teachers have a clear understanding of the stress and problems they face. This further emphasize the need for intervention programs to optimize teachers' coping strategies.*

**Keywords:** *programs, optimization, recreational interests, problems, parents and children*



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# **Mental Health and Adverse Psychosocial Factors in Cardiovascular Patients. An Exploratory and Descriptive Study**

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## **Abstract**

**Introduction:** *There is an increasing interest in integrating mental health services into general health ones for cardiac patients, especially because there has been demonstrated that the evolution of cardiovascular disease could be influenced by issues like depression, anxiety or adverse psychosocial factors.*

**Objectives:** *This paper aims to analyze the frequency of mental health problems and adverse psychosocial factors in a sample of Romanian cardiovascular patients.*

**Methods:** *The evaluation methodology consisted in clinical interview, clinical observation and psychometric instruments.*

**Results:** *The collected data indicate high percentages of depression and anxiety amongst the participants, with 88.2% of the patients showing clinical or subclinical symptoms of anxiety, 62.8% showing clinical or subclinical symptoms of depression, 23.5 % having panic attacks and 80.4% sleep problems. There have been observed higher percentages of anxiety and depression in widowers, patients with low family support, participants who are caregivers for family members with dementia and in patients who had recently lost a loved-one.*

**Conclusions:** *The results highlight the importance of psychological evaluation and intervention in patients suffering from cardiovascular disease, as they frequently experience mental health problems, especially when adverse psychosocial factors co-occur.*

**Keywords:** *depression, anxiety, mental health, psychosocial factors, cardiac patients*

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## A Clinical and Projective Approach to the Mourning Process in the Family System

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** This study focuses on the bereavement process that is understood as the loss of a family member, by presenting the way mourning is experienced and processed in the family system layout. When someone passes away, the whole family is affected, but it must be accepted that each member of the family has its own way to live, express and integrate the mourning. From the perspective of the Attachment Theory, there is the vision that the family continues the attachment with one of its members even after his death.

**Objectives:** The analysis of the situation of a family in which the daughter died in a car accident is proposed, both parents and their son being psychologically assessed.

**Methods:** The case studies presented herein highlight how the data obtained by using the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III (MCMI-III) is correlated with the data extracted using projective methods (the Bender-Gestalt Test, the Rorschach Test and the Thematic Apperception Test for adults) in order to assess posttraumatic consequences in adults.

**Results:** The clinical approach reflects the psycho-emotional difficulties of each family member. The projective methods that have been applied allowed to see the way in which every member of the family experienced the loss and how they related to each other within the family system.

**Conclusions:** The study highlights both aspects that hinder the relationship and those that could act as a resource for the family. The collaborative interpretation of the results following the administration of tests helped each family member become more aware of their blockages that prevented them to process and integrate the bereavement and emotionally reconnect to each other.

**Keywords:** response to the bereavement, emotional family system, clinical multiaxial inventory, projective methods

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# The Development of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem through an Experiential Unifying Psychotherapeutic Intervention in Adolescents

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Adolescence involves the transition from childhood to maturity. It is a period of identity development. Haviland (1994) argued that emotions consolidate separate events through emotional processes or emotional valence. Certain emotions can become elaborated simply because they are associated with other different emotions. Adolescence is full of unprecedented experiences that serve for the first time as emotional triggers. It also brings changes to the types of emotions triggered by those events or to the situations in which emotions are elicited. On the other hand, teenagers are more likely to link their emotions to events related to peers, especially those of the opposite sex.

**Objectives:** The objectives of this paper emphasize the shaping up of a therapeutic framework for adolescents' personal development, characterized by empathy, unconditional acceptance, congruence, collaboration, facilitated during the sessions by humanistic experiential techniques.

**Methods:** A 14 weeks personal development group with 17 adolescents, colleagues from the same class, aged 17-19 years, was implemented; the students were also tested before and after the therapeutic intervention with Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Test (adapted by Mihaela Rocco) and Rosenberg Scale, to determine the level of self-esteem.

**Results:** After 14 weeks of personal development through Experiential Unifying Psychotherapy, self-esteem increased in 7 of the 8 participants of the core group and the level of emotional intelligence increased in 13 of the participants from the whole group.

**Conclusions:** The results of this pilot research highlighted the importance of the effects of Experiential Unifying Psychotherapy on self-esteem and emotional intelligence in adolescents.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, self-esteem, adolescents, personal development group, P.E.U. Approach (Experiential Unifying Psychotherapy)



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