

PANDEMIC PROCESSING

Narrative Exposure Therapy

Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET) is an evidence-based treatment for trauma in adults and children with multiple stressors or complex trauma histories.

Since oral narratives are an integral part of every human culture worldwide, and imaginal exposure is proven to be a first-line treatment in trauma spectrum disorders, NET ensures healing of trauma symptoms through these combining these components.

MAKING MEANING THROUGH TRAUMA

NET's process helps us find meaning through difficult circumstances - perfect for processing the pandemic!

It is understood that the story a person tells about their life influences how the person perceives both their experiences and wellbeing. Framing one's life story solely around the traumatic experiences leads to a feeling of persistent trauma and distress. Integrating the trauma into a larger life story helps them find strength and understanding of life as a whole.

LAY OUT THE LIFELINE

How did the pandemic begin for you?

How did it end?

What were the highly anxious or arousing events that occurred just before, during, and after?



THE NARRATIVE

Active chronological reconstruction of the autobiographical/episodic memory.

Cognitive re-evaluation of thoughts and behavior patterns noted during writing.

USE OF EXPOSURE

Imaginal exposure to the traumatic events ('hot spots') takes place through writing.

The exposure piece works through activation of the fear memory while writing. Detailed narration and imagination of traumatic events in the context of larger life experience help to modify the emotional networks.

PROCESS-INTEGRATE

Meaningful linkage and integration of physiological, sensory, cognitive, and emotional responses to one's time, space, and life context

Revisiting of positive life-experiences to activate resources and to adjust basic assumptions.

Choose how to act with this new evaluation (i.e., volunteer, enhance relationships).



REFERENCES

- APA Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Treatment of PTSD in Adults: <https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/ptsd.pdf>
- Schauer, M., 2015. Narrative Exposure Therapy. In: James D. Wright (editor-in-chief), International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2nd edition, Vol 16. Oxford: Elsevier. pp. 198–203.
- Schauer, M., Neuner, F., & Elbert T. (2011). Narrative Exposure Therapy: A short term treatment for traumatic stress disorders (2nd ed.). Cambridge, MA: Hogrefe Publishing