Trauma-Informed Care With African Americans With Substance Use Disorders

Presented By:
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Definition of Trauma

Psychological Trauma

Damage to the mind that occurs as a result of distressing events. Trauma is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds one’s ability to cope with the experience. Trauma may result from a single distressing experience or recurring events for days, weeks, months or years.
Traumatic Stress Disorders and African Americans
Historical Trauma
Definition

A cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma.

Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 2000
Historical Trauma

- The Middle Passage
- Slavery
- Jim Crow Laws
- Lynching
- Riots

Photo: Library of Congress
Impact of Historical Trauma on African Americans

- Loss of culture
- Survivor guilt
- Depression
- Traumatic stress symptoms
- Numbing
- Low self esteem
Impact of Historical Trauma:

- Historical unresolved grief
- Substance use
- Suicidal ideations
- Traumatizing others at the micro and macro levels
PTSD

- The person has been exposed to a traumatic event

- Recurrent and intensive distressing recollections of the event

- Efforts to avoid conversations, activities, places and people that bring up memories of the event

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep, nightmares, flashbacks
PTSD vs. Complex Trauma
PTSD:

Exposure to a specific traumatic event
Complex Trauma: Multiple Layers and Years of Traumatic Experiences

- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Multiple placements
- Parental substance abuse
- Adult emotional unavailability
- Multiple losses
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Abuse
Most Common Symptoms of Complex Trauma

- Difficulty regulating emotions 65%
- Difficulty with impulse control 63%
- Negative self-image 62%
- Difficulty concentrating (ADD) 60%
- Aggression (Conduct Disorder) 56%
- PTSD 12%
- Substance Abuse 10%
24 – 7 – 365  Terror
Addressing Trauma With African Americans With Substance Disorders

- Historical trauma
The Healing of Historical Trauma

- Awakening and Collective Commitment
- Mass Mobilization
- Personal and Collective Mourning
- Forgiving the Unforgivable
- Return to culture
- Achieving a new harmony
- Cultural revitalization and celebration
- Nontraditional approaches

White and Coyhis
Leymah Gbowee
Liberian,
Nobel Peace Prize Winner

Source: flickr.com
Tattoos on the Heart

The Power of Boundless Compassion

Gregory Boyle
Founder of Homeboy Industries

Source: amazon.com
Addressing Trauma With African Americans With SUD:

- PTSD and Complex Trauma
- CBT
- 24 – 7 – 365 Terror
An Existential Concern

How long do African American males live?
Dispelling the Myth

- 500 murders annually
- 40,000 annual births in Chicago
- 2.7 million residents
Dispelling the Myth:

- 9 million residents of Cook County
- 112 murders in Englewood over last 20 years
- 73 thousand residents of Englewood
- Life expectancy of African American men in Chicago is age 70. Hispanic Latino males age 73
Trauma-Informed Care Definition

• A trauma-informed system of care recognizes and therapeutically responds to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system from the initial phone call, through termination and follow-up.
• In a trauma-informed system of care every member of the service team has an awareness of their role in reducing the impact of trauma on those seeking services.
Steps to Developing a Trauma-Informed System of Care

1. Create a trauma-informed change team, include peers

2. Select leadership

3. Announce the agency’s commitment to becoming trauma informed
Steps to Developing a Trauma-Informed System of Care:

4. **Train staff**
   - Evidence-based practices
   - Select evidence-based practice with staff input (expect grief)
   - Cultural competence
Train Staff:

- Boundaries
- Do no harm!
How to Avoid Re-traumatizing African Americans With Substance Use Disorders in Treatment
How We Harm

- Biases
- Threats
- Stereotypes
- Micro-aggressions
- Countertransference reactions
- Not believing the client
Do no Harm, Continued:

- Low expectations
- Touch
- Language
- Disproportionate Service Discharge
- Service energy
- Second-class service
- Pictures on the walls, audiovisuals, and written materials
Steps to Developing a Trauma-Informed System of Care
Continued

5. Train leadership
   • Buy-in
   • How to support staff
   • Team building
Developing a Trauma-Informed System of Care, Continued

6. Make sure policy and procedures are trauma-informed
   • Vision, mission, and value statement
   • Good vacation policy
   • Health insurance that has a good benefit for counseling
Steps to Developing a Trauma-Informed System of Care:

7. Collect Data

- Staff retention
- Client satisfaction
- No-show rates
- Recovery rates
- Walk-through
- Recruitment, hiring and retaining trauma informed staff
Online Museum of African American Addictions, Treatment and Recovery

WELCOME The purpose of this website is to serve as a single location where individuals who are interested in information about addictions, treatment, and recovery among African Americans can be found. The site contains historical data, scholarly articles, educational videos, music and DVDs.