

**The HK Council of Social Service
Workshop on Working with Female Substance
Abusers :
Attending to the Gender Difference**

**Post-trauma influence: from sexual abuse to
substance abuse**

創傷後遺症或性侵犯與濫藥的關係

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Women and Trauma

- About 50% women & 60% in men will experience at least one traumatic incident in their life.
- Prone to be neglected or abused in childhood and experience domestic violence.
- Sexual or child sexual abuse are the most commonest kind of trauma.
- Sexual assault is more likely to cause PTSD than other traumas.

After the trauma....

- Depression, substance abuse or develop PTSD are the commonest responses of women after a trauma.
- Research of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that women begin abusing alcohol and drugs **at younger age** than men do and may have more situations in their lives that trigger substance abuse.

Women and Trauma

1. Women in substance abuse are 5 times more than men to have been sexually abused as children.
2. Women are likelier to suffer eating disorders, both of which are major risk factors for substance abuse.
3. Women are more likely to have heavy drinking after a crisis.

PTSD

- Usually develops about three months after the incident. Some symptoms might show up years later.
- About 8% of men and 20% of women develop PTSD after a traumatic event.
- PTSD commonly co-exist with depression, alcohol or other substance abuse, or other anxiety disorders frequently.
- Better prognosis if problems being treated.

Risk Factors for PTSD

1. Female
2. Low educational level
3. Alcoholic
4. Had an earlier life-threatening event.
5. Mentally ill.
6. Lack of family or social support.
7. Recent lost of a loved one.

Risk Factors for PTSD

1. Recent stressful life changes
2. Think that you or your family were in danger.
3. Feeling of helplessness during the incident. Felt unable to help yourself or a loved one.
4. Had a severe emotional reaction to the event
5. Suffered serious and long lasting injury.

PTSD Common Symptoms

- Flashback, nightmares, or frightening thoughts especially when facing to situation that hints to the traumatic episode.
- Anniversaries of the event may trigger symptoms.

Common Symptoms

- Emotional numbness
- Sleep disturbances
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger or guilty feelings
- Avoid any reminders or thoughts of the traumatic episode.

Common Symptoms

- Physical symptoms like dizziness and headaches, GI distress and vague chest discomfort.
- **The diagnosis of PTSD is established when symptoms last for more than 1 month.**

Treatment of PTSD

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- the most effective way to combat trauma, substance abuse, and mental health problems is through an **integrated, holistic approach for a better clinical state.**
- **Life is no longer helpless and without hope.**
- **Anxiety and depression can be lessened,**
- **Dependence on drug is not necessary.**

Treatment of PTSD

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy, group therapy, and exposure therapy.
- Anti-depressant.
- Ventilation of feelings
- Counseling.

PTSD Under-diagnosed

- There are relationship between experience of a trauma and increase in utilization of medical services for physical problems.
- **Patient with PTSD was not identified appropriately.**
- Important to screen for PTSD in primary settings.

Sexual Abuse 性虐待

1. Forcing of sexual acts by one person to another who rejects it.
2. Psychological forms of abuse including verbal abuse.
3. The use of a position of trust for sexual purposes.

Signs of Sexual Abuse 徵兆

1. Injuries with no clear reason, especially to sexual area like genital area or breasts
2. Torn or stained clothing.
3. Pregnancy
4. Venereal diseases
5. Vaginal infections
6. Unexplained behavioral problems
7. Depression
8. Anxiety

Signs of Sexual Abuse 徵兆

1. Self abuse and/or suicidal behavior
2. Sudden increase or loss of interest in sexual activity.
3. **Substances abuse 藥物物質濫用**

Long Term Effects of sexual abuse

1. Low self-esteem 低自尊
2. Self-hatred, guilty or shame
3. Depression 抑鬱
4. Sleep disturbances
5. Fear of being alone particularly at night
6. Re-traumatized when stay in abusive, dangerous situations

Long Term Effects-ii

1. Lack of trust
2. Flashbacks
3. Dissociation which might leads to multiple personalities
4. Obsessive compulsive behaviours
5. Distorted body image

Substances Abuse

- Victims turn to substances abuse as a way to get some **relief from their emotional turmoil.**
- However, it is ineffective and it provides a host of additional problems that make the healing process even more difficult.

Substances Abuse

- ***Continued non-medically indicated use of a substance*** that results in repeated adverse social consequences including the area of work, school, interpersonal relationship and family.
- Substance dependence describes the area of one's ***physiological and behavioural symptoms*** whereas substance abuse describes one's social life.

Abuse and Dependence

- Substance dependence can be a result of substance abuse.
- Dependence always implies abuse,
- Abuse often occurs in the absence of dependence.

DSM IV Definition: Substance abuse

- A. A maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by one (or more) of the following, occurring within a 12-month period:
- Recurrent substance use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home (e.g., repeated absences or poor work performance related to substance use; substance-related absences, suspensions or expulsions from school; neglect of children or household)

DSM IV Definition

A) problem occurring within a 12-month period:

- Recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous (e.g., driving an automobile or operating a machine when impaired by substance use)

DSM IV Definition

- Recurrent substance-related legal problems (e.g., arrests for substance-related disorderly conduct)
- Continued substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance (e.g., arguments with spouse about consequences of intoxication, physical fights)

Substance abuse

B. The symptoms have never met the criteria for Substance Dependence for this class of substance.

Alcohol & Substance Abuse

- Substance abuse can take many forms, from the misuse alcohol to the use of illegal substances.

Alcohol=yeast excreta in sugar solution.

- A drink that puts the spring back into old man.
- The sale of which pours money into our government.
- The drink of which enable us to magnify the joy. And happiness.
- It can also be the devil's brew and drink.

The first victim of alcohol

- Yeast will die when Alcohol reaches the concentration of 12-13%.
- All unfortified wine, produced by yeast fermentation alone have alcohol concentration below 13%.
- Fortification of wine is adding alcohol into wine. E,g, sherry and port.
- Distillation is discovered about 800 AD in Arabia.

Alcoholic beverage

- Alcoholic beverage is water plus ethyl alcohol plus some congeners.
- The congeners provide the taste, and smell and all the colour of alcoholic beverage if any.
- Congeners include various amount of amino acids, minerals, vitamins, IT sometimes has poison like 1 carbon carbon alcohol (methanol) and higher alcohols (fuse oils),

Congeners free alcohol

- Brandy and whisky have congeners.
- Volka is relatively congener free.
- Drinking may cause harm to woman in pregnancy, or man going to drive a car, or operate a machinery.
- Drinking may cause health problems. .

Alcoholism

Main features:

- Strong desire for alcohol.
 - Loss of control.
 - Physical dependence like nausea, sweating or tremour.
 - Tolerance.
1. Alcohol may produce analgesia and euphoria by increasing the activity of the activities of these morphine like substance in the brain.
 2. The break down products of alcohol may combine with a chemical in the brain to produce a substance resembling morphine. ,

Risk / dangers Associated with Alcoholism

1. In the metabolism of alcohol to acetic acid and water, dehydrogenase enzyme is used.
2. Alcohol aldehyde is poisonous.
3. More lactic acid, more uric acid and more fat is produced too from alcohol metabolism in the body.

Risk / dangers Associated with Alcoholism

1. Cancers
2. Organs damage like liver and brain.
3. Birth defects.
4. Risk of accidents
5. Risk of homicide and suicide.
6. Presentations might affect patient's physical or mental health or welfare condition.

Drug Rehabilitation

- Drug rehabilitation includes medical and psychotherapy
- Consider physical and psychological dependency.
- Rehabilitation aims to enable the patient to cease substance abuse.

Management

- Motivate client to stop using alcohol.
- Introduce client new methods to live in a drug-free environment.
- Induce insight in habits related to their addictions through education.
- The effect of moderation is doubtful.

Management

- Assist client to change behavior, repair relationships or enlarge social circle to make new friendships with people who do not use alcohol or drugs.
- Involve family members in the recovery process. Support from family members and others is critical.

Management

- Life skills training to improve clients' a variety of skills like social skills, employment skills, temper and money management.
- Relapse prevention training helps to identify and cope with circumstances that may trigger a relapse.

Management

- Clients in self help groups meet and share personal experiences about recovery in an attempt to remain alcohol- and drug-free.
- Clients with substance abuse problems might also have other psychiatric problems like anxiety or depression and these problems should be treated accordingly.

Management

- A life-long commitment to recovery is important as clients will likely face various temptations and relapse is common.