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One Page PTSD Self Help: Trauma Therapy

Information contained is as simple as it gets. One page, point form. SKIP NOTHING or failure increases.

1. All substance use must be within acceptable ranges of use before trauma therapy begins. (Alcohol: 2 standard drinks daily, 2 days alcohol free per week : No illegal drug usage : Prescription medication only as prescribed : ensure 6 – 12 weeks duration prior to commencing.)
2. Safety and support! Working, kids, etc. will impact trauma therapy. Home must feel safe. If you live next to a crack house, or current domestic violence, etc. then home environment not safe. Need support, friends, family, spouse, etc. to manage your duties. Emergency hotlines, etc. You can do this without support, but you must commit yourself to not do destructive things, eg. suicide, fighting, smashing.
3. Create a self contract, sign it and put it on the fridge, all the dangerous responses you have had, could have, think you might have; commit to an action plan on them prior to experiencing.
4. Learn breathing, relaxation and grounding exercises prior to trauma therapy. Excel at them prior. These are essential for anger and dissociation management during symptom severity.
5. Stable medication suggested during trauma therapy to regulate symptom severity. 6 – 12 weeks prior.

YOU MUST ACHIEVE ABOVE PRIOR TO COMMENCING BELOW – FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY

6. Emotional processing – write out your worst trauma only (as defined by yourself), read over, write out again, add anything missed, repeat process over day/s until full trauma picture is captured, honestly, accurately. Immediate repetitiveness will assist to reduce immediate symptoms through desensitization.
VERY IMPORTANT TO NOT AVOID PROCESS REGARDLESS OF SYMPTOMS SPIKING - EXPECT MINOR TO SERIOUS SYMPTOM SEVERITY – DO NOT STOP THE WORK – IMPORTANT
7. Emotion identification – Isolate emotions felt from your trauma writing. What you feel is what you feel, regardless then or now, as feelings change over time. What you feel now is what affects you now. Rate them from 0 – 100. 0 being nil, 100 being worst.
ie. I feel frustrated that he can get away with this; I feel frightened when I hear a loud noise.
8. **Thought identification** – Identify thoughts associated to each emotion and rate the degree to which you believe the thought. Select one to challenge, often starting at your highest rated emotion.
9. **Evidence identification** – Provide evidence for and against each thought.
10. **Cognitive restructuring** – Identify positive response/s to the for and against thoughts, and rate your degree of belief for the positive/s created.
11. **Process** – Process mentally what you just achieved by finding the positive response, repeat it for a week if required to get a handle on whether it sits well with you or not. If not, repeat steps 8 to 11.
12. **Rerate** – return to the original emotion and rerate its severity now on how you feel, associated with its thought.
13. **Repeat** – Repeat process for each emotion within each trauma. As you remember more, add it, involve it within the process, repeat for each emotion and thought. Complete one traumatic event, then shift down to the traumatic event you have determined as the next most severe event affecting you.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO RELAX BETWEEN SYMPTOM SPIKES, MANAGE THEM, EXPECT THEM, AND DO YOUR BEST; THEY WILL DISSIPATE FASTER AS THE PROCESS EVOLVES. BEGINNING IS ALWAYS THE WORST OF THE PROCESS.