Impact of Trauma

Asherson P *

Trauma is a reaction to a highly distressing or upsetting occurrence that overwhelms a person's ability to cope, triggers feelings of helplessness, destroys one's sense of self, and restricts one's ability to feel a full range of emotions and experiences. It makes no distinctions and is present all over the world. Psychological trauma occurs when a person's mind is impaired as a result of one or more distressing incidents that trigger excessive levels of stress and overpower the person's ability to cope with or integrate the emotions involved, ultimately contributing to severe, long-term negative effects. Trauma affects people differently, and people will respond to similar traumatic events in different ways based on their subjective experiences. To put it another way, not everyone who experiences a potentially traumatic incident would become mentally traumatised. [two] After being subjected to a major traumatic event, however, some people can experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). People who have these kinds of traumatic events often develop symptoms and problems as a result. The severity of these symptoms is determined by the person, the type of trauma they have undergone, and the emotional help they have received from others. Trauma can cause a wide variety of reactions and symptoms, which vary in intensity from person to person. After a traumatic event, a person can relive the trauma both mentally and physically, which is why trauma reminders, also known as triggers, can be unpleasant and even painful.

To try to escape, they can turn to psychoactive substances such as alcohol. Triggers and cues serve as reminders of the trauma, which may result in anxiety and other negative emotions. Frequently, the individual is completely unaware of the triggers. In certain cases, a person with traumatic disorders can engage in disruptive behaviours or self-destructive coping strategies as a result of this, often without fully understanding the nature or causes of their own behaviour. Emotional fatigue will set in over time, causing distraction and making critical thought difficult or impossible. Emotional isolation, dissociation, or "numbing out" are common occurrences. The person may appear emotionally flat, preoccupied, distant, or cold as a result of dissociating from the painful emotion. Depersonalization disorder, dissociative amnesia, dissociative fugue, and dissociative identity disorder are all manifestations of dissociation. Trauma exposure and re-experience can result in neurophysiological changes such as slowed myelination, irregular synaptic pruning, hippocampus shrinkage, and cognitive and affective disability. This is important in brain scan studies of higher-order thought. When trauma symptoms do not go away and they do not believe their condition will change, some traumatised people will believe they are permanently harmed. Feelings of desperation, transient delusional ideation, loss of self-esteem, profound emptiness, suicidality, and depression are all potential outcomes.

Department of Psychiatry, Hong Kong SAR, Kings College London, UK

1Author for correspondence: Asherson P, Department of Psychiatry, Kings College London, UK, Email: philip.asherson@kcl.ac.uk