Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy

TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for adults who have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

SUMMARY
Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy is a one-on-one therapeutic treatment for adults who have experienced significant trauma and have consequently received a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Treatment focuses on reducing trauma symptoms, such as hypervigilance, hyperarousal, flashbacks, and related depression and anxiety symptoms.

EVIDENCE
Numerous randomized clinical trials, including several external replications of PE Therapy, have demonstrated its effectiveness as a treatment for PTSD. Studies consistently reveal that individuals who participated in PE Therapy, compared to various control conditions (e.g., wait-list/delayed treatment, relaxation therapy, person-centered therapy, typical treatment, dynamic therapy), showed the following improvements: significant reduction in their PTSD symptoms at immediate post-treatment and at follow-up (i.e., ranging from 6- to 17-months post-treatment), significant reduction in secondary depressive and anxiety symptoms, and overall significant increases in measures of global functioning. These results are found in individuals with a wide variety of traumatic exposures (e.g., robberies, sexual assaults, domestic violence, childhood abuse, combat- and terrorism-related traumas) with differences in degree of exposure, single and chronic, and with wide ranges in time from last trauma exposure (i.e., from 3 months to no upper limit). The efficacy of PE Therapy has been demonstrated in civilian and military populations.

COMPONENTS
PE Therapy is designed to help individuals who have PTSD caused by traumas, such as rape, childhood sexual abuse, combat, motor vehicle accidents, or natural disasters. This program has three components:

1. Psychoeducation: Increase the patient's level of understanding of his or her diagnosis and the symptoms he or she is experiencing.
2. Imaginal exposure: Encourage patients to repeatedly recount the traumatic memory, help participants retrieve missing information about the event, and assist them as they increase their ability to create an organized narrative of the event.
3. In vivo exposure: Expose patients, gradually, to situational aspects related to their trauma. The impact of the trauma is reduced through the use of systematic desensitization techniques.

PREVIOUS USE
PE Therapy is widely implemented by clinical psychologists across the United States and internationally. Currently, PE Therapy is being implemented in numerous Veterans' hospitals.
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**TRAINING**

Licensed mental health professionals facilitate this program, and they are required to attend a training workshop. The training takes 4 days and is offered twice annually during the fall and spring semesters by faculty from the Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety at the University of Pennsylvania. The cost to attend the workshop, including training and support materials (e.g., workshop binder, intervention therapist guide, client workbook), is $1500 per person. For more information, please visit the website located in the Contact section.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Considerations for implementing this program include securing professionals to facilitate the program and ensuring they attend the workshop, gaining buy-in from participants, understanding that therapist burn-out may occur, and understanding funds for program training and implementation may need to be acquired.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email clearinghouse@psu.edu

**IMPLEMENTATION**

If you are interested in implementing PE Therapy, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you!
Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email clearinghouse@psu.edu

**EVALUATION PLAN**

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals.
Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email clearinghouse@psu.edu

**CONTACT**

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.
Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact the Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety by mail at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania, 3535 Market Street, Suite 600, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3309, phone 1-215-746-3327, fax 1-215-746-3311, or visit www.med.upenn.edu/ctsa/workshops_pet.html

**SOURCE**

www.med.upenn.edu/ctsa/workshops_pet.html and legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=89