Understanding the Role of Addictions in the Lives of Women Who Have Overcome an Experience With Human Trafficking

NAADAC Annual Conference 2019

Michelle Harrison, LPCC, NCC
Ph.D Candidate
MA; MA w/Specialization in Addiction
Learning Objectives

The intent of this presentation is:

• To define, educate, and increase the awareness of mental health professionals about the topic of human trafficking

• To discuss the role of addiction in a victim/survivor’s journey of recovery

• To offer suggestions for therapeutic approaches to assist victim/survivor’s in recovery and address addictions

• To provide resources for mental health professionals interested in working with individuals impacted by human trafficking
Presenter Disclosure

• I have nothing to disclose
Background

• Role as an advocate
• The ILO (2018) estimated that 40,300,000 people were trafficked in 2016, of which 25,900,000 were trafficked in forced labor (including labor in the commercial sex industry) and 15,400,000 million in forced marriage. Statistics indicate that as awareness of human trafficking grows, the number of identified cases continues to increase (Polaris, 2018).
• It is a current and important social justice issue; a global health concern (U.S. Department of State, 2018; Zimmerman & Kiss, 2017)
• Modern day expression of slavery (Campana & Varese, 2016; U.S. Department of State, 2018; Zimmerman & Kiss, 2017)
• Force, Fraud, and Coercion (Abas, et al., 2013; Domoney et al., 2015; Hossain et al., 2010)
What?


*Sex Trafficking:* The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. § 7102) defines *sex trafficking* as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.”
What?

Labor:
The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. § 7102) defines **labor trafficking** as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.”

Organ:
This trafficking form involves the unethical and illegal removal of body organs, which are then sold for money (Efrat, 2016). U.S. law does not include a definition of organ trafficking, but the 2000 U.N. Protocol does (Panigabutra-Roberts, 2012). Sex, labor, and organ trafficking all involve force, fraud, and coercion, impact victims mentally and physically, and cross international and domestic borders.
Where?

*Sex Trafficking*: street or online solicitation, escort service, pornography, residential brothels or private household), occurring behind the scenes at businesses (bars, strip clubs, cantinas, fake massage parlors); *bride trafficking* (Zimmerman & Kiss, 2017; Litam, 2017; Anklesaria & Gentile, 2012)

*Labor Trafficking*: domestic service and in agricultural, commercial fishing, factory work, and among construction and mining workers (Zimmerman & Kiss, 2017). Beggars are also vulnerable (Cannon et al., 2018; Weitzer, 2014).

*Human Organ Trafficking* Individuals being held captive until can sell organ (usually kidney)-usually internationally (Cannon, Arcara, Graham, & Macy, 2018; Efrat, 2016).
How?

- **Force**: physical restraint or serious physical harm that traffickers use to obtain and maintain control.

- **Fraud**: use of false promises to lure persons into the human trafficking industry, is another method used by traffickers to control and exploit their victims.

- **Coercion**: using threats of physical harm or physical restraint against a person- can be physical or psychological.

- **Grooming**: progression of power to control victims; can forge trauma bond; “Stockholm syndrome” (*Litam, 2017; Abas et al., 2013; Domone*).

- Does not always involve movement or physical captivity (*Stoklosa et al., 2017*).
Who?

- Men (and sometimes women) identify vulnerabilities: single parents, parents with substance abuse-prey on children lonely, isolated, depressed, unsupervised (neighbors, parent’s friends)

- Adds: for example, client answered ad for room mate/share apt. for Junior College

- Runaways: Looking for girls who look out of place, no luggage, look lost (Bus Stops, Train Stations, Marta, etc.)

Who?

• Kidnapped: gang related, just bad people!

• Lured by promises prostitution/escort work will help make money for their family or themselves- promised amazing life, lots of money, pretty clothes, nice place to live and then suddenly enslaved, threatened to be killed, or kill family if leave

• Sold: doesn’t make sense, but sold by pimps, drug supplier, or someone that they have become dependent on – to gang member or Cartel

• Sold by family member (as child) for drug money,

• Deception: Again, see weakness/vulnerability- offer shelter, help; leads to being held hostage and trapped/kidnapped; kept dependent on drugs
Who

• Strip joints, prostituting for **drugs**, promise of **drugs** or need for **drug** money-appeal to the person’s addictions

• In 2017, the Office of Trafficking in Persons identified American Indians and Alaska natives, LGBTI individuals, undocumented workers, individuals with limited English and low literacy, individuals with disabilities, and persons **participating in mandated substance use programs** as being most vulnerable in the United States
Role of Addictions

- Very little research on the role of addictions and HT

- Polaris Project 2017 report: Substance use as 2nd in top 5 identified risk factors for HT (#1 Recent migration/relocation, runaway/homeless youth; mental health concern; involvement in child welfare system)

- Mentioned in research about mental health and HT-noted that women use substances as anesthesia to enable selves to do sex work (Ankelsaria & Gentile, 2012 and others)
Role of Addictions

• Stoklosa, MacGibbon, & Stoklosa MD (2017) study, diagnostic overshadowing with co-occurring addiction and mental illness

“Addictions complex relationship with human trafficking”

• Exacerbates victim’s vulnerability

• A mean to coerce victim to submit and remain dependent; used to control victim

• Incentive – do work get drug

• Used as coping mechanism- trauma, pain
Role of Addicitons (Stoklosa et. al., 2017)

- Authors note research limited
- One survey of US survivors: 84.3% used substances while trafficked
- Alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine were used by more than 50%
- 22.3 % used heroin
- Opioids choice for traffickers – numb pain and addictive (personal clients reported)
- Suggest opioid addiction may be red flag for HT
What We Know

• **Relationship and trust** is KEY!
• Used to surviving, distrusting, being manipulated
• Real fear of being found, consequences of talking – being charged for past acts
• Impact of addictions on their brain, thinking, and patterns of behavior
• Collaboration of services; survivor-centered
Counseling Considerations

- Sensitivity to the unseen and the seen impact of unbelievable trauma
- Survivor-informed [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/otip/definition_and_recommendations.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/otip/definition_and_recommendations.pdf)
- Trauma-informed care (Stoklosa, et. al., 2017)
- “The Life” – apply multicultural awareness
- SAFETY (for self and client)
- Supervision and peer support- compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and self-care paramount
- See each client as unique and meet individual needs, individualized therapy (Litam, 2017).
- Limited research regarding best treatments of this population (Domoney et al., 2015; Hemmings et al., 2016; Levine, 2017; Litam, 2017)
Basic Goals

- Heal from any previous trauma or pain that may have led to their drug addiction
- Diagnose and treat any co-occurring health disorders
- Recognize the triggers
- Learn to avoid situations that would cause triggers to occur
- Gain tools, knowledge, and coping techniques that will equip clients to respond in different and healthier ways
Addictions

• Alcohol

• Drugs

• Sex (and love): porn, sex, masturbation, hook-up apps, fantasy sites; some contrary opinions about this addiction

• Other addictive behaviors: spending money, eating, sugar

• Symptoms diminish when begin to feel safe and have a chance for bodies and mind to heal.

• Substitute when give one up
Evidence-based for Trauma plus Experience

- **Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT):** Manualized therapy for PTSD; incorporates Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- **CBT:** a popular therapeutic approach for counselors; addresses renewing mind with truth and distinguishing lies from truth: new thoughts-new behavior (*CBT-I-* with Insomnia); **TF-CBT** (certification -children and adolescents)
- **Empowerment/Strength-based**
- **Mindfulness:** Coping technique, breathing, meditation
- **Motivational Interviewing:** Client-Centered, works with client where they are and with resistance. Non-confrontational. Popular with people in recovery
- **Narrative Therapy:** Construct their story from 3\textsuperscript{rd} person; creates distance from traumatic event.
- **Physical:** exercise, trauma-based yoga
- **Other:** music and art therapy, aromatherapy, animal-assisted therapy (Polaris Project & Sanar-Institute, 2015, November).
Evidence-based

- **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT):** Specific form of CBT, first developed to better treat borderline personality disorder. Used with PTSD, trauma, substance abuse. Focuses on identifying negative thought patterns to destructive behaviors; learning to regulate emotions and behavior.

- **Eye Movement Desensitization Movement (EMDR):** Integrative psychotherapy approach, scientifically researched and established as effective in treating PTSD and trauma. Certification required.

- **Prolonged Exposure (PE) for PTSD:** Type of CBT, gradual approach to trauma memories, feelings, situations that have been avoided

- **Seeking Safety (Najavitis, 2007)**

- **Trauma Recovery and Empowerment model (TREM)-** have for men, women, adolescent girls & boys (G-TREM & B-TREM) (Harris & Fallot, 2001)

- VA PTSD educational videos: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/video/index.asp

From Experience

• Alcohol—rarely only alcohol
• Drugs – Often first recovery is in residential care—education on what to expect
• Coping Skills: relaxation, mindfulness, grounding skills; Use of ABC sheets and learning to identify feelings
• Sex – clues in session – less about what I think, more about how they identify
• Women in recovery—three pillars
Education and Assessments

- Inform
- SAST; PTSD; Depression, Anxiety; DAST; ACES
- EMDR float back
- “That makes perfect sense”
- “No wonder”
- Empower – knowledge, have a voice, protect themselves
- Treat recovery like a new born
Michelle’s BE Attitudes

• Believe Them
• Be Approachable
• Be Trustworthy
• Be On Time
• Be Honest
• Be Willing to Follow-up
• Be OK with being Uncomfortable
• Be Compassionate
• Be Sincere and Authentic
• Be Empathetic
• Be Positive
• Be a Strength-builder
• Be a Good Listener
• Be a Good Teacher
• Be Normalizing
Resources

• FIND LOCAL SUPPORT-Peer support and connection!

  • Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): http://www.aa.org/
  
  • Celebrate Recovery (CR) meeting locator: http://locator.crgroups.info/
  
  • Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meeting locator: http://www.nacincinnati.com/index.php/kentucky-meetings
  
  • Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) meeting locator: https://www.sa.org
How to Respond

To request help or report suspected human trafficking, call the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](tel:1-888-373-7888) at 1-888-373-7888.

Or text HELP to: BeFree (233733).

**Polaris Project:** [https://polarisproject.org/](https://polarisproject.org/)

**National Trafficking Sheltered Alliance:** [https://www.shelteredalliance.org/](https://www.shelteredalliance.org/)

**Refuge for Women:** [http://www.refugeforwomen.org/](http://www.refugeforwomen.org/)
Resources

- **On Shame**: by Brene Brown: I Thought It Was Just Me (but it isn't): Making the Journey from "What Will People Think?" to "I Am Enough" (Also an accompaniment to Connections curriculum); Rising Strong; Brene Brown; Unashamed, Christin Caine

- **On Trauma**: Trauma and Recovery, by Judith Herman, M.D.; The Body Keeps the Score, by Bessel Van der Kolk, MD ; Disney’s Inside Out; Seeking Safety (Najavits, 2002); Betrayal Bond, Patrick Carnes

- **On Sexual Abuse and Addiction**: The Wounded Heart: Hope for Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse, by Dan B. Allender; No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Addiction, Marnie, C. Ferree; Dirty Girls Come Clean by Crystal Renaud; Patrick Carnes

- **On Trafficking**: Girls Like Us, A Memoir, by Rachel Lloyd; The White Umbrella: Walking with Survivors of Sex Trafficking, by Mary Frances Bowley; Renting Lacy: A Story Of America's Prostituted Children (A Call to Action), Smith and Coloma, 2009
References


References (cont)


- National Human Trafficking Hotline: https://humantraffickinghotline.org/mission


