

UKZN HOWARD COLLEGE THE PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC

Issue 3 | April, 2017



ABOUT US

The Psychology Clinic is located on the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus and is home to the Clinical & Counselling Master's programme in the discipline of Psychology.

The Clinic's main aim is to provide affordable psychotherapy, counselling and assessment services for both adults and children.

We offer short-term treatments for the following concerns:

- Depression
- Interpersonal conflict
- Anxiety
- Trauma
- Behavioural concerns
- HIV/Aids (pre, post, and ongoing counselling)
- Personality disorders
- Couple or marriage counselling

A PLAYFUL PROJECT!

The Clinic boasts a new and improved play-therapy room.

The class of 2017 banded together to brighten up the children's play room.

With a fresh coat of paint, beautiful murals, and revived furniture, this is a fun and safe space for children to visit.

MEET THE CLASS OF 2017



"We are a very **diverse** group of people, yet highly **cohesive** and eager to learn from each other. This is our **passion** and we are all striving to be the best helpers that we can be".

MYTH-BUSTER

1.) *"PTSD affects someone immediately after a traumatic ordeal. If time has passed, someone is no longer at risk for PTSD."*

FALSE - While symptoms for PTSD often arise within the first 3 months after a traumatic event, many times it takes months or even years for symptoms to appear.

2.) *"Only military veterans experience PTSD."*

FALSE - According to research, many people within their lifetime will experience some type of major traumatic event. Out of that group, at least 20% will experience symptoms of PTSD.

3.) *"Experiencing PTSD is a symptom of mental weakness; people should just 'get over' traumatic events of life."*

FALSE - While the majority of people who go through a traumatic ordeal do go on to readjust to normal life after a period of time, not everyone can, and it has nothing to do with mental weakness. Several factors determine whether or not someone will develop PTSD, including but not limited to: The type of trauma experienced, whether or not the individual has social support or how the brain releases chemicals to fight against the stress..

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)



PTSD: What is it?

It is a condition of persistent mental and emotional stress occurring as a result of injury or severe shock, typically involving disturbance of sleep and constant vivid recall of the experience, with dulled responses to others and to the outside world. Examples of events that may cause PTSD are: natural disaster, serious accident, sudden death of a loved one, war, violent personal assault such as rape, or other life-threatening events.

Signs and Symptoms:

If any of the following symptoms have been present for more than a month after the traumatic event, you may be experiencing PTSD:

There are four types of PTSD symptoms:

- ▶ Reliving the event (also called re-experiencing symptoms)

Memories of the traumatic event can come back at any time. You may feel the same fear and horror you did when the event took place. For example:

- You may have nightmares
- You may feel like you are going through the event again (flashbacks)
- You may see, hear, or smell something that causes you to relive the event
 - ▶ Avoiding situations that remind you of the event
- You may try to avoid situations or people that trigger memories of the traumatic event.
- You may even avoid talking or thinking about the event.
- You may keep very busy or avoid seeking help because it keeps you from having to think or talk about the event.
 - ▶ Negative changes in beliefs and feelings

The way you think about yourself and others changes because of the trauma.

This symptom has many aspects, including the following:

- You may not have positive or loving feelings toward other people and may stay away from relationships

DO CHILDREN REACT DIFFERENTLY THAN ADULTS?

Children and teens can have extreme reactions to trauma, but their symptoms may not be the same as adults. In very young children (less than 6 years of age), these symptoms can include:

- Wetting the bed after having learned to use the toilet
- Forgetting how to or being unable to talk
- Acting out the scary event during playtime
- Being unusually clingy with a parent or other adult

Older children and teens are more likely to show symptoms similar to those seen in adults.

They may also develop disruptive, disrespectful, or destructive behaviors. Older children and teens may feel guilty for not preventing injury or deaths. They may also have thoughts of revenge.

- you may forget about parts of the traumatic event or not be able to talk about them
- you may think the world is completely dangerous, and no one can be trusted.
 - ▶ **Feeling keyed up (also called hyperarousal)**

You may be jittery, or always alert and on the lookout for danger. You might suddenly become angry or irritable. This is known as hyperarousal. For example:

- You may have a hard time sleeping, concentrating and you may be startled by a loud noise or surprise.

If you think you may be suffering from PTSD, the good news is that **PTSD can be treated!** It can be treated with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both. **The Psychology Clinic** provides short-term psychotherapy treatment for PTSD in order to improve symptoms and offer clients a better quality of life.



CONTACT US:

The Psychology Clinic:

(tel): (031) 260-2612 / 7425

(E-mail): psychclinic@ukzn.ac.za

Services offered at reduced rates:

- **R120.00** per therapeutic session
- **R900.00** for assessment (requires 4 sessions at R225.00 each)

OTHER:

Suicide Crisis Line

(tel): 0800-567-567 or **SMS: 31393**

Life Line

to reduce personal stress and emotional pain, contact:

(tel): 031-312-2323

Destiny Helpline for Youth & Students

(tel): 0800-4142-43