Psychological Disorder Summary Paper

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**Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Many people in their lifetime experience an unsettling or traumatic event. After these experiences it may become difficult to readjust and move past the event, but with some self-care and time people are able to alleviate their symptoms. If certain symptoms following a trauma do not go away, or get worse, the person can be considered for having Post-traumatic stress disorder. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a very common psychological disorder that occurs as a result of experiencing extreme trauma. At first, PTSD was mainly used to diagnose people in the military. It is a true fact that veterans are more likely to experience PTSD than non-veterans. PTSD is a long-lasting disorder with various symptoms such as intrusive memories, nightmares, severe anxiety, increased physical arousal, negative thoughts and emotions, and avoiding certain triggers.

PTSD symptoms can be debilitating for some people. Intrusive memories and nightmares occur when the person replays the event in their mind over and over. These thoughts seem to ‘take over’ other thoughts, leaving the person focused on the one thing they do not want to dwell on. These memories can be triggered by certain stimuli, such as a smell or a loud noise. This leads people to avoid these certain triggers, to sometimes extreme degrees. So many negative emotions stem from having PTSD, and people begin to feel alone, afraid, guilty, angry, bitter, and anxious. PTSD sufferers often seek someone to blame for the trauma, whether it is themselves or someone else. Physical arousal can mean different things for people who experience PTSD; it can be a lack of sleep, lack of focus, having outbursts, or being easily startled. For example, a loud bang may startle a war veteran and cause him to lash out because the trigger is similar to what they would have experienced in war.

More than five million people in the United States experience PTSD every year, but it affects people differently. When it comes to gender, there is a large difference between how it impacts women versus men. It is known that twice as many women as men develop PTSD after being exposed to a certain trauma. It is mainly found in adults, but children have also been known to have and experience its various symptoms which proves that PTSD can occur at any age. PTSD is ultimately caused as a result of a traumatic event, but there are other factors that can help cause it. People are more likely to have PTSD if they have a personal or family history of psychological disorders. Certain genes may leave people more susceptible to experience PTSD, so it can be inherited. When experiencing any trauma, the brain is triggered and releases stress hormones. This allows you to have more energy or adrenaline to avert or handle the trauma. PTSD sufferers are always stuck in this state of brain arousal, so those stress hormones are constantly being released. People who experience PTSD have been known to have a more active amygdala, and a smaller hippocampus.

There are many different treatments for PTSD. The most successful two treatments are medication (such as antidepressants), and psychotherapy. Both of these treatments can be done at the same time and yield very positive results. Treatment styles may vary from person to person, so those experiencing PTSD symptoms must talk to a mental health professional to find a treatment plan that works best for them individually. Many people with PTSD can experience other issues, such as depression or suicidal thoughts, so these issues must also be taken care of. People who are in long term traumatic situations such as abusive relationships must remove themselves from the triggering environment. People who suffer PTSD can also help themselves by consulting medical professionals, exercising, setting personal goals, spending time with loved ones, and seeking positive things that bring them comfort.

**References**

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