Clinical Applications of Trauma Therapy with Substance Abusers: Therapeutic Strategies and Insights to Help Patients Overcome Addiction

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The inner world of the healthy child is filled with wonder, awe and faith in the benevolence of a just and fair world. But for people who have suffered a trauma in childhood, this belief is hard to achieve. This dialectic has been the central theme of psychological research and substance abuse recovery programs whose aim it is to help curb the impact of trauma on addiction in young adults. Historically, trauma and recovery therapists have long wrestled with the unending swing of the addiction pendulum; where suffering and despair is transformed into a more therapeutically pure state of mind, while possibility of relapse continues to loom overhead. This lecture is designed to further the growth of healthy functioning through teaching strategies and interventions that are gleaned from therapy, research and lived experience. We will explore recent findings from clinical research on trauma and recovery, and we will discuss ways that these findings are applied to every day psychotherapy with survivors of abuse. In addition, we will discuss first-hand accounts of recovery from child abuse, drug abuse and despair, and we will identify key factors that lead to adult sobriety and optimal mental health functioning. Time will be set aside for questions, comments and debriefing before the end of the talk.

In the end, participants will:

1. Be more equipped to identify the signs and symptoms of trauma, and how these symptoms manifest in the physical body, as well as in the psyche, of the victim.
2. Gain greater insight into how trauma and abuse in childhood are significantly correlated with addiction in adolescence and adult life.
3. Develop an appreciation for the latest clinical and empirical findings and strategies for healing addiction behaviors as they are related to Post Traumatic Stress symptomatology and childhood abuse.
4. Discover the overlap between psychiatry and addiction, and learn how to apply psychological and existential (as well as spiritual) concepts in their work with patients who are in recovery.

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Biography

Dr. Norman Fried is a Clinical Psychologist specializing in Trauma and addiction. After receiving his PhD in Clinical and Pediatric Psychology from Emory University, Dr. Fried served as the Chief Psychologist for the Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at Northwell Health and Winthrop University Hospitals for 30 years. His academic appointments include Assistant Professor in Pediatrics and Psychiatry at New York University Medical School, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Pastoral Counseling at the Jewish Theological Seminary/Columbia University; and were a Fellow in Clinical and Pediatric Psychology at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Fried lectures on the Practice of Psychotherapy with Addiction and Trauma at conferences across the U.S. and Europe. Additionally, he is a Disaster Mental Health Specialist for The American Red Cross of Greater New York. He is the author of five books; including the made-for-television series .

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