

Brief overview of Acute Stress Disorder

- A) Requires **BOTH** of the following
- 1) Person experienced or witnessed an event(s) that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury to themselves or another person.
 - 2) Person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.
- B) Either during the experience or after they have **3 or more** of the following symptoms:
- 1) Subjective sense of numbing, detachment, or absence of emotional responsiveness
 - 2) Reduction in awareness of his or her surroundings (e.g., "being in a daze")
 - 3) Derealization
 - 4) Depersonalization
 - 5) Dissociative amnesia (i.e., inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma)
- C) The person persistently re-experiences the traumatic event in **at least one** of these ways:
- 1) Recurrent images
 - 2) Thoughts
 - 3) Dreams
 - 4) Illusions
 - 5) Flashback episodes
 - 6) Sense of reliving the experience
 - 7) Distress on exposure to reminders of the traumatic event
- D) Person has marked avoidance of stimuli that arouse recollections of the event (e.g., thoughts, feelings, conversations, activities, places, people)
- E) Marked symptoms of anxiety or increased arousal such as:
- Difficulty sleeping
 - Irritability
 - Poor concentration
 - Hypervigilance
 - Exaggerated startle response
 - Motor restlessness
- F) Symptoms last at least 2 days but not longer than 4 weeks. If symptoms last longer than 4 weeks, then we're probably looking at PTSD.

***Please remember although this is the criteria for a DSM-IV diagnosis of Acute Stress Disorder, we actually expect and want to normalize some of these symptoms as a part of the reintegration process. However, if the symptoms last beyond 4 weeks or are intrusive, then this may signify an abnormal reaction to the stress/trauma.

Brief overview of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- A) Requires **BOTH** of the following
- 1) Person experienced or witnessed an event(s) that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury to themselves or another person.
 - 2) Person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.
- B) The person persistently re-experiences the traumatic event in **at least one** of these ways:
- 1) Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event (images, thoughts, or perceptions)
 - 2) Recurring distressing dreams of the event
 - 3) Acting or feeling as if the event were recurring (sense of reliving event, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashbacks)
 - 4) Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues symbolizing or resembling an aspect of the event
 - 5) Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the event
- C) Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness that was not present before the trauma as indicated by **three or more** of the following:
- 1) Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma
 - 2) Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma
 - 3) Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma
 - 4) Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities
 - 5) Feelings of detachment or estrangement from others
 - 6) Restricted range of affect (e.g., unable to have loving feelings)
 - 7) Sense of foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have career, marriage, children, or a normal life span)
- D) Persistent symptoms of increased arousal not present before event as indicated by **two or more** of the following:
- 1) Difficulty falling or staying asleep
 - 2) Irritability or outbursts of anger
 - 3) Difficulty concentrating
 - 4) Hypervigilance
 - 5) Exaggerated startle response
- E) Duration of disturbance is more than 1 month