Community Recovery
How we get here?
What does it mean?
Who is responsible?

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Presentation Outline

Recipe for Community Violence:
1. Historical & Environmental Factors
2. Dehumanization
3. Biological Basis & Consequences
4. Impact on Mental Health

Deterioration of Conflict Resolution & Problem Solving:
1. Moral Disengagement
2. Allostatic Load
3. Community Apathy

Who Can Help Turn the Tide
1. Provider’s Role
2. Government Responsibility
3. Community Response

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over
--like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sag
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

RECIPE FOR COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Langston Hughes
Historical Context

Slavery; Enslaved; Building

A legacy of Trauma

'Those who have experienced or witnessed an event involving actual or threatened death or serious injury and have respondsed with feelings of fear, helplessness, or horror may develop PTSD symptoms. This is the unfortunate, but intentional, legacy of trauma within the historical memories of persons of African Ancestry...'

Typical Environmental Factors

- Imbalance of power in black communities
- Poor or failing schools
- Heavily segregated communities
Breaking Down Ferguson: A Legacy of Dehumanization

Dehumanization Cont.

- African American boys are seen as older and less innocent.
- African American boys are robbed of the innocence of childhood in comparison to their Caucasian same-aged peers.
- The dehumanizing African American/ape association predicted racial disparities in police violence toward African American children.

(2014 study by Goff et al)

Biological Consequences

- Hormones
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
The psychological impact of police use of force on black communities.

- Violations (police brutality) to well-being communities threaten their psychological integrity (ACLU, 2014; WHO, 2002; Brewin et al., 1999; October 22 movement, 1999):
  - Brutal public killings (e.g., Eric Garner)
  - Modern Day Lynching's (i.e., Michael Brown)
  - Militarized police (Ferguson, MO)
  - Excessive Hot-Spot policing
  - Racial Profiling

Psychological Stressor-Trauma

- Trauma
  - Threat to life which results in flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilance, feeling numb, heightened sense of fear.
  - Maladaptive Coping Skills (Coker et al., 2014)
    - Substance Use Lead in to other psychological disorders

Impact of Psychological Stressors on Children-Trauma

- Decreased Concentration
- Difficulty with cognition
- Difficulty with memory
- Poorer school performance
- Difficulty with learning
- Decreased problem-solving skills
- Violence & Aggression
- Moral Disengagement
- Substance use
- Juvenile delinquency
Psychological Stressors: Depression

- Depression
  - Feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, guilt and sadness. May include suicidal ideations, anhedonia and physical pain.
  - Eating and Sleep disturbances
  - Depression further compounded by visual cues and reminders of community turmoil

Psychological Stress: Anxiety

- Anxiety (acute and chronic)
  - Restlessness, irritability, sleep disturbances, inability to control the worry.
- Children
  - Exposure to a disaster makes them twice as likely to have persistent fear, lack of trust and personality changes (Krack, 1982)

The Aftermath....

PTSD
- 7.8 % national prevalence --- Police: 14% Community: 34%

Depression
- 6.7 % national prevalence --- Police: 33% Community: 43%

Anger
- 7.3 % national prevalence --- Police: 23% Community: 32%

*Credit: University of Mo-St. Louis research study, lead by Dr. Tara Galovski, Center for Trauma Recovery
“This is not your grandmother's revolution!”

DETERIORATION OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION & PROBLEM SOLVING

Breakdown of Conflict resolution & Problem Solving: The Brain/Body Connection

- Bidirectional Communication
- Allostasis
- Allostatic Load

Breakdown of Conflict resolution & Problem Solving:

- Problem Solving
- Moral Disengagement
Community apathy turned vengeful.

A community in turmoil

“The time for justice is always right now.”

Who Can Help Turn the Tide?

The time for justice is always right now.

Who Can Help Turn the Tide?
Provider’s Role: Clinical
suggestions for clinicians

Treatment must be culturally competent in order to appropriately diagnose, treat, and build a therapeutic alliance:
- must know what symptoms look like in their cultural context
- refrain from pathologizing community trauma
- consultation is critical

Providers Role

- Build credibility
- Introduced by community invitation
- Not something to be asserted
- Flexibility is a must
- Clinician vs Activist - different or same?
- Don’t take things personally

Clinical application of Black Psychology

- Immediate Community canvassing
- Grassroots treatment
- Protest De-escalation
Community Outreach and Workshops incorporating African Principles (i.e. the importance of breathing in yoga, incorporating rap with journaling)

Impacting change at the state level - through school prevention & intervention

Impact at the state and federal level

- Adjusting the Culture of Law Enforcement
  - Required sensitivity training to address
  - Link promotions and raises to community engagement measures such as complaints, positive feedback from community members, and physical contact with communities.
  - Support the implementation of a citizens review board.
  - Mandatory staff training - targeting those who work with the juvenile population.
Community responsibility in minimizing community violence.

- The Role of the Elder
- Faith-Based Institutional Involvement
- Grassroots Healing - Emotional Emancipation Circles
- Youth Power Movement
  - @YouthPowerMovem
  - Pull your Pants Up Campaign
- Volunteer - Tutor, Mentor, Afterschool club

THANK YOU

References

- Emotional Emancipation Circles (Retrieved online 07/23/2015)
  http://communityhealingnet.com/emotional-emancipation-circles/


