

# Substance Use Disorders and Trauma

## Seeking relief through drugs

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**GVHealth**

When I grow  
up I want  
to be...



- Stigma
- Prejudice
- Anger
- Misunderstanding



# People use drugs to...

## To feel good

To have novel:  
feelings  
sensations  
experiences  
AND  
to share them

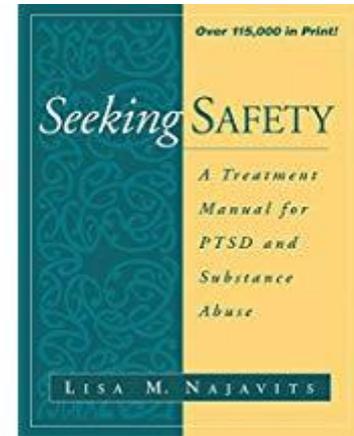


## To feel better

To lessen:  
anxiety  
worries  
fears  
depression  
hopelessness

# Seeking safety

- Complex trauma, posttraumatic stress disorder and substance use disorder are like parts of a prism—different lenses from which to see into clients' often-tragic past ...





## Child Abuse & Neglect

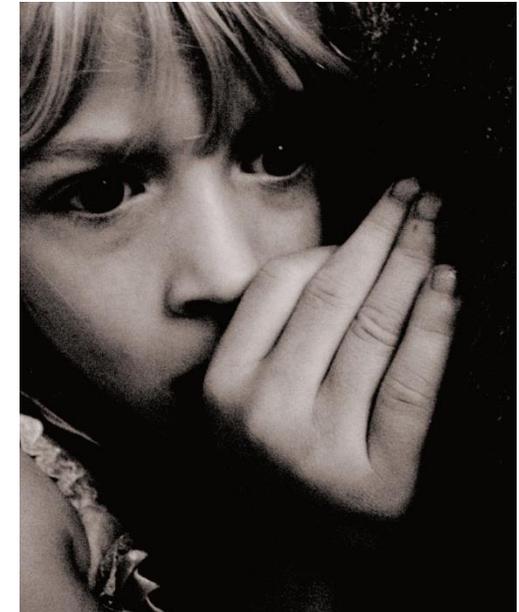
Volume 22, Issue 3, March 1998, Pages 223-234



### PTSD as a mediator between childhood rape and alcohol use in adult women ☆

Jeffery N Epstein , Benjamin E Saunders, Dean G Kilpatrick, Heidi S Resnick

PTSD symptomatology which develops after childhood rape may be one of many variables that affect alcohol abuse patterns in women ...



(interviewed 4,009 women)



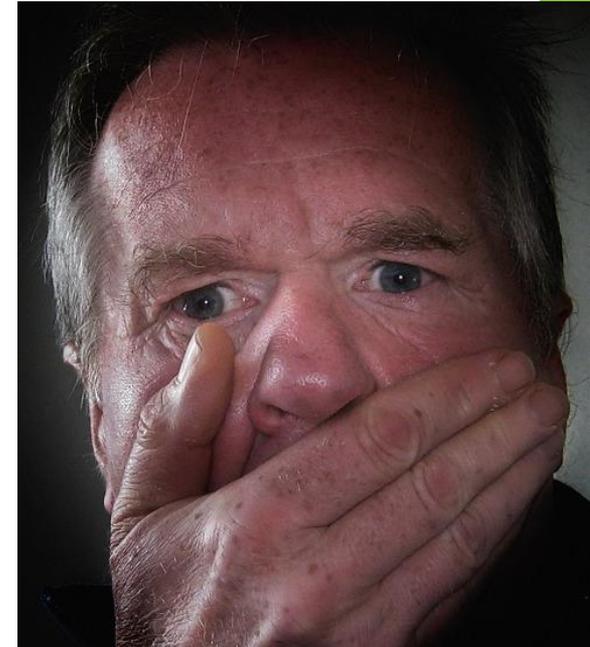
# Significant changes to DSM-V:

- Adjustment disorders are re-conceptualized as stress-response syndromes that occur after exposure to a distressing (traumatic or non-traumatic) event
- DSM V criteria for PTSD are more explicit:
  - **directly experiencing**
  - **witnessing in person** the events as it occurred to others
  - learning that the event occurred to a **close family member**/friend and in cases of actual or threatened death the events must have been violent or accidental
  - experiencing **repeated or extreme exposure** (first responders, child welfare, firefighters)
- Does **not** apply to exposure through electronic media, TV, movies or pictures unless the exposure is work related

# Trauma and PTSD

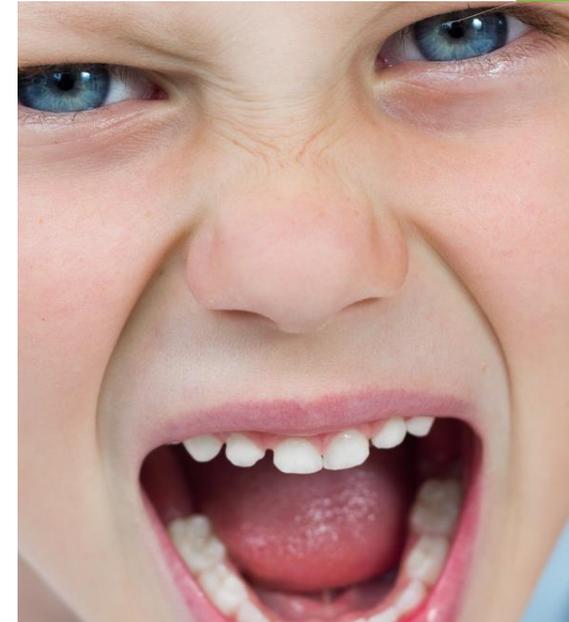
Are now 4 symptom clusters instead of 3:

1. Presence of intrusive symptoms
2. Avoidance symptoms
3. Negative alterations in cognitions or mood
  - amnesia, distorted cognitions, persistent negative emotional state
4. Marked alterations in arousal and reactivity
  - includes irritable behavior and angry outbursts



# Trauma and PTSD

- PTSD can be reliably diagnosed in children 6 years and younger:
  - Intrusive memories may not appear distressing and may be expressed as play reenactment
  - Social withdrawal
  - Extreme temper outbursts



# Trauma informed care



- Practice
  - Realises the impact of trauma &
  - Understands the paths to recovery
  - Recognises the signs of trauma in clients, families, staff and others
  - Responds by integrating knowledge into practice and policy
  - Resists re-traumatisation

Previous Article

Volume 137, Issue 8, August 1980, pp. 966-968

Next Article

## Traumatic neurosis in the etiology of alcoholism: Viet Nam combat and other trauma

Published online: April 01, 2006 | <https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.137.8.966>

**Abstract** Cited by PDF PDF Plus

### Abstract

Traumatic neurosis from Viet Nam combat or other sources includes many symptoms that can be effectively self-medicated with alcohol, at least initially. These symptoms include chronic anxiety and restlessness, insomnia, and recurrent frightening dreams. Repeated self-medication with alcohol results in tolerance and a need to increase the amount consumed. Attempts to decrease consumption or to abstain can lead to alcohol withdrawal symptoms similar to and exacerbating the initial symptoms of traumatic neurosis. Continuing alcohol use, with the establishment of a vicious circle, can follow. The authors present three case examples. They note that treatment of alcoholism under the conditions described requires specific attention to the underlying traumatic neurosis.

LaCoursiere, R. B., Godfrey, K. E., & Ruby, L. M. (1980). Traumatic neurosis in the etiology of alcoholism: Viet Nam combat and other trauma. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 137, 966–968.





Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

## Drug and Alcohol Dependence

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/drugalcddep](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/drugalcddep)

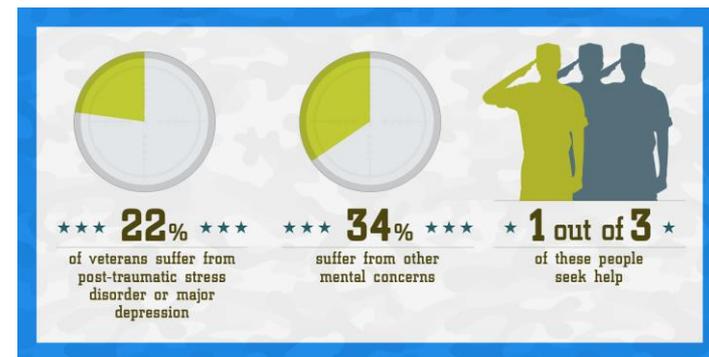
### Substance use disorders in Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in VA healthcare, 2001–2010: Implications for screening, diagnosis and treatment

Karen H. Seal<sup>a,\*</sup>, Greg Cohen<sup>b</sup>, Angela Waldrop<sup>a</sup>, Beth E. Cohen<sup>a</sup>, Shira Maguen<sup>a</sup>, Li Ren<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of California, San Francisco and San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, 4150 Clement St., San Francisco, CA 94121, United States

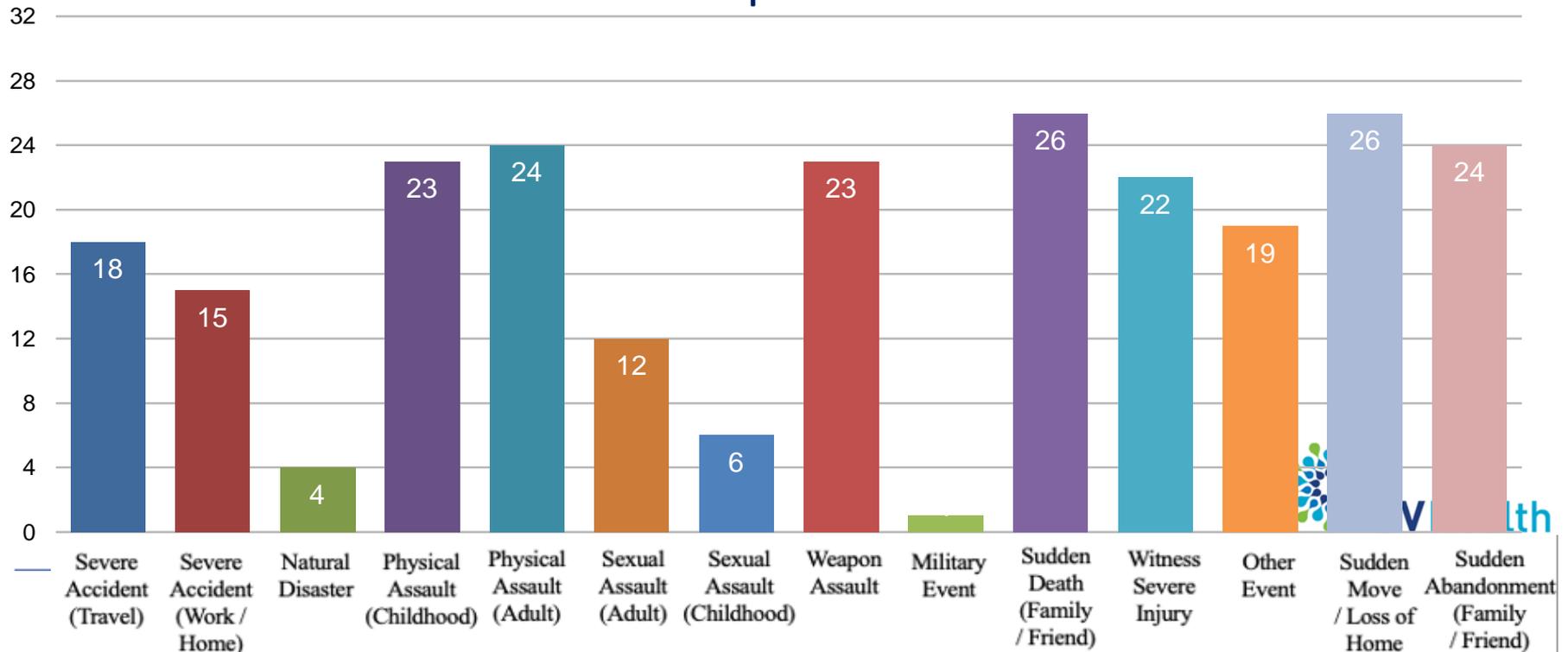
<sup>b</sup> San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, 4150 Clement St., San Francisco, CA 94121, United States

- Examined the health records of 565,024 veterans
  - 48% of returned service personnel 2001 – 2009
- 11% substance use disorder
  - 10% alcohol
  - 5% drugs
  - 3% both
  - 90% had PTSD / anxiety / depression



# Some local (unpublished) data

- Medical student interviewed 32 patients
  - 31 had a trauma history
    - 8 separate types of trauma
    - All the women had experienced sexual assault



Short communication

## Substance use and posttraumatic stress disorders: Symptom interplay and effects on outcome

Jennifer P. Read <sup>a</sup> , Pamela J. Brown <sup>b, 1</sup>, Christopher W. Kahler <sup>a</sup>

- 95% of the sample reported a trauma history
- 41% met criteria for current PTSD.
  - 50 % women
  - 32% men

Untreated PTSD is a prognostic indicator for poor outcome

( $n=126$ )

# How patients perceive the relationship between trauma, substance abuse, craving, and relapse: A qualitative study

Nele Gielen ✉, Anja Krumeich, Mignon Tekelenburg, Chantal Nederkoorn & Remco C. Havermans

Pages 466-470 | Received 06 Feb 2015, Accepted 11 Jun 2015, Published online: 20 Jan 2016

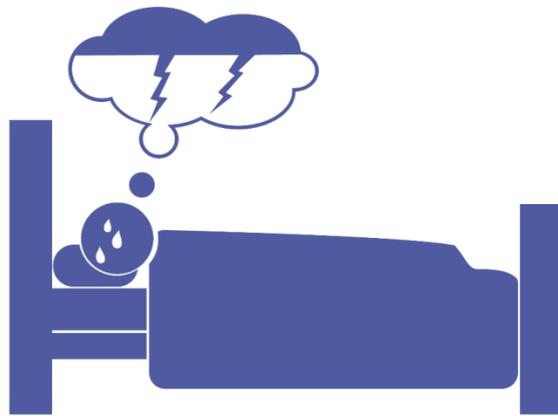


432 patients with SUD – 36.6% had PTSD

- *I drank to stop my negative feelings and to not be burdened by them. I don't allow myself to feel anything and I use alcohol to get rid of my feelings.*
- *When I use, I think about nothing, not about the negative things, the things that happened, the memories... At that moment, I feel great! But it only lasts for a short time and I feel depressed when it's over.*

- ... all the patients reported self-medicating behavior and craving after trauma intrusions
- ... they perceived no other means of coping with a difficult situation.





✓  
Hypervigilance

✓  
Sleep  
Impairment

Avoidance  
✓

Re-  
experiencing  
✓



# 'Psychedelics renaissance': new wave of research puts hallucinogenics forward to treat mental health



## Psychedelic medicines for mood disorders: current evidence and clinical considerations

Sarris, Jerome<sup>a,b,c,d</sup>; Pinzon Rubiano, Diego<sup>a</sup>; Day, Kimberley<sup>a</sup>; Galvão-Coelho, Nicole L.<sup>b,e,f</sup>; Perkins, Daniel<sup>a,g,h</sup>

[Author Information](#) 

Current Opinion in Psychiatry: January 2022 - Volume 35 - Issue 1 - p 22-29

Launched in 2021, Psychae is a not-for-profit medicinal psychedelics research institute, that has been established in Melbourne, Australia



*'Psychae' means 'souls' in Latinised Greek, and is represented in our logo by the symbolism of mirrored butterfly wings. This reflects the therapeutic journey via psychedelic medicines into one's deeper neuropsychological framework to elicit profound healing*

**3VHealth**

Healthy Communities

# Interest in novel therapies



MENU 

*The biggest and most important Psychedelic Medicine  
Conference in the Southern Hemisphere*

## International Summit on Psychedelic Therapies for Mental Illness

**2 Day Introductory Workshop program  
in Psychedelic Therapies  
+ 2 Day Public Summit**

17-20 November 2021, Online event



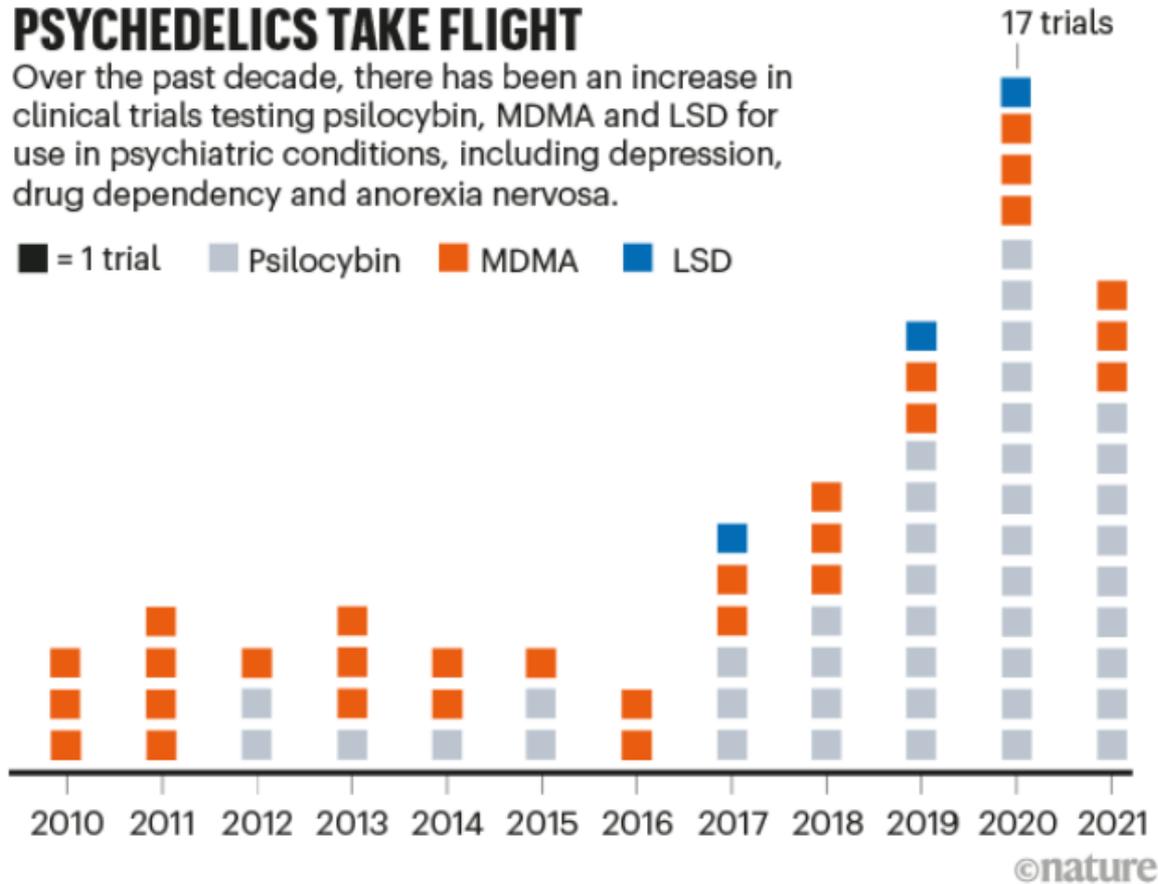
Healthy Communities

# Psychedelic research

## PSYCHEDELICS TAKE FLIGHT

Over the past decade, there has been an increase in clinical trials testing psilocybin, MDMA and LSD for use in psychiatric conditions, including depression, drug dependency and anorexia nervosa.

■ = 1 trial   ■ Psilocybin   ■ MDMA   ■ LSD



# MDMA

- Developed by Merck in 1912
- Some toxicological studies in 1927
- In 1952 Dr Albert van Schoor tried it on flies
- ‘flies lie in the supine position and then death’
- Resynthesised at Merck in 1959
- First illicit seizures 1970 (Chicago)
- First psychotherapy 1978
- Banned 1985



# TGA Expert Panel - MDMA

- PTSD
- may affect 1-2% of Australians at any one time
- up to 12 % over their lifetime
- Significant benefit with MDMA assisted psychotherapy at doses of greater than 100 mg
- MDMA was well tolerated in all the studies
- Serious events were rare and occurred almost entirely in the placebo arm or were unrelated to the therapy.



Psychedelic drugs could soon help people, including soldiers, who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder with the pain of recalling traumatic memories. Credit: Chris Hondros/Getty



# QUESTIONS

