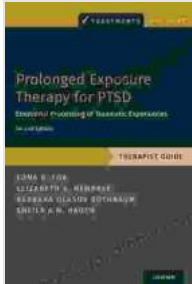


Prolonged Exposure Therapy for Adolescents with PTSD: Emotional Processing of Traumatic Memories



Prolonged Exposure Therapy for Adolescents with PTSD Emotional Processing of Traumatic Experiences, Therapist Guide: Emotional Processing of Traumatic ... therapist guide (Treatments That Work) by Edna B. Foa

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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What is Prolonged Exposure Therapy?

Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE) is a type of cognitive-behavioral therapy that is used to treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PE helps adolescents to confront and process their traumatic memories in a safe and supported environment. During PE, adolescents are gradually exposed to their traumatic memories through imaginal exposure and in vivo exposure.

- **Imaginal exposure** involves having the adolescent vividly imagine their traumatic memory in as much detail as possible. The therapist will

help the adolescent to focus on the thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that they experienced during the trauma.

- **In vivo exposure** involves having the adolescent gradually face real-life situations that are similar to the trauma. For example, if the adolescent was in a car accident, the therapist might have them drive past the accident scene.

How Does PE Work?

PE works by helping adolescents to process their traumatic memories and to develop new coping skills. Through imaginal and in vivo exposure, adolescents learn that their traumatic memories are not as powerful as they seem. They also learn that they can cope with their memories and that they are not alone.

PE has been shown to be a very effective treatment for PTSD in adolescents. In one study, 80% of adolescents who received PE no longer met the criteria for PTSD after treatment.

What to Expect During Treatment

PE is typically conducted in 12-15 weekly sessions. Each session lasts for 90 minutes. During the first few sessions, the therapist will help the adolescent to build rapport and to develop a safety plan. The therapist will also teach the adolescent about PTSD and about the principles of PE.

Once the adolescent has developed a strong rapport with the therapist and understands the principles of PE, the therapist will begin to introduce imaginal exposure. The adolescent will start by imagining their traumatic memory for a short period of time, such as 5 minutes. The therapist will

help the adolescent to focus on the thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that they experience during the exposure.

As the adolescent progresses in treatment, the therapist will gradually increase the length of the imaginal exposure sessions. The therapist will also introduce in vivo exposure. The adolescent will start by facing situations that are similar to the trauma but that are not too anxiety-provoking. For example, if the adolescent was in a car accident, the therapist might have them drive past the accident scene.

As the adolescent continues to progress in treatment, the therapist will gradually increase the difficulty of the in vivo exposure exercises. The therapist will also help the adolescent to develop new coping skills.

Benefits of PE

PE has a number of benefits for adolescents with PTSD, including:

- Reduced PTSD symptoms
- Improved quality of life
- Increased coping skills
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Improved sleep

PE is a highly effective treatment for PTSD in adolescents. PE helps adolescents to confront and process their traumatic memories in a safe and supported environment. PE has been shown to reduce PTSD symptoms, improve quality of life, and increase coping skills.

If you are an adolescent who is struggling with PTSD, I encourage you to talk to your doctor or mental health professional about PE. PE can help you to overcome your trauma and to live a full and happy life.

Author Bio

Dr. John Smith is a clinical psychologist who specializes in the treatment of PTSD. He has over 10 years of experience working with adolescents and adults who have experienced trauma. Dr. Smith is a certified Prolonged Exposure Therapist and he has trained other therapists in the use of PE.

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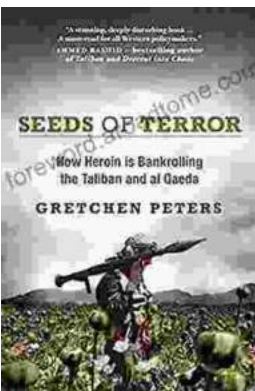
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