CO-EXISTING WITH PERSISTENT PAIN

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BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL EXPLANATION OF PERSISTENT PAIN
MANAGING PERSISTENT PAIN IS HARD

- HIGHLY PREVALENT
- PATIENT EXPERIENCE OF PAIN IS REAL
- PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS ARE FRONT LINE AND UNDER TRAINED & RESOURCED
- COMPLEX REGULATORY AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS
WHAT IN THE WORLD CAN A PSYCHOLOGIST DO TO HELP?

• TWO BUCKETS OF TOOLS
  • CONTROL BASED STRATEGIES
  • CO-EXISTENCE STRATEGIES
“CO-EXISTENCE STRATEGIES”
HELPING PEOPLE COPE WITH PERSISTENT PAIN
“Good news. The test results show it’s a metaphor.”
METAPHOR AND PAIN

• A METAPHOR IS A FIGURE OF SPEECH THAT DESCRIBES AN OBJECT OR ACTION IN A WAY THAT ISN’T LITERALLY TRUE, BUT HELPS EXPLAIN AN IDEA OR MAKE A COMPARISON.

• A METAPHOR STATES THAT ONE THING IS ANOTHER THING

• IT EQUATES THOSE TWO THINGS NOT BECAUSE THEY ACTUALLY ARE THE SAME, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF COMPARISON OR SYMBOLISM
PING PONG BALL
SHOT GLASS
GALLON JAR
FOURTH GRADE
MRS. HILDEBRANDT

“MICHAEL . . WHAT ARE THE FOUR BASIC OPERATIONS OF MATH?”
THE MATHEMATICS OF PERSISTENT PAIN

• “SUCCESSFUL” PAIN MANAGEMENT USES TWO OF THESE FOUR OPERATIONS - EXCLUSIVELY

• “UNSUCCESSFUL” PAIN MANAGEMENT USES THE “OTHER” TWO OPERATIONS - EXCLUSIVELY

• THIS LEADS US TO - “BUTS” & “ANDS”
BEACH BALL
CONTEXT HELPS DEFINE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF PAIN
WHICH ONE IS EXPERIENCED AS BIGGER?
ENVIRONMENT
Restoring Function

Developing A “New” Flight Plan:

- Depart only when it’s safe
- Depart with enough fuel
- Around storms, not through them
- Sit down when it gets rough
- May arrive late, but everyone’s safe
Restoring Function

- Become Your Own Pain Coach

“What did I do wrong?”

“What do I do now?”

“I don’t want to make the same mistake twice.”

“What do I do differently next time?”
Restoring Function

The Tortoise and the Hare:

• Can’t improve by sitting
• Can’t do it all in one day
• Finding a balance between moving and recovery is the key
• Always a price to pushing too hard.
• Slow and steady strategy wins the CP race.
Goal setting and progress-monitoring

The investor:
day trader vs. value investor
Medication use

The washing machine:

The addition of more soap
Makes the clothes no cleaner
...and get some unwanted effects
Self-monitoring

The signal light:

Green light, yellow light, or red light
Activity pacing

The bank machine:

Cannot continue to make withdrawals
SUGGESTION
PERSISTENT PAIN =
CENTRALLY MEDIATED SENSORY EXPERIENCE

• BE CAREFUL - DON’T JUDGE
• “YOUR PAIN VISION IS ALL IN YOUR HEAD!”
• YOUR PERSPECTIVE IS EVERYTHING

https://serendip.brynmawr.edu/bb/contrastcolor/
"CENTRALLY MEDIATED SENSORY EXPERIENCE"

• ALL PAIN IS A SENSORY EXPERIENCE
  • PAIN IS THE EXPERIENCE OF SENSORY STIMULI…
    • …INTERPRETED BY THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM…
    • …IN THE CONTEXT OF…
      • OTHER SENSORY INPUT AND
      • PSYCHOSOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS
      • THE NEURO-CHEMICAL CONSEQUENCES OF PAST EXPERIENCE.
  • YOUR CNS CREATES “BEST GUESS” BASED ON COMPLEX INPUT
  • IF THIS EXPERIENTIAL SYSTEM IS FOOLED IMPRECISE AUGMENTED DAMAGED MALFUNCTIONING:
    • → CHRONICALLY MALADAPTIVE, UNCOUPLED FROM PROTECTIVE PURPOSE
CENTRALLY MEDIATED SENSORY EXPERIENCE

• MULTIPLE HYPOTHESES OF MECHANISMS
  • GATE CONTROL THEORY
  • NEURO-BEHAVIORAL FEEDBACK LOOPS
  • EVOLUTIONARY STRESS/AVOIDANCE
  • IMPRECISE ENCODING/CONDITIONED RESPONSE
• NEURO-IMMUNOLOGICAL
  • ROLE OF GLIAL CELLS
IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY & THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS

• EXAMINE
  • GENDER, SOCIAL GRADIENT, OTHER SES & SDH
  • TRAUMA: PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, NEGLECT, ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EVENTS (A.C.E.)

• ALL OF THESE APPEAR TO PREDISPOSE TO THE CENTRAL SENSITIZATION PHENOMENON

• THE PAIN EXPERIENCED FROM CENTRAL SENSITIZATION IS REAL
CULTIVATE EMPATHY & THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS

• THERAPY:
  • COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL, DIALECTICAL BEHAVIORAL, ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT (CBT, DBT, ACT)
  • WEB, APPS, GROUPS

• SELF MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
  • SMS EDUCATION/ GROUPS

• TRAUMA INFORMED CARE:
  • RESPECT, PERMISSION, TRANSPARENCY, CONTROL, BOUNDARIES

• POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES
  • REINFORCEMENT
  • POSITIVE B.A.T.H.E. TECHNIQUE
CULTIVATE EMPATHY & THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS

• “B.A.T.H.E.”
  • **BACKGROUND:** WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR LIFE?
  • **AFFECT:** HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?
  • **TROUBLE:** WHAT ABOUT IT TROUBLES YOU MOST?
  • **HANDLING:** HOW ARE YOU HANDLING THAT?
  • **EMPATHY:** THAT MUST BE VERY DIFFICULT.
CULTIVATE EMPATHY & THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS

• THE POSITIVE BATHE

  • BEST - WHAT’S THE BEST THING THAT’S HAPPENED TO YOU THIS WEEK/SINCE I SAW YOU?
  • AFFECT OR ACCOUNT - HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL/HOW TO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THAT?
  • THANKFULNESS - FOR WHAT ARE YOU MOST GRATEFUL?
  • HAPPEN - HOW CAN YOU MAKE THINGS LIKE THAT HAPPEN MORE FREQUENTLY?
  • EMPATHY OR EMPOWERMENT - THAT SOUNDS FANTASTIC. I BELIEVE YOU CAN DO THAT.
SUCCESSFUL PAIN MANAGEMENT