

Lisa M. Najavits, PhD

Possible titles (choose one):

- The Link Between PTSD and Substance Abuse
- Seeking Safety* therapy for PTSD and Substance Abuse
- Numbing the Pain: PTSD and Substance Abuse

The goal of this presentation is to describe current state-of-the art knowledge about the treatment of patients with the dual diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder and substance abuse, a population that is typically considered “difficult to treat”. We will cover background on PTSD and substance abuse (including rates, the “typical case”, models and stages of treatment, clinical dilemmas, and gender issues) and clinical Interventions for PTSD and substance abuse (including demonstration of specific treatment strategies, assessment tools, and community resources).

Objectives:

- 1) To review scientific literature on rates and presentation of PTSD/substance abuse;
- 2) To increase empathy and understanding of PTSD/substance abuse;
- 3) To describe specific therapeutic strategies for this dual diagnosis;
- 4) To provide assessment and treatment resources.

References:

Herman JL. Trauma and Recovery. New York, Basic Books, 1992.

Fletcher, A. Sober for Good. New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 2001.

Foa, E., Rothbaum, B.O. Treating the Trauma of Rape: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for PTSD. Guilford: New York.

Kessler RC, Sonnega A, Bromet E, et al: Posttraumatic stress disorder in the national comorbidity survey. Archives of General Psychiatry 1995; 52: 1048-1060.

Najavits LM, Weiss RD, Shaw SR. The link between substance abuse and posttraumatic stress disorder in women: A research review. American Journal on the Addictions, 1997; 6: 273-283.

Najavits, LM. Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse. New York: Guilford, 2002.

Triffleman, E. An overview of trauma exposure, posttraumatic stress disorder, and addictions. In H. R. Kranzler & B. J. Rounsaville (Eds.), Dual Diagnosis and Treatment: Substance Abuse and Comorbid Medical and Psychiatric Disorders (pp. 263-316). New York: Marcel Dekker, 1998.

Najavits LM, Abueg F, Brown PJ, Dansky B, Keane T, Lovern J. Videotapes by

Cavalcade Productions. Nevada City, CA, 1998 [800-345-5530]:

Trauma and substance abuse I: Therapeutic approaches [*For professionals*]

Trauma and substance abuse II: Special treatment issues [*For professionals*]

Numbing the Pain: Substance abuse and psychological trauma [*For patients*]

Audiovisual:

LCD projector

VCR and monitor (to show video segments)

Microphone (handheld preferred, but any type is fine)

Typical training day: Please feel free to suggest any schedule you would like (e.g., longer, shorter, different breaks). A typical format is 9-4, with a one-hour lunch break and two fifteen-minute breaks (one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon). The schedule below assumes this typical format, but you can change it based on your scheduling.

Agenda (Day 1) – Background on PTSD and Substance Abuse  
and Overview of *Seeking Safety*

I. **Background** (9am to 11am, with a 15-minute morning break)

1. Rates of PTSD and substance abuse
2. Clinical dilemmas
3. Gender differences

II. **Treatment** (11am to noon, and 1pm to 2pm)

1. Models of treatment for PTSD and substance abuse
2. Stages of treatment
3. Specific interventions
4. Outcome studies
5. Community and national resources

III. **Video on PTSD and substance abuse** (2pm to 2:45 pm)

IV. **Clinical role-play** (3pm to 4pm)

1. “Tough cases”: discussion of difficult clinical scenarios that may arise

2. Role play, with a participant playing a client and trainer playing the clinician, to demonstrate treatment strategies.

Agenda (Day 2) – Implementation of *Seeking Safety*

**I. Implementation (9am-10am)**

1. How to make *Seeking Safety* most effective
2. In-depth description of typical session

**II. Experiential role-play of *Seeking Safety* session (10:15 am to noon)**

1. Break into small groups and practice session check-in
2. Break into small groups and practice use of handouts and check-out
3. Discussion and questions

**III. Video on trauma-related symptoms, and discussion (1pm-2:45pm)**

**IV. Special implementation topics (3pm-4pm)**

1. Guidelines for the use of exposure-based treatments for PTSD
1. Assessment
3. Clinician processes and training
4. Frequently-asked questions

**Note: Methods of instruction for days 1 and 2 include:**

1. Lecture
2. Video segments related to treatment issues
3. Experiential exercises (e.g., role-play)
4. Question/answer discussion with participants