

BRAIN 2021

SESSION 9: COMPLEX TRAUMA AND BORDERLINE PD

Trauma, attachment styles, stress response, resilience, and psychiatric disorders... how are these all connected?

The concept of stress is more nuanced than generally thought. Early trauma can lead to dysregulation of the HPA-axis and the development of long-lasting and potentially debilitating psychiatric symptoms (including what we might call "complex trauma" and "borderline personality"). But not all stress is bad. In fact, successfully overcoming challenges (stress inoculation) can facilitate resilience – an increased capacity to tolerate future adversity. And, of course, all of this depends on a range of other crucial factors, including attachment style, psychosocial supports, social determinants of health, and genetic vulnerabilities.

Through the pod activity and self-study resources we take you on a journey that we hope will help you better understand – and connect with – your patients.

On Your Own

Watch or Read:

Epigenetics and Trauma
or
The Nature of Nurture: How Developmental Experiences Program Adult Stress Circuitry

Watch:

Talking Pathways to Patients: Borderline Personality Disorder

Read:

From Generation to Generation (if you didn't already read in Session 3)

Poverty, Parenting, and Psychiatry

Beyond Bootstraps: Pulling Children up with Evidence-Based Interventions

With Your Pod (Or on Your Own)

**What to Say When Patients Ask:
To Bend and Not Break: The Neurobiology of Stress, Resilience, and Recovery**

**Bonus:
Translational Neuroscience: Borderline Personality Disorder**** (See footnote.)

Assessment

At the end of Session 9, you should be able to answer the following:

1. **Describe a mechanism for how early adverse experiences can lead to long term changes in adult stress response.**
2. **Define epigenetics.**
3. **Define resilience. What would you say to a patient who asks, "Why me?"**



When you're ready, click here to submit your responses.

Fun Extras!

Do:

Neuroscience Lab: Human social interactions and adult attachment style

Watch:

"Trauma and Resiliency"

**The session starts with a case vignette, followed by a review of the current standard of care. You then split up to read three different papers that each highlight how cutting-edge research could lead to next-generation treatment. (Don't get too bogged down in the science. It's not about the details – just read for the big picture ideas.) If nothing else, it's worth looking at this for Dr. Fineberg's review of Standard of Care treatment.