

Review of: "Viewing trauma as a developmental process emerging from chronic repeated experience and reiterated meaning-making mental processes"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The authors propose a reading of trauma at the developmental level and in terms of meaning making of it, insisting on the distinction with the 'triggering' event often considered - wrongly - to be THE trauma. Their demonstration is applied and based on current knowledge. The reduction or confusion between the triggering event and the psychological trauma is still all too often the case, and certain reductions in diagnostic classifications (e.g. DSM) or inconsistencies in the assessment of psychological trauma as the reaction of the subject and not the event are indeed to be regretted. I fully agree with the authors on the importance of not misunderstanding the issue of psychological trauma, both at the phenomenological and aetiological levels, and in terms of intrapsychic and relational consequences. A better understanding will lead to better psychotherapeutic support.

While I can only agree with the authors on the importance of this distinction and clarification for as many people as possible, I am cautious about some of their assessments and their intentions.

In particular, they seem to start from the presupposition that this understanding of trauma is the most widely accepted, including, if I understand them correctly, in the professional field. And yet, in the field of psychotraumatology at least, the clarification of trauma as being the specific reaction of an individual to an event/series of events beyond his or her capacity to integrate has long been accepted (see Cloitre, e.g.).

Also, the article itself may put forward certain views or opinions that should be distinguished from theoretical and/or scientific facts or reflections. In this respect, the authors' intention is not clear to me as to the target audience (psychology and psychiatry professionals, healthcare professionals, general public) and the intended register (opinion column, literature review, scientific article).

The authors apply themselves to a lengthy demonstration using metaphors of varying degrees of success in the field of trauma, which nonetheless allow us to grasp some of the key concepts in the development of traumatic after-effects from the neurophysiological point of view and in terms of our vision of ourselves and the world. Here again, it seems to me that the length of the presentation, particularly on basic concepts in psychology and psychotraumatology, leads to confusion about the target audience and the category of publication.

Despite the authors' desire to provide a broad demonstration of the mechanisms involved at developmental and neurophysiological levels, I feel that their reflections lack aspects relating to the notion of peritraumatic dissociation and a

stronger link with Janétian concepts that would enable us to understand traumatic injury as the result of a lack of integration. Furthermore, it seems to me that additional references would be welcome to accompany certain assertions in the section « Uncertainly, prediction, fear conditioning and trauma as a « game » », for example, and for the entire demonstration relating to « being slapped » sections.

It also seems to me that there are a number of inaccuracies in the authors' presentation - or representation - of therapeutic approaches. Particularly with regard to EMDR or sensory-motor therapy, which integrates the different levels of meaning-making in the treatments they propose, much more so than the authors seem to imply. In this sense, the last section on the importance of an integrative approach - because this is what psychotraumatology is all about, and I can only agree with the authors that as a therapist you need the widest possible toolbox - is somewhat imprecise or more of an opinion or synthesis of opinions than a scientific article.

To sum up, I found the article too long and written in a style that is half opinion magazine and half scientific. The target audience is not sufficiently clear, with some of the comments seeming too basic to be addressed to the scientific community in the field of psychology and psychiatry, for example, even though there is still a lot of work to be done in this field to improve knowledge and recognition of psychology and psychiatry.

The intentions of the authors in terms of clarifications and a more up-to-date understanding of current knowledge on psychotrauma remain no less laudable and essential in the scientific, professional and public fields.