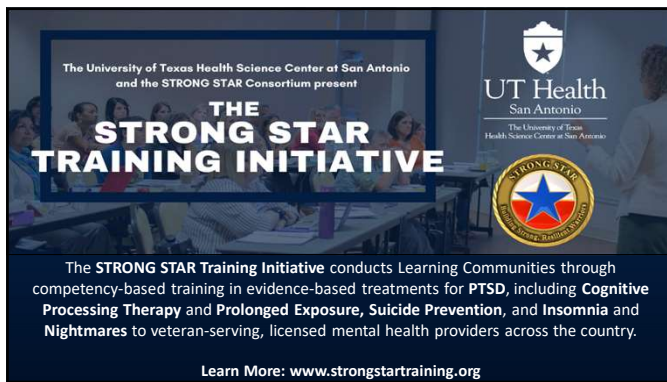




Addressing Racial Trauma Through Cognitive Processing Therapy and Prolonged Exposure Therapy

Brittany Hall-Clark, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas

1



The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and the STRONG STAR Consortium present

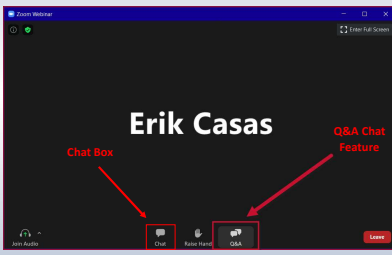
THE STRONG STAR TRAINING INITIATIVE

The STRONG STAR Training Initiative conducts Learning Communities through competency-based training in evidence-based treatments for PTSD, including **Cognitive Processing Therapy** and **Prolonged Exposure**, **Suicide Prevention**, and **Insomnia** and **Nightmares** to veteran-serving, licensed mental health providers across the country.

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Addressing Racial Trauma Through Cognitive Processing Therapy and Prolonged Exposure Therapy

Brittany Hall-Clark, Ph.D.
STRONG STAR Training Initiative Webinar Series
STRONG STAR Training Initiative, Consultant
National Center for PTSD, Consultant
University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Assistant Professor
February 10, 2022

5

Conflict of Interest Disclosure



The presenter(s) have no conflicts of interests to disclose.

6

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Identify relevant cultural factors related to PTSD and racial trauma in military personnel and veterans.
- ▶ Assess the presence of racial trauma and PTSD.
- ▶ Identify at least 3 specific strategies for integrating cultural sensitivity into the treatment of PTSD and racial trauma.

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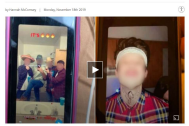
Overview

- ▶ Define racial trauma
 - ▶ Impact
 - ▶ Overlap with PTSD
- ▶ Historical context of racism in military populations
- ▶ Clinical applications
 - ▶ Assessment
 - ▶ Diagnosis
 - ▶ Treatment
 - ▶ General strategies
 - ▶ Integration with Trauma-focused EBP's
- ▶ Resources

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Recent examples of race-based incidents

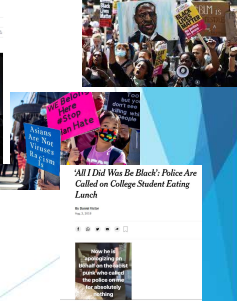
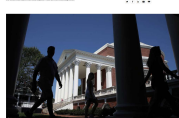
"It's really ignorant": University of Lynchburg students react to festa-themed party



Hate crimes against Asian and Black people rise sharply in the U.S., FBI says



Addressing Racial Trauma and Hate Crimes on College Campuses



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2020 FBI Report on Hate Crimes

- ▶ FBI report from October 2021
 - ▶ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/30/us/fbi-report-hate-crimes-rose-2020/index.html>
- ▶ Hate crimes due to race
 - ▶ 61.8% of victims were targeted because of race or ethnicity, up from 58% in 2019
 - ▶ 56% of attacks due to race were perpetrated against African Americans
 - ▶ African Americans: increased from 1,972 to 2,871
 - ▶ Asians jumped from 161 to 279
 - ▶ Anti-Jewish attacks dropped from 963 to 683 in 2020
- ▶ 20% were victimized because of sexual-orientation bias in 2020
- ▶ 13.3% because of religious bias

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What is racial trauma?

- ▶ Emotional impact of stress related to racism, racial discrimination, and race-related stressors
 - ▶ Stereotypes
 - ▶ Hurtful comments
 - ▶ Barriers to advancement
 - ▶ Mistreatment
- ▶ Can be specific incident or cumulative, ongoing, harmful emotional impact
- ▶ Direct or vicarious
- ▶ Media coverage of events caused by racial discrimination can also be upsetting
- ▶ Historical trauma
 - ▶ Slavery
 - ▶ Imperialism
 - ▶ Native Americans
 - ▶ Internment camps

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Microaggressions (Sue et al. 2019)

- ▶ POC experience at higher rates than White
- ▶ Micro refer to interpersonal vs systemic level (macro)
- ▶ Some research criticism (Lillienfeld, 2017)
 - ▶ Questions empirical supports
 - ▶ Accuses POC of being overly sensitive
 - ▶ Erroneously assume race-based and non-race based rudeness are equivalent (Sue et al, 2019)

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Historical context of racism in military

- ▶ Intelligence testing
 - ▶ Immigrants and many African American given the Beta despite being able to read (Guthrie, 1976, Murdoch, 2007)
- ▶ Military segregation preceded desegregation in rest of country
 - ▶ Officially ended in 1948 in Korean War
- ▶ History of discrimination stateside and while deployed
 - ▶ Contrast of integration in Army and segregation stateside
 - ▶ Segregated units often more assigned to services jobs
 - ▶ German prisoners allowed in Officer club
 - ▶ Could not arrest White Soldiers, even if MP
- ▶ Race-related trauma in Asian American Vietnam veterans (Loo et al., 2001)
 - ▶ Phenotypical similarity to enemy, relating to enemy, race/related assaults

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Racial Trauma in Military Populations (Carlson et al., 2018)

- ▶ POC veterans may be exposed to racial discrimination and race-based trauma in military and in daily life
 - ▶ Higher risk of developing PTSD and may underutilize services
 - ▶ Higher morbidity and mortality from chronic and acute conditions
 - ▶ Avoidance/mistrust of medical care
- ▶ Often underrecognized in trauma informed care

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Race-based traumatic stress model (Carter, 2007)

- ▶ Thorough literature review of the harmful emotional impact of racism
- ▶ Adaptation of Carlson's (1997) model of traumatic stress
 - ▶ Core is emotional pain, rather than life threat
- ▶ Caution against pathologizing reactions to racism
- ▶ Race-based psychological injury
- ▶ To be traumatic, race-based incident experienced as
 - ▶ Sudden
 - ▶ Negative
 - ▶ Out of one's control

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Impact of Racial Trauma

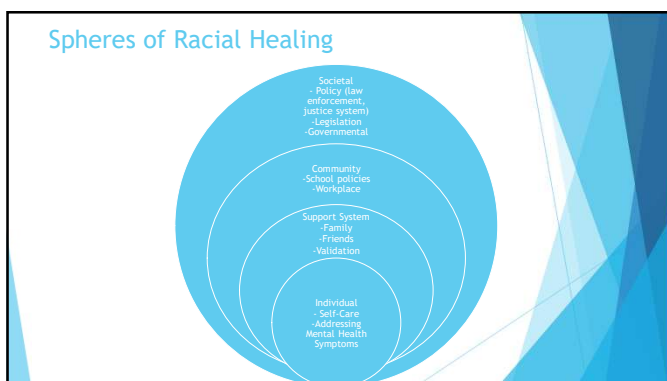
- ▶ Various reactions:
 - ▶ Fear
 - ▶ Harm
 - ▶ Invalidation
 - ▶ Anger
 - ▶ Helplessness
 - ▶ Shock
 - ▶ Negative impact on self-esteem
 - ▶ Doubt
- ▶ Racism can increase risk of physical and mental health problems (Carter, 2007; Carter et al., 2013; Hall-Clark, Asnaani, Sawyer, & Gotlik, 2016; Williams et al., 2021)
 - ▶ BIPOC
 - ▶ Adults
 - ▶ Youth
- ▶ Possible diagnoses can include anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, or PTSD

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Clinical Applications

Assessment, Diagnosis, & Treatment

17



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Clinician Factors

- ▶ Awareness of cultural identity
- ▶ Personal reactions to racism
- ▶ Hot spots, blind spot, and soft spots (Sandeep, Moore, & Swanda, 2018)
- ▶ Developing anti-racist stance

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Assessment of Racial Trauma

- ▶ Intake
- ▶ Trauma interview
- ▶ Ongoing assessment
- ▶ Available resources
 - ▶ Self-report measures
 - ▶ Semi-structured clinical interviews

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PASSWORD #1:
strong

21

Assessment of Racial Trauma

- ▶ Validation
- ▶ Establishing safe environment
- ▶ Acknowledge cultural differences in therapeutic relationship
- ▶ Inquire about cultural identity and experiences with discrimination
- ▶ Do not question whether something was racist
- ▶ DSM-5 considerations

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Assessment Tools

- ▶ Williams, Metzger, Leins, & DeLapp (2018) - Assessing racial trauma in the context of DSM-5
- ▶ Semi-structured interview
 - ▶ UCONN Racial/Ethnic Stress and Trauma Survey (UnRests)
- ▶ Self-report measures
 - ▶ Race-Related Stressor Scale (RRSS) - Loo et al. (2001)
 - ▶ Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale (Carter et al, 2013)
 - ▶ The Trauma Symptoms of Discrimination Scale (Williams, Printz, & DeLapp, 2018)

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Racial Trauma & PTSD

- ▶ May or may not meet Criterion A
- ▶ Racial trauma incidents that involve actual or threatened death, serious injury or sexual violence may lead to PTSD
- ▶ Similarities between PTSD symptoms and symptoms related to emotional impact of racial trauma
 - ▶ Intrusion
 - ▶ Avoidance
 - ▶ Hyperarousal
 - ▶ Negative mood and cognitions
- ▶ Ongoing nature of racial trauma

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Promoting Healing from Racial Trauma in Clinical Settings

- ▶ Increased awareness & psychoeducation about racism
- ▶ Considering internalized bias
- ▶ Self-reflection
- ▶ Self-care
- ▶ Empowerment

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Racial trauma: Self-care & Intervention strategies

- Empowerment
- Values-based goal setting
- Self-care and lifestyle changes
- Emotion regulation
- Social support
- Media balance
- Racial socialization

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Themes in Racial Trauma Processing

- ▶ Bryant & O'Campo (2006)
 - ▶ Acknowledge
 - ▶ Share
 - ▶ Safety & self-care
 - ▶ Grieve
 - ▶ Shame and self-blame/internalized racism
 - ▶ Anger
 - ▶ Coping strategies
 - ▶ Resistance strategies

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Overview of Integration of Racial Trauma in EBP

- ▶ CPT
 - ▶ Trauma Interview
 - ▶ Assessment of racial trauma
 - ▶ Sessions 1-7 - assimilation
 - ▶ Psychoeducation about racism and racial trauma
 - ▶ 8+ - accommodated
 - ▶ Safety
 - ▶ Trust
 - ▶ Esteem
 - ▶ Power/control
 - ▶ Intimacy
 - ▶ Final
- ▶ PE
 - ▶ Session 1
 - ▶ Assessment of racial trauma
 - ▶ Session 2
 - ▶ Psychoeducation about racism and racial trauma
 - ▶ Incorporate race-related exposure
 - ▶ Self-care and behavioral activation
 - ▶ Session 3+
 - ▶ Racial themes in processing
 - ▶ Trauma-related
 - ▶ Daily life
 - ▶ Future
 - ▶ Final

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Addressing Racial Trauma through Trauma-Focused EBPs

- ▶ Cognitive techniques
 - ▶ Caution not to restructure reality or question whether something was racist
 - ▶ Validation
 - ▶ Focus on empowerment and flexible response

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Race-related trauma cognitions

- ▶ It is not safe for me to go out at night because I could get killed by the police.
- ▶ If I go to the store, I will be followed.
- ▶ My supervisor does not recognize my work because I'm Black.

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Cognitive Work

- ▶ **Do:**
 - ▶ Focus on helpfulness/utility of thought
 - ▶ Validate experiences of oppression
 - ▶ Explore after more trust has developed
 - ▶ Focus on empowerment
 - ▶ Look for cultural strengths as source of alternative/balanced thoughts
 - ▶ Not inferior, different
- ▶ **Do not:**
 - ▶ Avoid sensitive topics
 - ▶ Use jargon
 - ▶ Challenge core cultural beliefs
 - ▶ Question whether experiences were racist

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Case Example 1

- ▶ African American, OIF/OEF Veteran
- ▶ Muslim
- ▶ Accused of sympathizing with the Taliban
- ▶ Combat trauma related to child that reminds him of his own
 - ▶ IED in marketplace
 - ▶ Peers tease him & say he's too concerned about "the Hajji kid"
 - ▶ Veteran attempted to bring the child to medicals for treatment but he was told supplies were too scarce
- ▶ Concerned about himself and his family going out and being stopped by police

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Addressing Race-Related Stuck Point through CBW - Assimilated

A. Situation	B. Thoughts/Feelings	C. Challenging Thoughts	D. Problematic Patterns	E. Alternative Thoughts
<p>For example, I was stopped by police when I was driving home from work. I felt nervous and scared. I thought they were going to arrest me. I felt like I was being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>I felt nervous and scared. I thought they were going to arrest me. I felt like I was being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Maybe they just need to check my license. Maybe they are just being cautious. I am not in trouble. I am not being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Assuming the worst. Jumping to conclusions. Overreacting. Feeling like I am being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Maybe they just need to check my license. Maybe they are just being cautious. I am not in trouble. I am not being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>
<p>For example, I was stopped by police when I was driving home from work. I felt nervous and scared. I thought they were going to arrest me. I felt like I was being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>I felt nervous and scared. I thought they were going to arrest me. I felt like I was being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Maybe they just need to check my license. Maybe they are just being cautious. I am not in trouble. I am not being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Assuming the worst. Jumping to conclusions. Overreacting. Feeling like I am being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>	<p>Maybe they just need to check my license. Maybe they are just being cautious. I am not in trouble. I am not being treated unfairly because of my race.</p>

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Addressing Race-Related Stuck Point through CBW - Safety

Challenging Beliefs Worksheet

A. Situation	B. Thoughts/Feelings	C. Challenging Thoughts	D. Problematic Patterns	E. Alternative Thoughts
Describe the event, situation, or stimulus (what happened?)	Write thoughts/feelings associated with the event (what were you thinking/feeling?)	Use Challenging Questions to challenge your automatic thoughts/feelings (Consider if the thought is balanced and based on evidence)	Write the Problematic Patterns (Thoughts/feelings/behaviors) that are associated with the event (What are you doing/feeling/behaving?)	Write the Alternative Thoughts (What else can you think of? Consider if the thought is balanced and based on evidence?)
going out at night with my family	we are not safe at night 100%	Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night?	Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night?	Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night? Is there evidence that we are not safe at night? Is there evidence that we are safe at night?

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Addressing Racial Trauma through Trauma-Focused EBP

- Exposure
 - Keep in mind differential levels of risk for different population
 - Context of vigilance vs. hypervigilance
 - Williams et al. (2014) - Culturally adapted PE
 - Slower pace
 - Race-related trauma themes
 - Role of exposure in addressing racism

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Example In Vivo Hierarchy with Race-Related Items

- 100 (seeing the child die)
- 90- talking about George Floyd with sons
- 80 - going to a restaurant at night with my family
- 75 - see Afghanistan on the news
- 70 - reading article about George Floyd
- 65- going to a restaurant during the day with my family
- 60 - seeing pictures of deployment
- 55 - going to grocery store when crowded
- 50 (running late): hearing traditional Afghani music
- 40 - playing with my son; driving by military police station
- 30 - volunteering for kid's sports team
- 20- going for a walk with my family in our neighborhood
- 10 - woodworking
- 0 (sitting in backyard)

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Processing Exposure Related to Race

- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ Just world
- ▶ Cultural nuances of self-blame
- ▶ Cultural mistrust
- ▶ Racism and esteem
- ▶ Spirituality
- ▶ Forgiveness
- ▶ Stoicism
 - ▶ Machismo
 - ▶ Manhood/Strength
- ▶ Value conflicts

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Microintervention Strategies (Sue et al., 2019)

- ▶ 4 strategic goals
 - ▶ Making the Invisible Visible
 - ▶ Disarming Microaggressions
 - ▶ Educate Perpetrator
 - ▶ Seek external support and reinforcement
- ▶ Can be used to empower targets of microaggressions
- ▶ Helpful for bystanders and allies as well

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Race-based Stress and Trauma Empowerment Groups

- ▶ Carlson et al. (2018)
- ▶ Currently 25 groups at VAs across the nation
- ▶ Consultation group to facilitate implementation
- ▶ Contact: Maurice.Endsley@va.gov



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National Center for PTSD Resources

- ▶ Racial trauma page: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/types/racial_trauma.asp
- ▶ Lecture Series: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/consult/lecture_series.asp
 - ▶ February 17, 2021: PTSD and Racial Trauma
Monica Williams, PhD, ABPP and Chad T. Wetterneck, PhD
[Audio Recording](#) (MP4)
 - ▶ The Elephant in the Room: Treating PTSD When Clinicians Have Negative Reactions to Patients' Sociocultural Views
Abigail Angkaw, PhD and Brittany Hall-Clark, PhD
[Audio Recording](#) (MP4)
 - ▶ October 21, 2020: Culturally Responsive PTSD Care 101: The Role of Case Formulation
Gayle Iwamasa, PhD
[Audio Recording](#) (MP4)
 - ▶ September 16, 2020: Racism-related Stress and Trauma: Definitions and Interventions
Juliette McClendon, PhD
[Audio Recording](#) (MP4)
- ▶ In development
 - ▶ AboutFace Race and PTSD page
 - ▶ Criterion A paper

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Racial Trauma Toolkits

- ▶ <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/lynch-school/sites/isprc/isprc-advisory-board.html>
- ▶ <https://www.drishametzger.com/racial-trauma-guide>
- ▶ <http://www.abpsi.org/pdf/FamilyCommunitySelfCareToolKit.pdf>


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PTSD Consultation Program

We can help

- Assessing and treating Veterans with PTSD
- Addressing racial trauma and racism experiences in PTSD treatment
- Treating PTSD with patients from historically marginalized groups
- Treating patients who hold beliefs or values that are different than yours




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866-948-7880
www.ptsd.va.gov/consult



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ISTSS Panel

► <https://istss.org/criterion-a>

What Constitutes A Trauma?
A Panel on Traumatic Stressors vs. Stress



Watch on  

The events of the past year have raised the question of how to distinguish the definition of Criterion A trauma in the DSM-5. This panel addresses this question in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and (2) the murder of George Floyd, which sharpened its

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Laboratory for Culture and Mental Health Disparities

► <https://www.mentalhealthdisparities.org/trauma-research.php>

- Assessment tools
- Empirical articles
- Clinically oriented articles and podcasts

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References

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- ▶ Williams, M. T., Malcolm, E., Sawyer, B. A., Davis, D. M., Bahojb Nouri, L., & Bruce, S. L. (2014). Cultural adaptations of prolonged exposure therapy for treatment and prevention of posttraumatic stress disorder in African Americans. *Journal of Behavioral Science*, 4, 102-124. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/bs4020102>
- [Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Racial Trauma](#) (PDF) RQ Vol. 32(1), 2021 by Monnica T. Williams, PhD; Angela M. Haeny, PhD; Samantha C. Holmes, PhD

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Q&A

- Please type your questions in the Q&A feature at the bottom of the screen.






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Next Month's Webinar

- *Integrating Substance Use Treatment Techniques into Evidence-Based Treatments for PTSD*
- Presented by Brooke Fina, LCSW, BCD, associate professor within the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and director of training for the STRONG STAR Training Initiative.
- **When:** Thursday, March 10 at 1pm CST/ 2pm EST





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