Use of hypnosis in the treatment of combat post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

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Abramowitz EG, Bonne O.
Department of Psychiatry, Hadassah Medical Center and Medical Corps, IDF, Jerusalem.
eitan@hadassah.org.il

Abstract

Clinical reports and observations going back almost two centuries consistently indicate that hypnotherapy is an effective modality for the treatment of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Pierre Janet was the first clinician to describe the successful initiation of stepwise hypnotic techniques in PTSD symptom reduction. Hypnotherapy may accelerate the formation of a therapeutic alliance and contribute to a positive treatment outcome. Hypnotic techniques may be valuable for patients with PTSD who exhibit symptoms such as anxiety, dissociation, widespread somatoform pain complaints and sleep disturbances. Hypnotic techniques may also facilitate the arduous tasks of working through traumatic memories, increasing coping skills, and promoting a sense of competency.

In this review we will present guidelines for the stepwise implementation of hypnotherapy in PTSD. Since most data regarding the use of hypnotherapy in PTSD has been gathered from uncontrolled clinical observations, methodologically sound research demonstrating the efficacy of hypnotic techniques in PTSD is required for hypnotherapy to be officially added to the therapeutic armamentarium for this disorder.
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