

Intake Assessment (Sample)

Client: Clarence Jones

Date: 5/6/16

Psychologist: Craig Childress, Psy.D.

Presenting Problem

Mr. Jones is a 51 year-old married African-American male who was referred to the Veteran's Administration Counseling Center by his physician due to his wife's concerns regarding Mr. Jones' moodiness, irritability, insomnia, and what she considers to be bizarre behavior. Mr. Jones reported marital stresses surrounding his symptoms, which included re-experiencing his experiences as a soldier in Iraq, angry outbursts, insomnia, and social isolation. No suicidal ideation reported. Mr. Jones reported a history of prior substance abuse but no current substance use or abuse.

Family History

Mr. Jones lives with his current wife, Charlene. They have no children together. Mr. Jones was previously married and has three grown children from that marriage. His first marriage occurred following his first tour of duty in Iraq. Mr. Jones indicated that his first marriage ended after five years, reportedly when his wife took the children and left him because she couldn't handle his drinking, his moodiness, and his explosive anger. According to Mr. Jones, his former wife feared for the safety of the children because he would sometimes become explosively angry and destructive.

Following the end of his first marriage, Mr. Jones remained single for several years and lived primarily with "army buddies." During this period, he reported having difficulty maintaining consistent employment and he moved every few months. Mr. Jones indicated that during this period he was dependent on alcohol and abused marijuana. It was also during this period that Mr. Jones had an extended relationship with a woman, Alice, with whom he lived for six years. They have one child together but that relationship ended, reportedly because of his volatile moods and his conflicts with fellow employees at work. Mr. Jones indicated that he was also arrested and spent time in jail, and later entered rehabilitation for substance abuse.

Mr. Jones married his current wife, Charlene, several years ago. He indicated that Charlene has told him that if he doesn't get help for his emotional and psychological problems that she will leave him. Mr. Jones appeared motivated to maintain his relationship with Charlene and is seeking counseling at the VA to resolve his issues.

As a consequence of this deployment in Iraq, Mr. Jones reported re-experiencing images from his combat in Iraq in which he feels like he's back in combat with the same feelings, just as if he was back in Iraq. For example, he indicated that he feels as though he is going to be ambushed even though he is in his own living room. He also indicated possible hallucinations of seeing Iraqis coming out of the bushes, which frightens him and concerns his wife regarding his psychological stability. He reported that these flashbacks

can be triggered by something on TV or by hearing noises outside, and that these flashbacks have occurred regularly but infrequently since his return to the United States.

Work History

Mr. Jones indicated that he served in the military for four years as a soldier in Iraq, serving in combat areas. According to Mr. Jones, during his tours of duty he witnessed women, children, and fellow soldiers die in combat. While serving in Iraq, Mr. Jones also learned of the violent death of his younger sister, who was murdered in a park where she had taken her daughter to play. Mr. Jones indicated that he was unable to return to the United States for her funeral.

Following discharge from the military, Mr. Jones reported having difficulty maintaining steady employment and that he had frequent conflicts with fellow employees at work. Mr. Jones also reported that he had significant substance abuse problems with alcohol and marijuana during this period. According to Mr. Jones, he eventually entered rehab several years ago for his substance abuse problems and he denies current use and abuse of drugs and alcohol. Mr. Jones currently works part-time at an automobile repair shop.

Social History

Mr. Jones reported having made friends in the military with whom he stayed after the break-up of his first marriage. Currently, he reports having experiences of depersonalization in which he wants to isolate, feeling alone and awkward, and he feels as if he doesn't fit in socially with other people. He reports feeling like an outsider everywhere he goes.

Summary

During his combat experiences in Iraq, Mr. Jones was directly exposed to actual and threatened death. He also witnessed, in person, the death of women, children, and fellow soldiers. In addition to the trauma personally experienced in combat, Mr. Jones also learned of the traumatic murder of his sister and he was unable to properly grieve her death.

Mr. Jones reported have recurrent, involuntary, and intrusive memories of the traumatic events of his deployment in Iraq, including dissociative flashbacks in which he feels as if the traumatic events are reoccurring. He also indicated that these intrusive memories cause him to feel tense, frightened, and agitated. His symptoms include reported feelings of estrangement and detachment from others. He also reported increased irritability and angry outbursts and difficulty falling asleep.

Following his return from deployment in Iraq, Mr. Jones has evidenced an unstable work history and problems with alcohol and marijuana abuse. His first marriage ended when his wife took their three children and left because of his unstable mood and anger outbursts. A second relationship of six years, which produced one child also ended because of his unstable mood and anger. His current marriage of five years is also threatened by his

irritability and flashbacks to his time in Iraq, and his current wife is threatening to leave him if he does not get treatment for his problems. Mr. Jones denies current suicidal ideation and he denies current use or abuse of drugs or alcohol.

Mental Status

Mr. Jones is a 51 year-old African American male of average build who appears his age. He appeared quiet and subdued, but conversant and disclosive. His mood and affect appeared distressed when reporting on his symptoms, but appropriate to content and context. His thought processes appeared linear and organized. He reported some possible visual hallucinations related to re-experiencing post-traumatic events in Iraq.

DSM-5 Diagnosis

Mr. Jones appears to meet DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In Iraq, he was exposed to threatened death (criterion A1) and he witnessed the death of others (criterion A2), and he also learned of the violent death of his younger sister (criterion A3). He reported recurrent, involuntary, and intrusive distressing memories of the traumatic experiences in Iraq (criterion B1) and dissociative flashbacks to the traumatic events of Iraq (criterion B3). Mr. Jones reported negative alterations of mood associated with the traumatic experiences of Iraq as evidenced by feelings of detachment and estrangement from others (criterion D6). He also reported increased irritability and angry outbursts (criterion E1) and sleep disturbance (criterion E6). These symptoms have lasted longer than one year and cause significant distress and impairment in this marital relationships and occupational functioning

DSM-5 Diagnosis

309.81 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, with dissociative symptoms (depersonalization).

R/O Alcohol-Related/Cannabis-Related Use Disorder

Recommendations

1. EMDR treatment of PTSD
2. Systematic desensitization treatment and trauma-informed mindfulness and interpersonal therapy for PTSD elevated arousal symptoms.
3. Marital therapy to stabilize family support.
4. Continued substance abuse recovery.