

# Critical issues

Psychology



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Psychological Debriefing The need for critical intervention after a traumatic event occurring to a victim is usually sustained by the risk of onset of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and similar conditions in the victim. One of the ways in which intervention is done is through psychological debriefing, which refers to a one time talking session to which the victim of a traumatic event is subjected (Rose, Bison, Churchill & Wessely, 2009). The psychological debriefing is similar to military debriefings, where the victim is supposed to recount the events surrounding the traumatic event. However, contemporary research indicates that psychological debriefing is not effective in any way in reducing the chance of post traumatic stress, and ore research indicates that it may actually be harmful to the victim.

Sijbrandij et al (2006), state that psychological debriefing has been used for a long time as a means of preventing stress, anxiety or depression in the victims. The authors state that although single-session psychological intervention has become a common mode of treating survivors of harmful or traumatic events, it does not help the victim, and most of the times have adverse effects on the victim's mental health. One of the arguments proposed against psychological depression is that the stimulation o the emotional ventilation that a victim or survivor of a traumatic event can be too overwhelming for some survivors, and may cause serious psychological harm. The proponents of these argument state that the victims should be given a period of rest and relaxation. This is because a psychological intervention is more likely to increase the patient's chances of noticing stress factors that would otherwise have been ignored and faded away.

Myriad studies have been conducted about the efficacy of psychological debriefing after a traumatic event and whether the patients should be

subjected to psychological debriefing. From these researches, it is evident that psychological debriefing has no positive impact in the avoidance of psychological disorder, mainly Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Mayou, Ehlers & Hobbs (2000) conducted an assessment of the effect of psychological debriefing of trauma survivors, using the recommended frameworks for the debriefing. Their study divided trauma victims into two groups, one the intervention group that was subjected to psychological debriefing and the other a control group. From their research, it is identified that the intervention group was significantly worse than the control group at the end of the research, indicating that psychological debriefing is actually harmful to the survivor. According to Balon (2002), the use of psychological debriefing is essential for the victims of traumatic events, but from contemporary research, it is evident that this view of the argument is not much supported. Researchers who support the use of psychological debriefing do not provide much rationale for their support, just that the debriefing has been effective in some victims of stress. From the research indicated, it is evident that post traumatic psychological debriefing is more harmful than beneficial to the survivor or victim of a traumatic event. The research indicates that it is better to let a victim or survivor cope with the stress factors in other ways other than a psychological debriefing.

#### References

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