

## Book Review

### **Workplace Trauma Concepts, Assessment and Intervention**

Noreen Tehrani

*Brunner-Routledge, New York, NY, 277pp., £16.99*

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*Workplace Trauma* is authored by Noreen Tehrani, a chartered occupational, counselling and health psychologist. Noreen Tehrani's aim was to move the discussion of post-traumatic stress from major crises such as those faced in war, to incidents occurring within the workplace that have also resulted in PTSD and similar strong reactions. This covers incidents ranging from armed robberies to workplace bullying, bridging the gap in the available literature to date on workplace trauma. Information is provided on policies, procedures, and interventions that organizations may need to plan and implement in order to protect their employees from further psychological harm.

The book initially details the history of post-traumatic stress from early accounts in historical documents and literature, to the greater emergence and acceptance of the condition brought about via trauma experienced in the First World War, and finally to today's diagnostic criteria. This makes for an engaging introduction and has an easy writing style. The book then covers a brief overview of the psychobiological processes, making comparisons to the differences between PTSD and normal stress, before covering typical responses to workplace trauma using varied case studies to illustrate.

This book provides well-written and clear information on the responsibilities that an organization has and needs to consider when employees face trauma, with emphasis on proactive risk assessment and the importance of effective crisis management. Examples of trauma care are given from existing organizations to illustrate the types of intervention necessary, and in what stage of a trauma support programme that they are most effective in their execution. Further information is then offered on how organizations can begin to establish such programmes with the aid of external providers, and what issues need to be considered when selecting such a provider.

Overall, the book has a wide content, covering issues from theory to practice. The writing style also ensures that the information presented is clear and assessable, with familiar case studies of major incidents stressing the importance and need of well-planned intervention strategies. This also becomes more apparent and essential in light of the recent terrorist attacks occurring on the London transport systems (July 2005), where many were involved in or were witness to these horrific acts.

The book is intended as a main resource to provide guidance directly to organizations. This makes the book serve as a good introduction on workplace trauma, highlighting the areas that need to be considered in organizations for both their own protection and that of the employees. This extends beyond the immediate aftermath of an incident, be it a violent

crime or a major accident, where the main priority is for that of the emergency services, to the psychological care that maybe required for months or years after the event.

The book alone however, does not provide the sufficient level of detail to work beyond that of an introduction to these issues. It would be beneficial if the reader were directed to wider resources where support and information maybe obtained from qualified bodies. In consideration though, the book is intended as a bridge for the lack of information that is easily available on these issues. The book also does urge a stronger relationship between researchers and practitioners involved with workplace trauma to further evaluate each stage of intervention strategy, for what traumatic incidents they are most effective, and how individual differences may influence this to build upon the existing knowledge that is held.

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