Numer tematyczny/Thematic Issue

Doświadczanie zdarzeń traumatycznych — konsekwencje i pomiar/
Experiencing traumatic events — consequences and measurement

Redaktorzy numeru/Editors of the Issue
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Introduction

The problems discussed in the thematic issue of the Review of Psychology revolve around trauma, its consequences, both negative and positive, and their measurement. Trauma has been the subject of interest of researchers and practitioners for many years now. This has mainly been due to the fact that most people (an estimated 90% of the human population) experience at least one traumatic event in their lives. The experience of such an event may entail many negative consequences, primarily for mental health.

The most serious aftermaths of trauma are the symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Research in this field has been conducted since 1980, when PTSD was introduced into the APA classification of mental disorders. However, studies conducted in recent years have provided data showing that an experience of a traumatic event may also be associated with some positive changes. These changes are subsumed under the concept of posttraumatic growth (PTG).

The popularization of the mentioned constructs depends to a large extent on the possibility of measuring them. Psychometric tools are available in Poland for measuring both PTSD and PTG. However, the PTSD criteria were subject to changes in the successive editions and revisions of the classification of mental disorders. In the currently used DSM-5 classification published in 2013, the structure of symptoms was changed by adding negative changes in the cognitive and emotional sphere. As a result, the previously used Impact of Event Scale (IES-R) and other instruments developed in accordance with the previous classifications and corresponding to the three-pronged PTSD structure have become of little use. Work on the Polish adaptation of a new tool, the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5), has already been completed. To meet the interest of numerous researchers, a preliminary report from research has been included in this issue.

The consequences of traumatic experiences depend on many factors, but most of all on the cognitive processes involved in dealing with the experienced situation. This issue is addressed in the first of the presented articles, entitled Cognitive processing of trauma—Polish adaptation of the Cognitive Processing of Trauma Scale by Nina Ogińska-Bulik and Zygfryd Juczyński. This issue seems particularly significant, because the most important role in revealing both negative and positive consequences of traumatic events is attributed to the individual's cognitive involvement in the processing of trauma. The article presents a new measure for assessing cognitive processing strategies of coping.
with trauma. The study was conducted among people who had experienced various types of traumatic events. The results show that the instrument has good psychometric properties. The Cognitive Processing of Trauma Scale can be a valuable tool for assessing cognitive strategies of coping with trauma. It can be used in scientific research as well as in clinical work, primarily to track changes during therapy in people exposed to trauma.

The second article, *Children’s Impact of Event Scale—CRIES.13* by Nina Ogińska-Bulik and Magdalena Kobylarczyk presents a new instrument used to assess the symptoms of PTSD in children (over 8 years of age) and youth. It allows to determine the three main symptoms of PTSD, i.e. intrusion, avoidance, and arousal. Studies conducted on a large group of teenagers showed this tool has good psychometric properties. The scale is intended mainly for research purposes, but it can also be used in practice, screening prophylaxis and in assessing the effectiveness of therapeutic interactions in children who have experienced traumatic events.

The authors of the next article, *Psychological effects of organ transplantation: Symptoms and predictors of change*, are the psychologists Zygfryd Juczynski, Paulina Rosińska, and Mateusz Zatorski, and the transplantologists Magdalena Durlik, and Olga Tronina. Organ transplantation is certainly one of the greatest achievements of 20th century medicine. Unfortunately, not everyone who needs a transplant is fortunate enough to receive one. Studies of people after transplantation point primarily to the positive changes experienced by organ recipients, including improvement in the health-related quality of life. But apart from positive changes, there are also specific emotional and behavioral reactions related to fears about the transplanted organ and negative affective states such as anxiety, depression or irritability.

The article presents the results of a study of people after kidney or liver transplantation. The authors adopted a research model referring to O’Leary and Ickovics’s thrive model, which is an attempt to combine the contribution of psychological factors in both posttraumatic growth (PTG) and postsestastic growth (PEG). The results of the study allowed to determine the predictors of changes only in relation to the negative psychological consequences, identified as the severity of PTSD symptoms.

The fourth article, written by Maja Lis-Turlejska and Izabela Kaźmierczak, entitled *The psychological consequences of war: Past research and new trends*, concerns the extensive and rapidly developing field of research on and therapeutic interventions for war victims. The authors show the evolution of this study area and new directions of research. Initially, this line of research focused on soldiers and war veterans. After World War II, European researchers turned their attention to the consequences of the extreme experiences of former prisoners of German concentration camps, largely Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. In the 1990s, research on the impact of war shifted its focus to civilians, and then attention was paid to the situation of children and youth in war-affected countries.

The thematic issue of the *Review of Psychology* closes with a preliminary report on the *Polish adaptation of the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)*,
prepared by a team of scientists from four research centers: Nina Ogińska-Bulik, Zygfryd Juczyński, Maja Lis Turlejska, and Dorota Merecz-Kot.

The problem of trauma and its consequences is of great interest and presents new challenges for researchers. The articles in this issue are, in part, a response to these challenges. They present new issues in the area of psychotraumatology, not yet described in the Polish scientific literature.

The presented issue of the Review of Psychology also contains a report by Magdalena Kobylarczyk of Nina Ogińska-Bulik’s monograph *Dwa oblicza traumy. Negatywne i pozytywne skutki zdarzeń traumatycznych u pracowników służb ratowniczych* [Two faces of trauma. Negative and positive effects of traumatic events in the employees of emergency services], and Paulina Michalska’s report from the 23rd National Psychosomatic Conference, in which one of the symposia was devoted to the problems of trauma and its consequences.

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