Unpacking the Boy Who Lived

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80558 Work With Individuals SOW 3313

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December 3, 2023

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Referral/presenting issues

Harry Potter was referred to the agency by the Minister of Magic Kingsley Shacklebolt to assess his mental state following the war. Minister Shacklebolt wanted to determine if Harry was in the right state of mind to pursue official Auror training after all of the events that took place when he was a child. Presenting problems include: abandonment issues, childhood abuse, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and coping with grief. The agency has allocated me with this case to help Harry with coping with his past and to evaluate if he is ready to be an Auror with the Ministry of Magic.

Background information

The client, Harry Potter, was orphaned at a very young age after the death of both of his parents by mass murderer, Tom Riddle. He was raised by an emotional abusive aunt and uncle isolated from people in his own community. In that home, he also was constantly tormented by his cousin, Dudley. Throughout his grade school, Harry was bullied by professors and fellow classmates while also being a target of the same mass murderer that killed his parents. Tom Riddle caused a war to break out and for a long while Harry had run away and was being hunted down by his followers. During this war, Harry saw a lot of violence and lost a lot of friends and people he considered family. In some instances, Harry witnessed the death of the people closest to him. To bring a close to the war, Harry had to take extreme measures and kill Tom Riddle himself. Essentially, Harry was raised as a soldier, it was expected of him to fight all of the foes that he did. According to Beyond war and PTSD: The crucial role of transition stress in the lives of military veterans by Meaghan C. Mobbs and George A. Bonanno they define soldier as "Individuals who choose to serve must first undergo an explicit period of training in which they

are instructed and immersed in practical skills training and indoctrinated in military standards, ethics, and values (Lieberman et al., 2014, McGurk et al., 2006).” But Harry, he had no choice. While he no longer has a biological family, he has made himself one out of his friends and their families have accepted him as their own as well. Before he went to boarding school, he learned that his parents were well off and left him with a hefty inheritance estimated to be over a million dollars.

Biopsychosocial Assessment

Physical Factors: Physically, Harry is in good health, he is in his late teens with no pre-existing conditions.

Psychological Factors: Harry says that in the past he has seen his mom and dad in times of great distress. He also stated that for a while, Tom Riddle also used mind manipulation to torture him into believing certain thoughts. He cannot recall any family concerns because most of them are dead or he has no contact with them.

Emotional Factors: Harry states that he feels very gloomy like a cloud is hanging over him. He has had it for a while, since his godfather died, but he expected that after the war, it would just go away. This state of gloominess has continued even after the war. He is not suicidal but he is having a hard time adjusting to being free of the threat of war.

Behavioral Factors: For the longest time, Harry has felt burdened with the responsibility of being the “Boy Who Lived”. Now as the war is over, he does not have that looming over him and most of the community is bonded over the fact that they all fought in a war together. From the age of eleven, he has had people looking up to him and while he is the one to end Tom Riddle’s torment, everyone was a vital part of defeating him.

Social Factors: Mr. Potter has a good support system in place. He lives with his best friend in an apartment together. He is also very close to his best friend's family who has taken him in and treated him as their own. He is also in a very devoted relationship with his girlfriend. The community around him also is a big supporting factor including former professors who have maintained their relationship.

Spiritual Factors: Harry has not attended any religious gatherings but he does celebrate some holidays including Christmas.

Treatment Plan:

Goal: To reduce the amount and frequency of night terrors Harry is experiencing so that he can have a full night of rest.

Objective: With a sleep diary, Harry is able to journal what he is feeling immediately after, what he recalls from the dream, and by using that we can determine what the nightmares are the root of. Whether or not it is his PTSD from the war, the loss of his parents, or the abuse he endured as a child. It could also be a mixture of things. Sleep events among veterans with combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder by Bruce Nolan highlights the research gone into the evaluation of nightmares and getting down to the root cause of them. PTSD is defined by the American Psychiatric Association as "a psychiatric disorder that may occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event, series of events or set of circumstances".

Outcome: With a sleep diary, we can discuss the fears that are being expressed in these night terrors. We can address what is causing the nightmares to find out the root problem and work on getting him a full night of rest.

Goal: Go and visit Hogwarts for the first time since the Battle of Hogwarts.

Objective: To be back at what he once considered home to show him that Hogwarts itself is not a bad place, while there are some bad memories, there are good memories too. He won his first quidditch game there, he got with his girlfriend there, and he gained lifelong friendships at Hogwarts.

Outcome: After visiting Hogwarts, Harry realized that the school is not responsible for what happened there. A singular person with bad intentions that gained a lot of following in narrow minded people was the cause of the war. While there are bad memories, there are also good memories like winning the house cup and making lifelong friends that are like family to him.

Goal: Meeting up with other survivors of the Battle of Hogwarts, including Slytherin students.

Objective: To talk and relate with other survivors that have gone through a very similar experience that he has and know that he is not the only one who is suffering with what happened.

Outcome: At first, Harry did not like to go because everyone saw him as the savior but after a few group sessions, he was able to find a support group that felt right to him and he was able to make connections. Now he has people he can relate to and go to with things that he may not feel comfortable discussing with me.

Intervention

I have encouraged Harry to go out and meet with others who have been through similar instances to him, to reach out with other survivors. A sleep diary was also an idea I proposed to get down to the real focus of what was causing Harry's night terrors. With this, Harry has become more social and open with others, including his family and seems to be on the right track. For tracking this, I evaluated how often he would go out not only to attend group therapy sessions but also as just social events. I did this to see if the burden was lightening on his shoulders and to see if the methods we had worked on were beneficial to him.

Case Notes

First meeting: September 1, 1998. Kingsley Shacklebolt reached out to the agency to do an evaluation on potential Auror's. He wanted to make sure that he was sound of mind before he started training and enforcing the law. Harry came into the office for our meeting and we had an open discussion with what was plaguing his mind. At first, he was anxious about being there, I had gotten the impression that he had never sat down to talk about what he was going through. Since it was our first meeting, I really just wanted to assess him and how he is doing without pushing him too far as to not get a good working relationship between the two of us. Throughout our conversation, I evaluated verbal and nonverbal cues from him and came to the conclusion that is not at risk for hurting himself or others. I noticed that he had bags under his eyes and asked an open ended question about the amount of sleep he is getting a week. With that we dove into a conversation about his night terrors guided by him. I suggested to him to keep a sleep journal for two weeks to find consistency in his nightmares that we can address together in our next session. In an journal piece, Sleep disturbances in veterans with chronic war-induced PTSD by Habibolah Khazaie, Mohammad Rasoul Ghadami, and Maryam Masoudi they highlighted the importance of addressing night terrors with the quote: "Recurrent nightmares have been associated with poor overall sleep quality, depression and heightened risk of suicide." (Khazaie et al., 2016). So, we do want to address these night terrors very soon so that he does not become a risk to himself.

Second meeting: September 15, 1998. Harry and I are meeting again to analyze his nightmares together and what he thinks they mean before finding ways to overcome the nightmares. We discussed and built up coping skills for him to manage the frequency of his nightmares. I also wanted to address his post traumatic stress disorder and how he is coping with all of the losses he

has experienced during the progression to war and in the war itself. It is the most recent trauma he experienced and from that point we can dive further into his past of abandonment issues and childhood abuse. One of those coping skills is to lean on his family. I also believe that he might benefit from more sessions. Harry does have the support of his friends and girlfriend, they all went through this war together and I do believe that group therapy sessions would be beneficial to most of the wizards that fought at the Battle of Hogwarts.

Third meeting: September 29, 1998. Once again Harry and I are meeting up to discuss how he is doing. I want to see how he is utilizing some of the coping skills we worked together to develop. He seems to be doing better, the bags under his eyes have not completely gone but have considerably lessened since our first meeting. Though, he does still seem to be carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. I ask him how the group sessions seem to be going and they do seem to be helping him. I suggest to him that maybe it is a good idea to reach out to all of the survivors of the Battle of Hogwarts, including the Slytherins, and to hold a vigil of some sort. To put to rest the souls that he feels burdened with. Coping with Loss by Susan Nolen-Hoeksema and Judith M. Larson says on page 148 that "Indeed, many bereaved people say they know instantly that they are in the presence of someone who has also been bereaved because there is more compassion, awareness and understanding. . ." This emphasizes the importance of reaching out with other survivors and reflect with them to find people of the same mind.

Termination

After the first three meetings, I would still continue to meet with him until I feel as though we have achieved the goals we have set into place. I would want to ensure that Harry is getting full nights of rest and that the nightmares are not as frequent as they once were. When I

felt that Harry had achieved the goals that we set out to achieve, I would remind him of that and talk of ending our meetings. I would also urge him to reflect within himself and make sure that being an Auror is what he wants to do. Reflecting on his career choice, I do not want him to go into that career because he felt it was expected of him as a war hero, the "Boy Who Lived" or as the man who killed Tom Riddle. He is now in the right state of mind to start training and she will let Minister Shacklebolt know that but to take time and to think of all the possibilities in front of him.

Summary

Meeting with Harry for the first time, there was a young man that had the weight of the world on his shoulders. He had the burden of the lost souls of the Battle of Hogwarts looming over him. With establishing coping skills, addressing underlying problems, and encouraging him to reach out to others that can help him we see his world lighten up and he becomes a bright young man. He is ready to take on the world, whether that be as an Auror or not. He should keep up with group therapy and meeting with other survivors at the very least. If he ever does feel the burden creeping back up, he should reach out to his family and to myself so that he does not fall into old patterns.

Self Evaluation

This project has been one of the most interesting and helpful projects I have ever done. It gave me a real look into what the future is going to look like. I do enjoy that this course is using specific sources of what social workers do to teach us.

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