

## THE INTERNATIONAL TRAUMA QUESTIONNAIRE (ITQ)

### OVERVIEW:

The attached instrument is a brief, simply-worded measure, focusing only on the core features of PTSD and CPTSD, and employs straightforward diagnostic rules. The ITQ was developed to be consistent with the organizing principles of the ICD-11, as set forth by the World Health Organization, which are to maximize clinical utility and ensure international applicability through a focus on the core symptoms of a given disorder. The ITQ is freely available in the public domain to all interested parties. Evaluation of the measure continues particularly as it relates to the definition of functional impairment for both PTSD and CPTSD and possibly the content of the items as they might relate to being predictive of differential treatment outcome.

### DIAGNOSTIC ALGORITHMS are as follows:

**PTSD.** A diagnosis of PTSD requires the endorsement of one of two symptoms from the symptom clusters of (1) re-experiencing in the here and now, (2) avoidance, and (3) sense of current threat, plus endorsement of at least one indicator of functional impairment associated with these symptoms. Endorsement of a symptom or functional impairment item is defined as a score  $\geq 2$ .

**CPTSD.** A diagnosis of CPTSD requires the endorsement of one of two symptoms from each of the three PTSD symptom clusters (re-experiencing in the here and now, avoidance, and sense of current threat) and one of two symptoms from each of the three Disturbances in Self-Organization (DSO) clusters: (1) affective dysregulation, (2) negative self-concept, and (3) disturbances in relationships. Functional impairment must be identified where at least one indicator of functional impairment is endorsed related to the PTSD symptoms and one indicator of functional impairment is endorsed related to the DSO symptoms. Endorsement of a symptom or functional impairment item is defined as a score  $\geq 2$ .

An individual can receive either a diagnosis of PTSD or CPTSD, not both. If a person meets the criteria for CPTSD, that person does not also receive a PTSD diagnosis.

Scoring instructions are available at the end of this document.

### THE REFERENCE for the measure is:

Cloitre, M., Shevlin M., Brewin, C.R., Bisson, J.I., Roberts, N.P., Maercker, A., Karatzias, T., Hyland, P. (in press). The International Trauma Questionnaire: Development of a self-report measure of ICD-11 PTSD and Complex PTSD. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*. DOI: 10.1111/acps.12956

### BACKGROUND PUBLICATIONS:

Redican, E., Nolan, E., Hyland, P., Cloitre, M., McBride, O., Karatzias, T., Murphy, J., & Shevlin, M. (2021). A systematic literature review of factor analytic and mixture models of ICD-11 PTSD and CPTSD using the International Trauma Questionnaire. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 79, 102381. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2021.102381>

Brewin, C. R., Cloitre, M., Hyland, P., Shevlin, M., Maercker, A., Bryant, R. A.,...Reed, G. M. (2017). A review of current evidence regarding the ICD-11 proposals for diagnosing PTSD and complex PTSD. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 58, 1-15. doi: 10.1016/j.cpr.2017.09.001.

Hyland, P., Brewin, C. R., Cloitre, M., Karatzias, T., & Shevlin, M. (2024). Responding to concerns related to the measurement of ICD-11 complex posttraumatic stress disorder using the International Trauma Questionnaire. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 147, 106563. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106563>

Cloitre, M., Hyland, P., Prins, A., & Shevlin, M. (2021). The international trauma questionnaire (ITQ) measures reliable and clinically significant treatment-related change in PTSD and complex PTSD. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 12(1), 1930961. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2021.1930961>

## International Trauma Questionnaire

**Instructions:** Please identify the experience that troubles you most and answer the questions in relation to this experience.

Brief description of the experience \_\_\_\_\_

When did the experience occur? (circle one)

- a. less than 6 months ago
- b. 6 to 12 months ago
- c. 1 to 5 years ago
- d. 5 to 10 years ago
- e. 10 to 20 years ago
- f. more than 20 years ago

Below are a number of problems that people sometimes report in response to traumatic or stressful life events. Please read each item carefully, then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

|  | <i>Not<br/>at all</i> | <i>A little<br/>bit</i> | <i>Moderately</i> | <i>Quite<br/>a bit</i> | <i>Extremely</i> |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| P1. Having upsetting dreams that replay part of the experience or are clearly related to the experience?   | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |
| P2. Having powerful images or memories that sometimes come into your mind in which you feel the experience is happening again in the here and now? | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |
| P3. Avoiding internal reminders of the experience (for example, thoughts, feelings, or physical sensations)?                                       | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |
| P4. Avoiding external reminders of the experience (for example, people, places, conversations, objects, activities, or situations)?                | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |
| P5. Being “super-alert”, watchful, or on guard?  | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |
| P6. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?  | 0                     | 1                       | 2                 | 3                      | 4                |

***In the past month have the above problems:***

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P7. Affected your relationships or social life?   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| P8. Affected your work or ability to work?  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| P9. Affected any other important part of your life such as parenting, or school or college work, or other important activities? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Below are problems that people who have had stressful or traumatic events sometimes experience. The questions refer to ways you typically feel, ways you typically think about yourself and ways you typically relate to others. Answer the following thinking about how true each statement is of you.

| <i>How true is this of you?</i>                            | <i>Not at all</i> | <i>A little bit</i> | <i>Moderately</i> | <i>Quite a bit</i> | <i>Extremely</i> |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| C1. When I am upset, it takes me a long time to calm down. | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |
| C2. I feel numb or emotionally shut down.                  | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |
| C3. I feel like a failure.                                 | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |
| C4. I feel worthless.                                      | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |
| C5. I feel distant or cut off from people.                 | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |
| C6. I find it hard to stay emotionally close to people.    | 0                 | 1                   | 2                 | 3                  | 4                |

***In the past month, have the above problems in emotions, in beliefs about yourself and in relationships:***

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| C7. Created concern or distress about your relationships or social life?   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| C8. Affected your work or ability to work?   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| C9. Affected any other important parts of your life such as parenting, or school or college work, or other important activities? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

## 1. Diagnostic scoring for PTSD and CPTSD

### PTSD

If P1 or P2  $\geq 2$  criteria for Re-experiencing in the here and now (Re\_dx) met

If P3 or P4  $\geq 2$  criteria for Avoidance (Av\_dx) met

If P5 or P6  $\geq 2$  criteria for Sense of current threat (Th\_dx) met

AND

At least one of P7, P8, or P9  $\geq 2$  meets criteria for PTSD functional impairment (PTSDFI)

If criteria for 'Re\_dx' AND 'Av\_dx' AND 'Th\_dx' AND 'PTSDFI' are met, the criteria for PTSD are met.

### CPTSD

If C1 or C2  $\geq 2$  criteria for Affective dysregulation (AD\_dx) met

If C3 or C4  $\geq 2$  criteria for Negative self-concept (NSC\_dx) met

If C5 or C6  $\geq 2$  criteria for Disturbances in relationships (DR\_dx) met

AND

At least one of C7, C8, or C9  $\geq 2$  meets criteria for DSO functional impairment (DSOFI)

If criteria for 'AD\_dx' AND 'NSC\_dx' AND 'DR\_dx', and 'DSOFI' are met, the criteria for DSO are met.

PTSD is diagnosed if the criteria for PTSD are met but NOT for DSO.

CPTSD is diagnosed if the criteria for PTSD are met AND criteria for DSO are met.

Not meeting the criteria for PTSD or meeting only the criteria for DSO results in no diagnosis.

## 2. Dimensional scoring for PTSD and CPTSD.

Scores can be calculated for each PTSD and DSO symptom cluster and summed to produce PTSD and DSO scores.

### PTSD

Sum of Likert scores for P1 and P2 = Re-experiencing in the here and now score (Re)

Sum of Likert scores for P3 and P4 = Avoidance score (Av)

Sum of Likert scores for P5 and P6 = Sense of current threat (Th)

PTSD score = Sum of Re, Av, and Th

### DSO

Sum of Likert scores for C1 and C2 = Affective dysregulation (AD)

Sum of Likert scores for C3 and C4 = Negative self-concept (NSC)

Sum of Likert scores for C5 and C6 = Disturbances in relationships (DR)

DSO score = Sum of AD, NSC, and DR