Childhood Trauma and Coping through the Science of Physics: An Attachment Perspective

VIVIANA LUCABECHE, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, JOLYNN HANEY, Widener University, PAUL QUINN, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania — Trauma can be defined as stressful life events that disrupt and/or delay successful transition during childhood developmental stages (Roberts, 2000). In this exploratory study, transitional stressors are defined as: childhood physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; loss of a caregiver or significant relative due to death or abandonment; exposure to physical violence by non-family members (e.g., bullying); or illness resulting in permanent physical disability. Trauma may produce disorganized attachments in childhood, which may lead to emotional and to social impairment in adulthood (Siegel, 1999). Consequently, traumatized individuals, who suffer from disorganized attachments, may seek to engage in activities which are emotionally predictable. An examination of the personal childhood histories from a sample of Nobel Prize winners in the field of physics provides support for the hypothesis that the study of physics may serve as an effective coping method for individuals who have experienced childhood trauma.

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