

PTSD VS COMPLEX PTSD (C-PTSD)

Basics Every Psychology
Aspirant Should Know



Let's have a quick look at the questions that might appear in your exams from this topic!

Q1: Which of the following is a key feature that differentiates Complex PTSD from PTSD?

A.

Presence of
flashbacks

B.

Exposure
to trauma

C.

Disturbances in
self-organization

D.

Hypervigilance

Read the full post carefully and try to solve it on your own.
(Answer is on the last slide!)



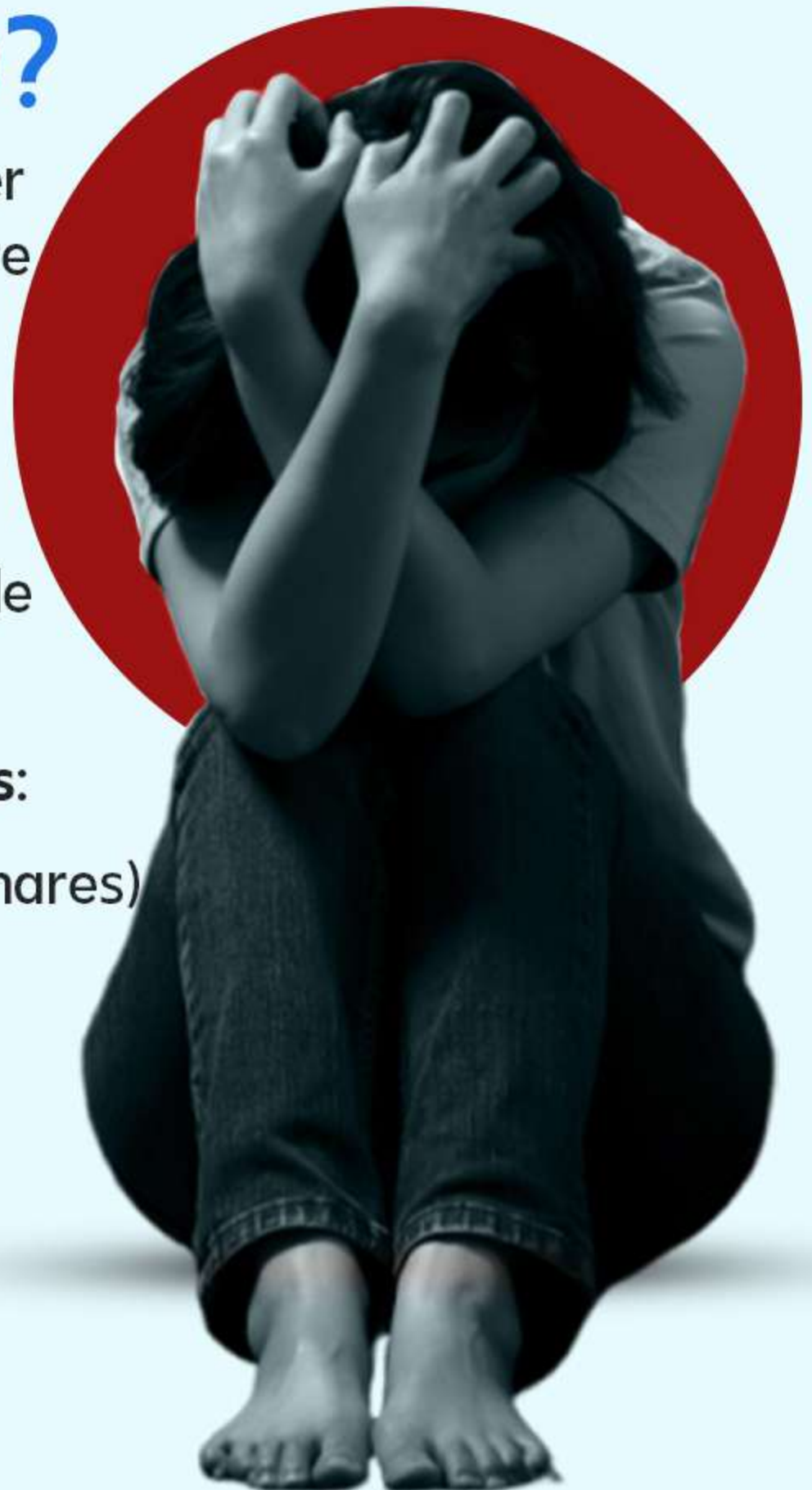
What is PTSD?

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) develops after exposure to a traumatic event (e.g., accident, assault, disaster).

Main idea: A fear-based disorder often linked to a single or discrete traumatic event

DSM-5-TR Symptom Clusters:

- **Intrusion** (flashbacks, nightmares)
- **Avoidance**
- **Negative alterations in cognition and mood**
- **Arousal** (hypervigilance, irritability)



What is Complex PTSD?

Complex PTSD (**C-PTSD**) develops due to prolonged or repeated trauma (e.g., abuse, neglect, captivity).

Main idea: Chronic trauma leading to disturbances in self and personality functioning

Recognized in the **ICD-11**, but not as a separate diagnosis in **DSM-5-TR**.



Key Similarities

Both PTSD and C-PTSD include:

- Exposure to trauma
- Re-experiencing (flashbacks, nightmares)
- Avoidance of trauma-related cues
- Persistent sense of threat (hypervigilance)



Key Differences

PTSD

- Typically linked to a single-event trauma
- Core symptoms are primarily fear-based
- No major disturbance in personality or self-concept

C-PTSD

- Results from chronic or repeated trauma
- Includes PTSD symptoms **plus** Disturbances in Self-Organization (**DSO**):
 - Emotional dysregulation
 - Negative self-concept
 - Interpersonal difficulties



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Q1 - C. Disturbances in self-organization