A PRE AND POST GROUP THERAPY ASSESSMENT OF THE HIGH THREAT PERCEPTION MODEL OF ILLNESS SUSCEPTIBILITY OF WICKRAM.

Peter V. Madill, MD and Ian Wickramasekera, Phd

Objectives: The purpose of this pilot study was to assess the potential relevance of the Wickram high threat perception model of illness susceptibility to a group of CFS patients meeting the CDC criteria for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in comparison to a group of age and sex matched controls.

Method: Patients for this pilot study were recruited through the first investigator’s private practice and a local chronic fatigue syndrome support group. From a larger pool, fourteen patients meeting the 1994 CDC criteria for CFS were chosen to participate in the pre and post group therapy assessment. Wickram’s high threat perception model of illness susceptibility has been receiving support in the behavioral medicine literature, especially in relationship to predicting and understanding core perpetuating factors in defined groups of chronically ill patients. This model involves the administration of a battery of psychometric tests, including a standardized biofeedback psychophysilogic evaluation, which generate the individualized data on the basis of which illness susceptibility risk is predicted by the Wickram high threat perception model. At the same time a similar group of age and sex matched controls were administered the same battery of tests that comprise the Wickram profile. The profile was administered before the group therapy experience and six months following the completion of the group process.

Results: While we are awaiting the six-month follow up data, comparison of the scores on the tests with those of the control group indicate significant differences between the CFS patients and the control group, which will be detailed in the poster presentation. At this time the six-month data will also be available.

Conclusions: The demonstration of clear differences in tests scores between the CFS group and the control group, point to the possible value of the Wickram high threat perception illness susceptibility model in understanding some aspects of patient’s susceptibility to CFS and the pathogenesis of CFS in these patients.

Communications should be addressed to:

Peter V. Madill, MD
Private Practice
7005 Hazel Cotter Ct. #93
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Keywords:
1. Hypnotic Vulnerability
2. Predispositions
3. High Threat Perception Model