Introduction

- Female incarceration rates in U.S. have been steadily rising in contrast to men’s decline
- Howard et al (2016) reported that Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been found in 40.2% of female prisoners
- Current study examines the relationship between social support, domestic violence, self-disturbance, and PTSD symptom severity

Methods

- 197 female prisoners from a Midwestern, minimum security correctional facility
- The Trauma System Inventory-2 (TSI-2; Briere, 2011) 136-item instrument measuring trauma symptoms among other variables
- Identified symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) including Self-Disturbance and Trauma
- Survey comprised of questions re domestic violence (Conflict Tactics Scale, Straus, 1979), other traumatic experiences, social support, PTSD symptoms (TSI-2), and self-disturbance (TSI-2)

Results

- Bivariate correlations conducted between trauma experiences, the Conflict Tactics Scale, social support, and scores on the TSI-2
- Showed significant positive correlation between domestic violence and trauma, and self-disturbance and Conflict Tactics Scale
- Showed significant negative correlation between social support and trauma; and self-disturbance and social support

Discussion

- Results indicate that the lower the social support and the higher the domestic violence experienced are related to higher scores on measures of trauma and self-disturbance
- The need for mental health services should be a priority in women’s prisons