

Becoming a Trauma-informed Agency

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▶
“Everyone has a right to have a future
that is not dictated by the past.”

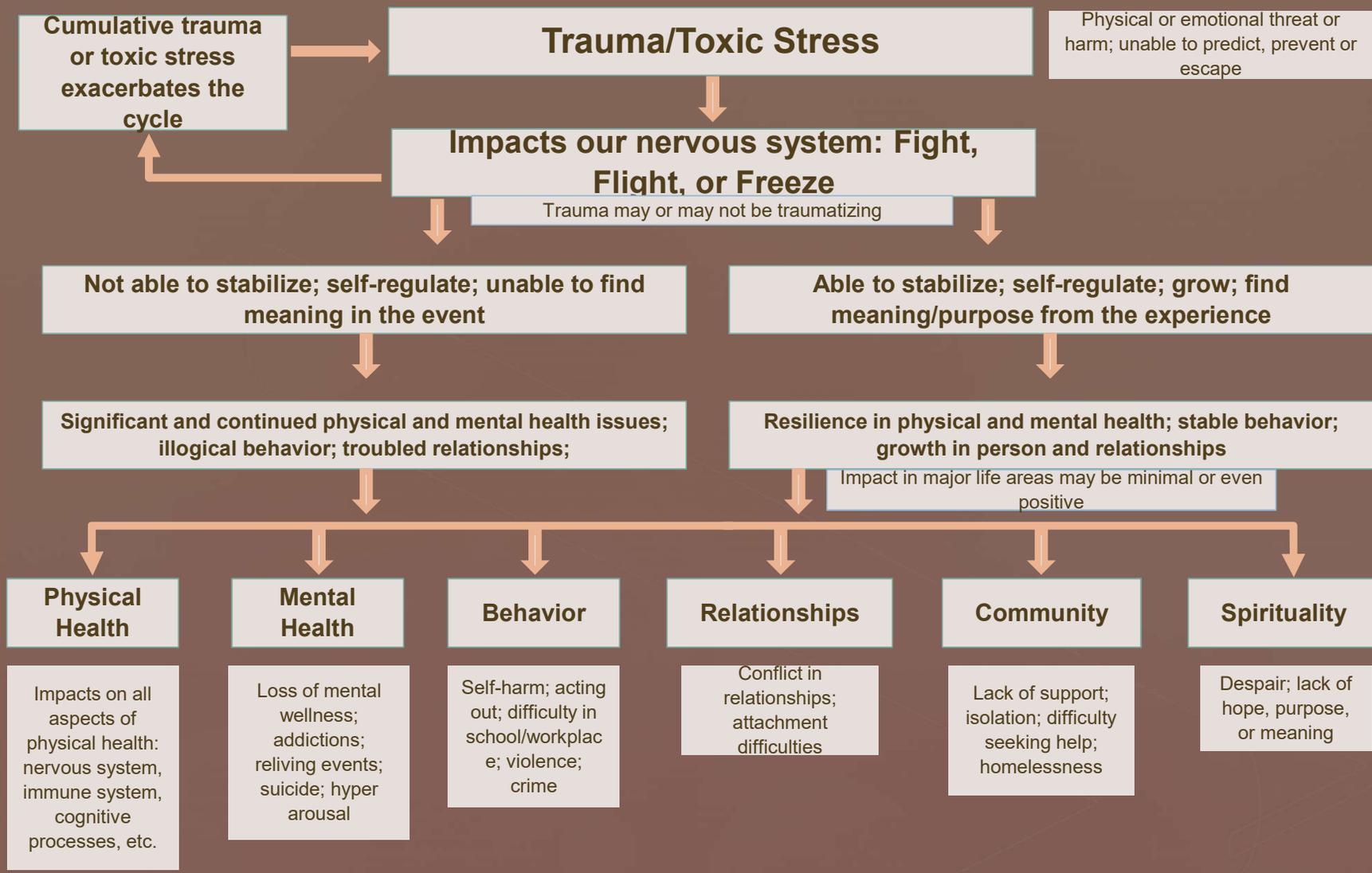
-Karen Saakvitne

Who Experiences Trauma?

- Anyone. No one is immune
- Individuals regardless of Age, Socio-economic status, Culture, Religion, Sexual Orientation
- Families- even people who did not directly experience the event
- Communities- when an event affects any of its members
- Cultures- by repeated denigration, attempts at assimilation, and genocide occur.
- Service Providers- after hearing stories or witnessing suffering
- Organizations- experiencing significant change or outside scrutiny

▶ Examples of Traumatic Life Experiences

- Physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse in childhood or adulthood
- In Childhood
 - neglect or abandonment (food insufficiency, lack of money to meet basic needs, homelessness)
 - death of a parent
 - divorce
 - family life that includes drug addiction, alcoholism, parental incarceration, violence
- Rape
- Serious medical illness or disease (disabling conditions, loss of function, invasive and distressing procedures)



▶
“Focusing on their strengths engages clients in their own process of change by instilling hope about the ultimate possibility of changing and creating a better life for themselves and their family.”

-ARC Community Services, Madison, WI

▸ Shifting the Narrative

Awareness of how trauma impacts people is essential to the healing process and replaces the “labeling” of people.

- What’s wrong with you?
- Why are you so lazy?
- Why don’t you just ask for help?
- You are sick
- You’re uncooperative
- You’re shutting people out by...

- Would it be helpful to talk about (the event)?
- You’ve had a tough couple of weeks, how are things today?
- You seem really...
- It sounds like...
- No wonder you feel...

The Four R's of TIC

1

Realize

All people at all levels have a basic **realization** about trauma, and how it can affect individuals, families, and communities.

3

Respond

Programs, organizations and communities **respond** by practicing a trauma-informed approach.

Recognize

People within organizations are able to **recognize** the signs and symptoms of trauma.

2

Resist Re-Traumatization

Organizational practices may compound trauma unintentionally, trauma informed organizations avoid this **re-traumatization**.

4

▸ Becoming a Trauma-informed Organization

- Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand the potential paths for healing;
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in staff, clients, patients, residents and others involved in the system; and
- Respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices and settings.

▶ Becoming a Trauma-informed Organization

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING

- Power & control: Do policies empower those being served or those providing the service?
- Doing with and not doing to
- Explaining what, why and how
- Offering real choices
- Flexibility
- Understanding and being able to identify fight, flight and freeze responses
- Focusing on strengths, not deficits
- Examining power issues within the organization and promoting democratic principles

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CREATING RESILIENCE

- Acknowledge the client's abilities to survive and even grow from adversity.
- Acknowledge the strength it takes to get to where the client currently is.
- Refer to the client as "someone who has experienced trauma," and who is more than what has happened to them.
- Focus on healing and recovery as "possible."
- Move beyond mere survival to the context of a healing process, and let the client decide what their path to healing consists of.
- Let the client know that you believe in them and support their efforts to heal.

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EMERGING PRACTICE STANDARDS

- Build relationships based on respect, trust and safety
- Strengths-based approach
- Frame questions with empathy, careful to not be judgmental
- Frame client's coping behaviors as a way to survive and explore alternative ways to cope
- Help client regulate difficult emotions
- Acknowledge that what happened was bad, but that the client is not a bad person
- Recognize that the client had no control over what happened
- Watch for a reduce triggers

Strategies For Encouraging Staff Wellness

- Encourage and incentivize self-care activities like counseling, meditation, exercise, and healthy eating
- Provide trainings that create awareness of chronic emotional stress and the importance of self-care
- Foster a culture that encourages staff to seek support, keeps caseloads manageable, and provides sufficient mental health and paid time off benefits
- Provide opportunities for staff to discuss feelings that arise from client interactions

24-Hour Lines

Crisis Hotline: Text CONNECT to 741741
(U.S. only)

Child Abuse Hotline: Call 800-4-A-CHILD
(800-422-4453)

National Center for Missing & Exploited
Children: 800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)

Victims of Crime: 800-FYI-CALL (800-394-
2255)

Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-
SAFE (800-799-7233)

For a full listing:

[https://pa.performcare.org/self-
management-
wellness/trauma/hotlines.aspx](https://pa.performcare.org/self-management-wellness/trauma/hotlines.aspx)

The National Center for Trauma Informed Mental
Health

www.samhsa.gov/nctic

The National Trauma Consortium (NTC)

www.nationaltraumaconsortium.org

Substance Abuse Mental Health services
administration's

National Mental Health Information Centre (SAMHSA)
U.S.A.

www.samhsa.gov

The Trauma Center at JRI

www.traumacenter.org

Books for Service Providers and Those Affected
by Trauma. The following website contains a
comprehensive list of books on trauma in a variety of
areas for service providers and survivors of trauma

www.parentbooks.ca/Booklists.htm

EVALUATIONS

The Partnership Wants Your Feedback!



Please be sure to **complete** the evaluation
for this session **online**,
via the **CAPCON18 Event App**.

Thanks in Advance for your Cooperation!