Trauma and Its Impact on Us

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Today's Presenter

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DEEPAK CHOPRA'S 3-MINUTE MEDITATION
Why Address Trauma Now?

ANNUAL COST OF TRAUMA

$216B CANCER
$245B DIABETES
$313B HEART DISEASE
$671B TRAUMA
Overview

• Overview of trauma
  • Prevalence and impact
  • Trauma and the human stress response
What is Trauma?

Definition (SAMHSA Experts 2012) includes three key elements:

Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as overwhelming or life-changing and that has profound effects on the individual’s psychological development or well-being, often involving a physiological, social, and/or spiritual impact.
What is your personal identity?

1. Write 1-5 on a piece of paper
2. Write 5 personal identities you have
3. Cross off 3 & 5
4. Write in __________________________ on 3
Intergenerational (Historical) Trauma

“Cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences.”

Microaggressions are everyday experiences of discrimination, racism, and daily hassles that are targeted at individuals from diverse racial and ethnic groups (Evans-Campbell, 2008). Health disparities, substance abuse, and mental illness are all commonly linked to experiences of historical trauma (Michaels, Rousseau, and Yang, 2010).
Intergenerational/ Historical Trauma Events

- Genocides
- Slavery
- Pandemics
- Massacres
- Prohibition/destruction of cultural practices
- Discrimination/Systemic prejudice
- Forced relocation
Epigenetics

Intergenerational (Historical) Trauma Effects

Symptoms of Historical Trauma:
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Isolation
- Loss of Sleep
- Shame
- Discomfort around white people
- Anger
- Fear and Distrust
- Substance Abuse
- Violence and Suicide

Adversity

Resilience

This, too, shall pass.
Cultural Humility

A *life-long* process of self-reflection & self-critique to understand personal biases & to develop & maintain mutually respectful partnership based on mutual trust.
Cultural Humility

Practicing Cultural Humility

A - sk questions in a humble, safe manner
S - eek Self-Awareness
S - uspend Judgment
E - xpress kindness and compassion
S - upport a safe and welcoming environment
S - tart where the patient is at

- Lisa Boesen
Trauma Shapes Our Beliefs

- **Worldview**
- **Spirituality**
- **Identity**

We do not see things the way they are. We see them as we are.

Heather Marcus

www.TheNationalCouncil.org
“Resiliency is the capability of individuals to cope successfully in the face of significant change, adversity, or risk. The capacity changes over time and is enhanced by protective factors in the individual and environment.”

(Stewart et al., 1997)
Protective Factors

Behaviors, characteristics and qualities inherent in some personalities that will assist in recovery after exposure to a traumatic event

- Environment
- A reliable support system (friends, family)
- Access to safe and stable housing
- Timely and appropriate care from first responders
- Behaviors
- Good self care, such as sleeping at least 8 hours a night
- Eating nutritious foods
- Exercise
- Practicing good boundaries
- Using positive coping mechanisms vs. negative coping mechanisms
Survival Mode Response
Normal Response to Traumatic Events

• Feelings become intense and sometimes are unpredictable
• Thoughts and behavior patterns are affected by the trauma
• Recurring emotional reactions are common
• Interpersonal relationships often become strained
• Physical symptoms may accompany the extreme stress
Responses to Traumatic Events (in the moment)

- Physical
  - Aches and pains such as headaches, backaches, etc.
  - Weakness, dizziness, and fatigue most of the time.
  - Heart palpitations, profuse sweating, and chills
  - Changes in sleep patterns
  - Changes in appetite and digestive problems
  - Being easily startled by noises and/or unexpected touch.

- Emotional
  - Increased susceptibility to allergies, colds, and illnesses.
  - Increased alcohol consumption and/or substance use.
  - Anxiety, depression, mood swings, self-destructive behavior, flashbacks, numbness and phobias
Impact of Trauma

- Perception of trauma varies among individuals
- Trauma is something that **overwhelms our coping capacity**
  - Affects the whole self
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Intellectual
  - Spiritual
Discharge of Trauma

easy charge  
sympathetic

easy discharge  
parasympathetic
Parasympathetic
(rest and digest)
Sympathetic
(fight, flight or freeze)
Discharge of Trauma

easy charge

sympathetic

parasympathetic

easy discharge
When trauma is not discharged
FIGHT  FLIGHT oohlala!  FREEZE  

FIGHT  FLIGHT oohlala!  FREEZE
Trauma’s Impact on the Body

**FIGHT or FLIGHT**

**NOTICEABLE EFFECTS**
- Pupils dilate
- Mouth goes dry
- Neck + shoulder muscles tense
- Heart pumps faster
- Chest pains
- Palpitations
- Sweating
- Muscles tense
- Breathing fast + shallow - hyperventilation
- Oxygen needed for muscles

**HIDDEN EFFECTS**
- Brain gets body ready for action
- Adrenaline released for fight/flight
- Blood pressure rises
- Liver releases glucose to provide energy for muscles
- Digestion slows - or ceases
- Sphincters close - then relax
- Cortisol released (depresses the immune system)
Impact of Trauma on Behavior Triggers

External reminders of traumatic event
- Smell
- Sound
- Sight
- Touch
- Taste

Internal reminders of traumatic event
- Emotions
- Thoughts
What’s Sitting in the Room from Trauma

- Anger
- Disrupted Mood
- Defiance
- Fear
- Physical Illness
- Guilt
- Sleep problems
- Perfectionism
- Persistent irritability
- Hyper arousal
- Mistrust
- Inattention
- Need to control
- Sensory sensitivity
- Trauma re-enactment
- Disability
- Dependent behavior
- Dissociation
- Depression
- Traumatic grief

- Low self-esteem
- Aggression
- Avoidant behavior
- Dissociation
- Sensory sensitivity
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Results in Vicious Loop
Trauma Prevalence and Research
Adverse Childhood Experiences

WHAT ARE THEY?

ACEx are

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

HOW PREVALENT ARE ACEx?

WHAT IMPACT DO ACEx HAVE?

The three types of ACEx include:

ABUSE
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

NEGLECT
- Physical
- Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION
- Mental Illness
- Incarcerated Relative
- Mother treated violently
- Substance Abuse
- Divorce

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Finding the ACE Score

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? Or, act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Or, ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? Or, attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

4. Did you often or very often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or, your family didn’t look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

5. Did you often or very often feel that you didn’t have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? Or, your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
ACEs Questions cont.

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?

7. Was your mother or stepmother often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? Or, sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Or, ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?

9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?

10. Did a household member go to prison?

Now add up your “Yes” answers. This is your ACE Score
Beyond the 10 ACEs

DISCRIMINATION
POVERTY
RACISM
OTHER VIOLENCE

INTEGENERATIONAL
AND CULTURAL TRAUMA
SEPARATION
ADJUSTMENT OR OTHER
MAJOR LIFE CHANGES
BEREAVEMENT AND
SURVIVORSHIP
ADULT RESPONSIBILITIES
AS A CHILD

https://numberstory.org/
Results Overview

Adverse childhood experiences are surprisingly common, although typically concealed and unrecognized.

ACEs still have a profound effect 50 years later, although now transformed from psychosocial experience into organic disease, social malfunction, and mental illness.

Adverse childhood experiences are the main determinant of the health and social well-being of the nation.
The Adverse Childhood Experience Study: Behavioral Heath at the Foundation of all Health

Over 17,000 adults studied from 1995-1997

Almost 2/3 of participants reported at least one ACE

Over 1/5 reported three or more ACEs, including abuse, neglect, and other types of childhood trauma

Major links identified between early childhood trauma and long term health outcomes,

- including increased risk of many chronic illnesses and early death

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and adolescent health. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/
Dose-Response Relationship: More ACEs = More Disease

- Severe obesity: 1.6 x
- Diabetes: 1.6 x
- Cigarette Smokers: 2.0 x
- Fair/poor health: 2.2 x
- Hepatitis/jaundice: 2.4 x
- Had an STD: 2.5 x
- 50+ intercourse partners: 3.2 x
- **COPD**: 3.9 x
- Depressed 2 weeks: 4.6 x
- Illegal drug use: 4.7 x
- Alcoholic: 7.4 x
- Injected drugs: 10.3 x
- Suicide attempt: 12.2 x

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Life-Long Physical, Mental & Behavioral Health Outcomes Linked to ACEs

- Alcohol, tobacco & other drug addiction
- Auto-immune disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease & ischemic heart disease
- Depression, anxiety & other mental illness
- Diabetes
- Multiple divorces
- Fetal death
- High risk sexual activity, STDs & unintended pregnancy
- Intimate partner violence—perpetration & victimization
- Liver disease
- Lung cancer
- Obesity
- Self-regulation & anger management problems
- Skeletal fractures
- Suicide attempts
- Work problems—including absenteeism, productivity & on-the-job injury
New research: Inflammation as Key Pathway for Major Chronic Diseases

Emerging information about interactions between a person’s experience, brain function, and coordination of the neurologic, immune, and endocrine systems.

Inflammation appears to be a common denominator in the pathway to many chronic illnesses.

Disruptions of these systems, through overwhelming adverse experience and trauma, causes inflammation resulting in acute and chronic illness and even early death.
Diseases implicated in the trauma inflammation pathway

- Asthma
- Autoimmune Disease
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Perinatal morbidity and mortality including the occurrence of pre-eclampsia, premature birth, low birth weight, and infant mortality
Children of Parents with ACE Scores ≥4, are:

1. 6.3x more likely to experience household substance abuse
2. 10.4x more likely to experience homelessness
3. 12.7x more likely to experience neglect
4. 44x more likely to be exposed to intimate partner violence

ACEs and its Effects on Children

According to Dr. Chris Blodgett, children with three or more ACEs are:

• 3 times more likely to fail
• 5 times more likely to have severe attendance problems
• 6 times more likely to have severe behavior problems
• 4 times more likely to have self-reports of poor health

According to SAMHSA, children with 2 or more ACEs are:

• 3 times more likely to repeat a grade
• 2 times more likely to have a special health care need
Hierarchy of Brain Development

- Brainstem: Basic life functions
  - Blood Pressure
  - Heart Rate
  - Temperature
- Midbrain: Motor control
  - Motor Regulation
  - “Arousal”
- Limbic: Emotional control
  - Emotional Reactivity
  - Sexual Behavior
  - “Attachment”
- Cortex: Higher mental functions
  - Affiliation
  - Concrete Thought
  - Abstract Thought

Complexity and Plasticity
Impact of Trauma on Brain Development

Typical Development
- Cognition
- Social/Emotional
- Regulation
- Survival

Developmental Trauma
- Cognition
- Social/Emotional
- Regulation
- Survival

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Survival Mode Response

Inability to
• Respond
• Learn
• Process
# Arousal Continuum

Adapted from Dr. Bruce Perry’s 
*The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal State</th>
<th>CALM</th>
<th>ALERT</th>
<th>ALARM</th>
<th>FEAR</th>
<th>TERROR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Style</td>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>CONCRETE</td>
<td>EMOTIONAL</td>
<td>REACTIVE</td>
<td>REFLEXIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulating Brain Region</td>
<td>NEOCORTEX Cortex</td>
<td>CORTEX Limbic</td>
<td>LIMBIC Midbrain</td>
<td>MIDBRAIN Brainstem</td>
<td>BRAINSTEM Autonomic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissociative Continuum</td>
<td>REST</td>
<td>AVOIDANCE</td>
<td>COMPLIANCE Robotic</td>
<td>DISSOCIATION Fetal Rocking</td>
<td>FAINTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arousal Continuum</td>
<td>REST</td>
<td>VIGILANCE</td>
<td>RESISTANCE Crying</td>
<td>DEFIANCE Tantrums</td>
<td>AGGRESSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Time</td>
<td>EXTENDED FUTURE</td>
<td>DAYS HOURS</td>
<td>HOURS MINUTES</td>
<td>MINUTES SECONDS</td>
<td>NO SENSE OF TIME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relational Contagion
A calm, regulated adult can regulate a dysregulated person.

BUT
A dysregulated adult can NEVER calm anyone.
Co-regulation
Reactive child and well-regulated adult (e.g. teacher)

Present, parallel, patient, persistent – facilitate multisensory, multi-domain, repetitive activity

Rhythm & Relationship = Regulation

Time

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Co-dysregulation
Reactive child and overwhelmed adult (e.g. teacher)

Child

Adult

Terror
Fear
Alarm
Alert
Calm

Present, overwhelmed, frustrated, angry = escalation = increased incidents/ restraint

Time
Impact the Lower Brain

- Rhythmic
- Respectful
- Rewarding
- Repetitive
- Relational
- Relevant
Activating the Lower Brain
Activating the Lower Brain

Movement
Activating the Lower Brain

Touch
Loneliness
Trauma and Addictions
Trauma is a risk factor for Substance Abuse

Substance Abuse is a risk factor for Trauma
Gabor Mate’s Definition of Addiction

Any behavior that is associated with:

- Craving and temporary relief
- Long-term negative consequences

That a person is unable to give up

Early emotional loss is the template for all addictions
"If you knew how excruciatingly uncomfortable it is to live in my own skin, you would understand why I do not want to be present in my body and in this world."

- Anonymous
As Gabor Mate notes in his book, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*, those with substance use disorder

“self-medicate to soothe their emotional pain – but more than that, their brain development was sabotaged by their traumatic experiences.”

Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging – something we’ve experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection.  

_Brene Brown_
“An addict needs shame like a man dying of thirst needs salt water.”

-Terrence Real
What can we do?

• Medications
• Recovery coaches
• Technology
• Prioritize the relationship
• Seek ways to build connection
• Embrace compassion instead of punishment
Recognize our Humanity

We’re all just trying to survive
We frequently observe misplaced Coping Strategies
We are all part of the problem therefore we can all be part of the Solution
Questions & Discussion
Resources

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2013) *Health Policy Brief: Patient Engagement*. People actively involved in their health and health care tend to have better outcomes—and, some evidence suggests, lower costs. [https://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2013/rwjf404446](https://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2013/rwjf404446)


Trauma 101- [https://youtu.be/1pNwHMjPrxY](https://youtu.be/1pNwHMjPrxY)


Trauma-informed Care in BH Services - [https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA14-4816/SMA14-4816.pdf](https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA14-4816/SMA14-4816.pdf)
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Thank You!