The Lions, Zebras, and Possums You Meet Everyday

Holly Nemec, MA, CEL
Tara Carney, MSc, MA, PLPC, CMHL
BHR
This is a **Normal** and **Predictable** response to a chaotic environment.
Let’s meet Jack and Jill
What Is Trauma?

Trauma is an event, or events, that are more overwhelming than expected.

Trauma overwhelms our usual abilities to cope.

Trauma makes us feel hopeless, helpless, and powerless.
Who Defines Trauma?

An event is deemed traumatic by the individual experiencing it.
Why Is This Important?

70% of adults in the US have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives.

That’s 223.4 million people!
ACE Study

• Why is this a **hot topic** in the social services field right now?
• What is it?
• [https://acestoohigh.com/2016/04/05/five-minute-video-primer-about-adverse-childhood-experiences-study/](https://acestoohigh.com/2016/04/05/five-minute-video-primer-about-adverse-childhood-experiences-study/)
ACE Study Findings

An association between childhood adverse experiences and later problems with social functioning, physical health, and mental health, including:

- Cigarette smoking
- Alcohol/IV Drug Use
- Chronic Depression
- Attempted Suicide
- Teen Pregnancy
- Being Raped
- Serious Job Problems
- Having more than 50 sexual partners
- Experiencing hallucinations
FACTS

• Missouri higher than national average
• Urban population are almost twice as likely to have an ACE score of 4 or higher
Poverty: Crisis to Crisis
Back to Jack and Jill
Trauma is to the human brain what a virus is to a computer operating system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lizard Brain</th>
<th>Mammal Brain</th>
<th>Human Brain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brain Stem</td>
<td>Limbic System</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cerebellum</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fight or Flight or Freeze</td>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memories</td>
<td>Abstract Thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autopilot</td>
<td>Decisions</td>
<td>Consciousness</td>
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We Care, We Listen, We Respond...24 Hours a Day
REGULATION:
The ability to experience and maintain stress within one’s window of tolerance. Generally referred to as being calm, focused, or relaxed. This term is utilized by literally every scientific discipline.

DYSREGULATION:
The experience of stress outside of one’s window of tolerance, generally referred to as being stressed out or in a state of distress. It is believed that affect dysregulation is a fundamental mechanism involved in all psychiatric disorders. (Dr. Allan Schore—Affect Dysregulation and Disorders of the Self)
Window of Stress Tolerance

- Jack
- Jill

- Level of Stress
- Window of Tolerance

We Care, We Listen, We Respond...24 Hours a Day
## Dysregulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hyper-Arousal</th>
<th>Hypo-Arousal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Unable to focus or sit still</td>
<td>• Defiant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cannot adhere to rules</td>
<td>• Withdraws from peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aggressive</td>
<td>• Tardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Resistant to directives</td>
<td>• Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Argumentative</td>
<td>• Dissociates—shuts down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anxious</td>
<td>• Avoids tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impulsive</td>
<td>• Numbs out—”I don’t care”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk-taking behaviors</td>
<td>• Forgetful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We Care, We Listen, We Respond...24 Hours a Day
Social Dominance Theory

1. The *perception* that someone is trying to dominate and/or control.
2. Perceived restriction of movement and action.
3. Perceived or real forcing of attention or focus on approved focus.
4. Perceived disrespect of status, power or role.
Epigenetics

• The study of changes in organisms caused by modification of gene expression rather than alteration of the genetic code itself.

• *Say What?*
# Impact of Trauma on Worldview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Development</th>
<th>Developmental Trauma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Nurturing &amp; stable attachments with adults</td>
<td>• Basic mistrust of adults/inability to depend on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Belief in a predictable &amp; benevolent world/good things will happen</td>
<td>• Belief that the world is unsafe/bad things will happen &amp; it is usually my fault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feelings of positive self-worth/others will see my strength</td>
<td>• Assumption that others will not like me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Optimism about the future</td>
<td>• Fear &amp; pessimism about future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feeling that I can have a positive impact on the world</td>
<td>• Feelings of hopelessness &amp; lack of control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Can We Do?

We change the question from “What’s wrong with you?” to “What happened to you?”

We create a trauma-sensitive culture by recognizing symptoms as survival skills.

We offer a different experience by creating a compassionate, caring, nonjudgmental environment.
Back to Jack and Jill
Trauma Informed Care

Safety
Empowerment
Collaboration
Choice
Trust/Transparency
Cultural Competence

We Care, We Listen, We Respond...24 Hours a Day
Strategies For Establishing Safety

- Speak calmly
- Clear & consistent rules for managing behavior & setting limits
- Establish yourself as a safe individual. Create an environment of safety and respect.
- Talk about safety and what steps you will take to help the individual be safe.
- Focus on the subtext in addition to content
Strategies To Establish Empowerment

• Allow the individual to tell her/his/their story
  • Minimal interruptions
  • Ask questions only to clarify; use “I” statements

• Avoid personalizing
  • Non-judgmental attitude
  • Avoid arguing or correcting

• Build on strengths and competency
  • What is the individual already doing well
Strategies To Establish Collaboration

• “How can I *help* you?”
• “How can we work together?”
Strategies To Establish Choice

• What choices are safe for you to allow an individual to make?
  – Hospitalization
  – Radio Station
  – Environment
Strategies To Establish Trust & Transparency

• Explain next steps
  – Will they have to tell their story again?
  – Will you have to search the individual?
  – Model Appropriate Behavior
  – Explain transitions

• Don’t make promises you can’t keep
Strategies To Establish Cultural Competency

• Try to use non-offensive language; if you make a mistake, back up, apologize, and try again
• Be aware of your own biases and beliefs and judgments
• Increase your own competencies
Ask Yourselves….

• “How can I create a situation where he/she/they feel safe, make choices and feel understood?”
Resources


“National Center for Trauma Informed Care Home” The National Center for Trauma informed Care (NCTIC) National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, NCTIC, April. 2015, www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic/
Holly Nemec
hnemec@bhrworldwide.com

Tara Carney
tcarney@bhrworldwide.com