



TRAUMA DURING COVID-19: HEALING THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

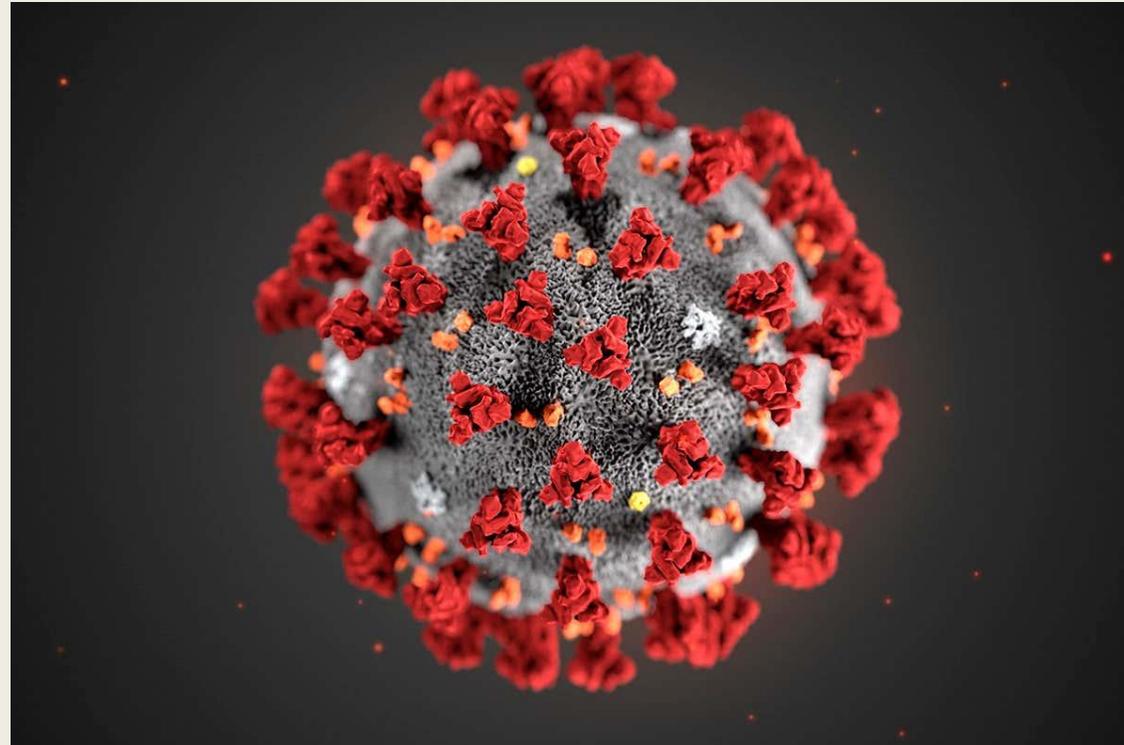
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Intent of this Training

- To Share
- To Explore
- To Identify
- To Answer
- Most Importantly – To Remind

COVID-19



“One size *does not* fit all”



Individual Responses are Multifaceted

- Pre-pandemic circumstances and resources
 - *Prior exposure to adversity*
 - *Physical and mental health vulnerabilities*
 - *Economic and social supports*
- Exposures encountered since the pandemic:
 - *Illness of a family member or a resident*
 - *Loss of job or health insurance*
 - *Job status – essential health care workers*
 - *Time immersed in social media, news, over-exposure to information*
 - *Community-level stressors – e.g., “Hot spots”*

Trauma-Informed Care

- SAMHSA's Trauma-Informed Approach:
 - *Behavioral Health is essential to health*
 - *Prevention works*
 - *Treatment is effective*

Trauma Informed Care Elements

Understanding the **prevalence** of trauma

Recognizing how trauma **impacts** individuals

Putting this knowledge into **practice**

to **actively resist re-traumatization**

Prevalence of Trauma: Approach



Prevalence of Trauma: Approach



Video: Power of Empathy

What is Trauma?

Individual trauma results from an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances **experienced** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being

Potential Traumatic Events

Abuse

- *Emotional*
- *Sexual*
- *Physical*
- *Domestic violence*
- *Witnessing violence*
- *Bullying*
- *Cyberbullying*
- *Institutional*

Loss

- *Death*
- *Abandonment*
- *Neglect*
- *Separation*
- *Natural disaster*
- *Accidents*
- *Terrorism*
- *War*

Chronic Stressors

- *Poverty*
- *Racism*
- *Invasive medical procedure*
- *Community trauma*
- *Historical trauma*
- *Family member with substance use disorder*

Prevalence of Trauma

Exposure to trauma is ubiquitous: seven out of ten respondents worldwide and nine out of ten adults in the USA report experiencing one or more lifetime traumas.

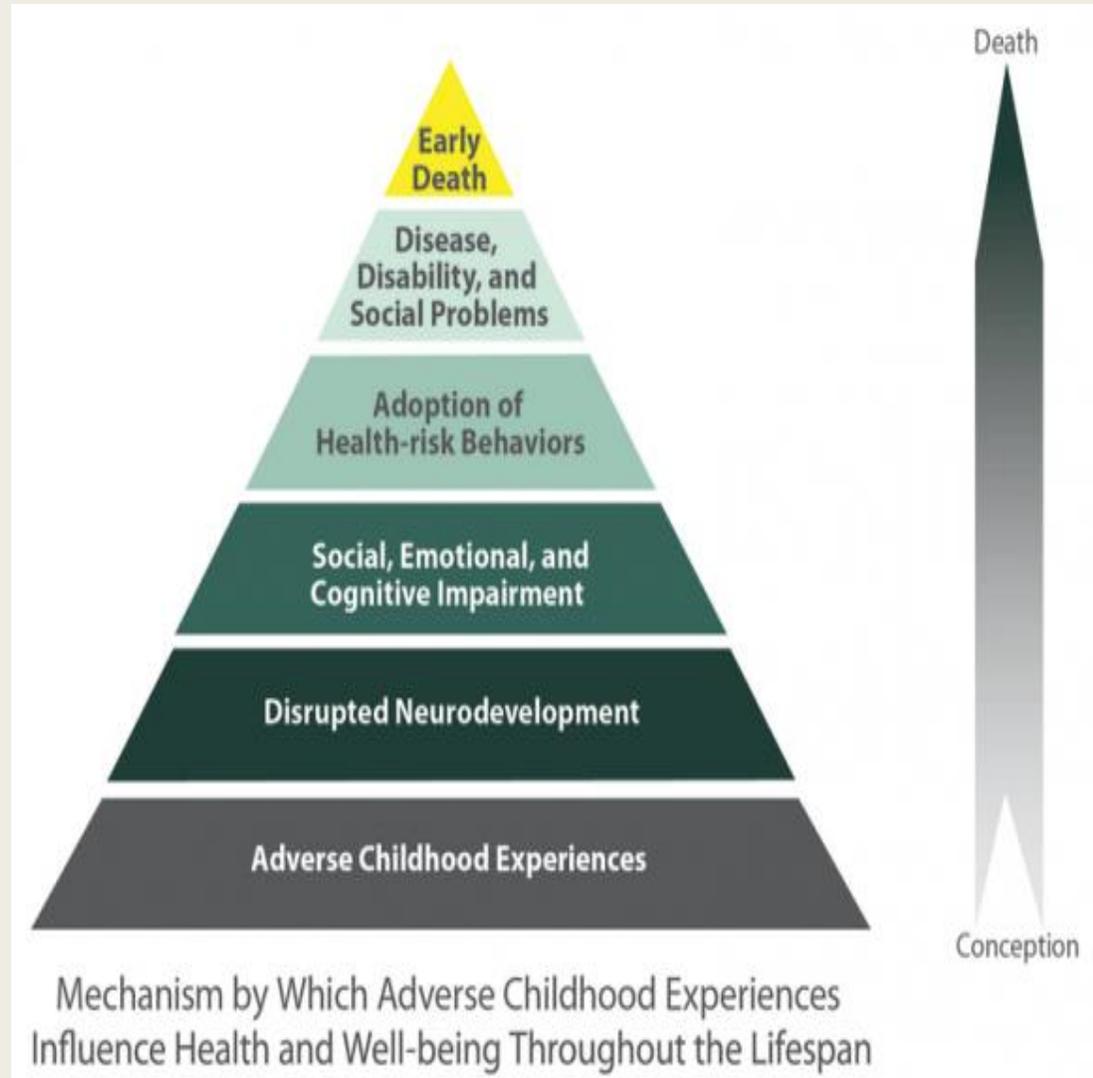
Impact of Trauma



Impact of Trauma on the Brain

- The brain has a bottom-up organization
- Experiences build brain architecture
- Fear activates the amygdala and shuts down the frontal lobes of the cortex.
- Toxic stress derails healthy development, and interferes with normal functioning

Impact of Trauma: Adverse Childhood Experiences



Impact of Trauma

The effect of trauma on an individual can be conceptualized as a normal response to an abnormal situation

Impact of Trauma: Problems OR Adaptations?

Fight

**“Non-compliant, combative”
OR
Struggling to regain or hold onto
personal power**

Flight

**“Treatment resistant, uncooperative”
OR
Disengaging, withdrawing**

Freeze

**“Passive, unmotivated”
OR
Giving in to those in power**

WHAT SKILLS CAN YOU DEVELOP TO
HELP OTHERS?



Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Identifying and Validating Feelings

People who have experienced traumatic events, particularly at the hands of a significant caregiver, were given contradictory messages, dismissed, ignored, silenced, abandoned, blamed, shamed, told they had no rights to feel, etc.

You have repeated opportunities to offer corrective experiences.

Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Identifying and Validating Feelings

Look for non-verbal emotional cues, e.g., eye contact, facial expression, tone of voice, body posture, movement and gestures, rhythm and rate of voice.

Reflect other's emotional state.
"It sounds like you feel very angry about this."

After reflecting feelings, I am able to validate the emotion.
"You had to wait three days to get an answer, and your question was really important to you. I understand why you're mad about this."

Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Regulating Feelings

A significant outcome of having an overwhelmed nervous system is emotional dysregulation. This can make it harder to use skills learned in the past.

Dementia can also undermine accessing skills to regulate emotions.

Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Regulating Feelings

When a person starts to feel overwhelmed, how can they bring themselves back to emotional balance?

What brings you back to balance when feeling stressed?

Use GROUNDING strategies

- Focus on breathing
- Redirection
- Distraction

Trauma Informed Care Skill

Development:

Understanding the Stress Response

The nervous system's most important function is to keep us alive by alerting us to danger.

Many people are under and/or over responsive to even the slightest perception of danger. Behaviors may include violence, running away, self-abuse or shutting down.

Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Appreciation

The survival brain becomes preoccupied with pain & danger but can be distracted when redirected and reminded of pleasure, fun, security, belonging, joy, beauty, humor, etc.

Trauma Informed Care Skill Development: Reason for Being

Trauma triggers can illicit existential questions bout life and death, about good and evil.

What aspects of your life do you have a deep connection to?

What brings purpose and meaning to your life?

Be able to talk to other people about what makes them unique and to help them connect with activities that promote a sense of hope and value.

Help others identify aspects of their lives that bring meaning and purpose.



Thank you



Trauma Informed Care: Further Reading

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