

# TRAUMA

## WHAT TO CONSIDER IN YOUR GRANT WORK WHEN WORKING WITH SURVIVORS (PART ONE)

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**GRANTS FOR OUTREACH  
AND SERVICES TO  
UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS**  
THROUGH THE OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



# Agenda

- Objectives
- Overview of Trauma
- Overview of Organizations and Trauma
- Healing/Coping Strategies
- Reflections



# Objectives

- Describe trauma.
- Identify and describe various forms of trauma.
- Delineate trauma experiences when working with underserved populations.
- Briefly explore ideas related to trauma-informed responses.
- Learn basic concepts related to trauma and its potential impacts on individuals and organizations.
- Identify and describe self-care/healing practices.

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?



# Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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



## American Psychological Association (APA)

- *“Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster.”*



# Trauma is...

- Emotional response
- Physical response
- Impacts an individual's or a community's functioning (i.e., social, emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical)
- Intersectional
- Intergenerational
- Historical

# SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA





# Symptoms of trauma can be...

- Anger
- Persistent feelings of sadness and despair
- Nightmares and flashbacks (i.e., re-experiencing the trauma)
- Unpredictable emotions
- Physical symptoms, such as nausea and headaches
- Intense feelings of guilt, as if they are somehow responsible for the event
- An altered sense of shame
- Feelings of isolation and hopelessness



# Symptoms of trauma can be...

- Headaches, backaches, stomachaches, etc.
- Sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- More susceptible to colds and illnesses
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating
- Fear, depression, anxiety
- Outbursts of anger or rage
- Emotional swings
- Tendency to isolate oneself or feelings of detachment
- Difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal
- Self-blame, survivor guilt, or shame
- Diminished interest in everyday activities
- Racing heartbeat

# TYPES OF TRAUMA



# Types of Trauma

- Sexual assault
- Child maltreatment (i.e., abuse or neglect)
- DV
- Rape
- War related trauma
- Medical trauma
- Traumatic loss
- Hate violence
- Accidents and natural disasters
- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Witnessing acts of violence
- Grief and loss
- Cultural and intergenerational trauma
- Historical trauma
- Vicarious trauma

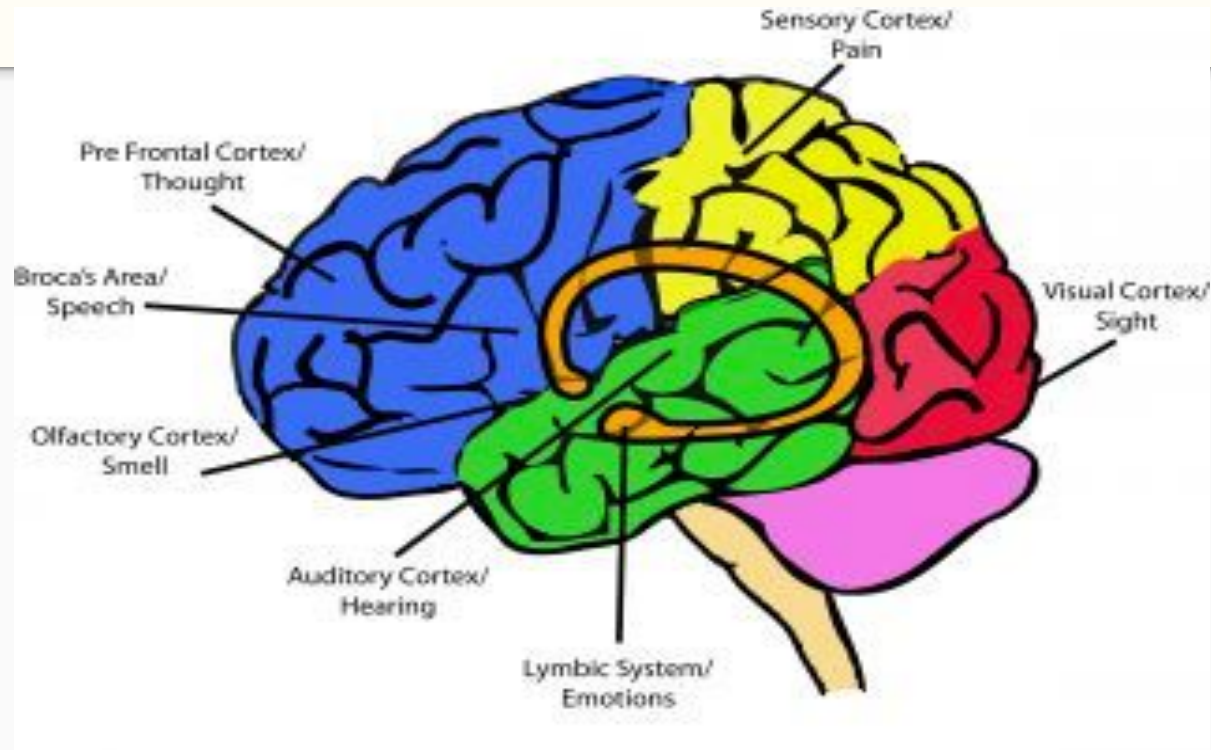




# Trauma and the brain

- Difficult to treat because the trauma stored throughout the brain
- A traumatic experience becomes a long-lived deeply embedded memory

# Trauma and the brain





# Trauma and the brain

- Trauma and the Brain



# HISTORICAL TRAUMA



# Historical Trauma

- **Historical trauma is a form of trauma that impacts entire communities. It refers to the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, as a result of group traumatic experiences, that is transmitted across generations within a community. Unresolved grief and anger often accompany this trauma and contribute to physical and behavioral health disorders. This type of trauma is often associated with racial and ethnic population groups in the United States who have suffered major intergenerational losses and assaults on their culture and well-being.**



# Historical Trauma

- [What is Historical Trauma?](#)

# VICARIOUS TRAUMA



# Vicarious Trauma

- A state of tension and preoccupation of the stories/trauma experiences described by clients





# Vicarious Trauma

- *Can affect*
  - Behavioral
  - Interpersonal
  - Personal
  - Personal values/beliefs
  - Job performance



# Vicarious Trauma

## Signs and Symptoms

- difficulty talking about their feelings
- free floating anger and/or irritation
- startle effect/being jumpy
- over-eating or under-eating
- difficulty falling asleep and/or staying asleep
- losing sleep over clients
- worried that they are not doing enough for their clients
- dreaming about their clients/their clients' trauma experiences
- diminished joy toward things they once enjoyed
- feeling trapped by their work
- diminished feelings of satisfaction and personal accomplishment
- dealing with intrusive thoughts of clients with especially severe trauma histories
- feelings of hopelessness associated with their work/clients
- blaming others





# Organizations and Trauma

- Must address trauma in a safe and sensitive way



# “Tone at the Top”

## Organizational Intentions

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Theoretical orientations
- Philosophies
- Principles
- Framing of issues

## Organizational Mechanisms

- Policies
- People
  - Staff
  - Volunteers
  - Board members
  - Those served
- Physical space
- Community
- Funders



# Trauma-Informed SA Advocacy

## ***5 CORE COMPONENTS:***

- Provide survivors with information about the traumatic effects of abuse
- Adapt programs and services to meet survivors' trauma and mental health related needs
- Create opportunities for survivors to discuss their responses to trauma
- Offer resources and referrals to survivors
- Reflect on our own and our programs' practice



# Trauma-Informed Practice Tips

## Welcoming Environments

- Offer trauma-informed services
- Understand symptoms as adaptations
- Adapt the physical space

## Strategies to Increase Survivor Access

### ***ASK OURSELVES:***

- How might this make someone feel? What are some ways that I can support survivors to manage feelings?
- Is information provided in ways that a person can understand easily? Are choices offered thoughtfully?
- How are they experiencing my interactions with them?

**WHAT CAN WE DO?  
WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO?**



# Coping Strategies and Self-Care

- Staff
- Individual
- Healing



# Coping and Self-Care Strategies

- Acknowledge that you have been through traumatic events
- Connect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event or experienced other trauma
- Exercise
- Relaxation techniques (i.e., yoga, stretching, massage, meditation, deep muscle relaxation, etc.)
- Music, art, other diversions
- Avoid over-using stimulants like caffeine, sugar or nicotine
- Commit to something personally meaningful and important every day
- Write about your experience for yourself or to share with others







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