

# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE



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# ASSUMPTIONS:

- Disasters do not only highlight inequity but often make them worse - “the best for the most” mentality
- We are experiencing uninterrupted, prolonged toxic stress – many communities have been experiencing this prior to COVID 19
- Disproportional experiences of events AND impacts for communities already impacted by structural violence, system oppression, poverty
- Holding complexity is necessary in our efforts
- Humans are resilient. Post Trauma Growth. People heal, thrive, flourish.

# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

“A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed:  
**realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;  
**recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and  
**responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices,  
and seeks to actively **resist re-traumatization**”

(SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach, 2014  
<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA14-4884/SMA14-4884.pdf>)

# THE IMPACT OF...

## Trauma –

- Anything that overwhelms one's ability to cope. Can be single event. More often multiple events, over time (complex, prolonged trauma). Includes collective, historical, generational – EXPAND your definition.

## Disenfranchised grief –

- experience when there a loss that is not or cannot be openly acknowledged, socially sanctioned or publicly mourned – (Doka, K)

## Toxic Stress –

- prolonged activation of the stress response system with no buffer.

## Scarcity –

- having less than you think you need (time, money, resources, space, food) (Mullainathan & Shafir)

# THE IMPACTS OF THIS TIME ON CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

## Increase exposure to stress events

- Death of loved ones
- Fear of illness or death
- Racial violence
- Loss of home (wildfire covid19)
- Violence exposure connected
- Displacement

## While decreasing buffers

- Caring adults
- Social supports
- Safe space to exercise
- Nutrition
- Peer supports
- Health care
- Mental wellness

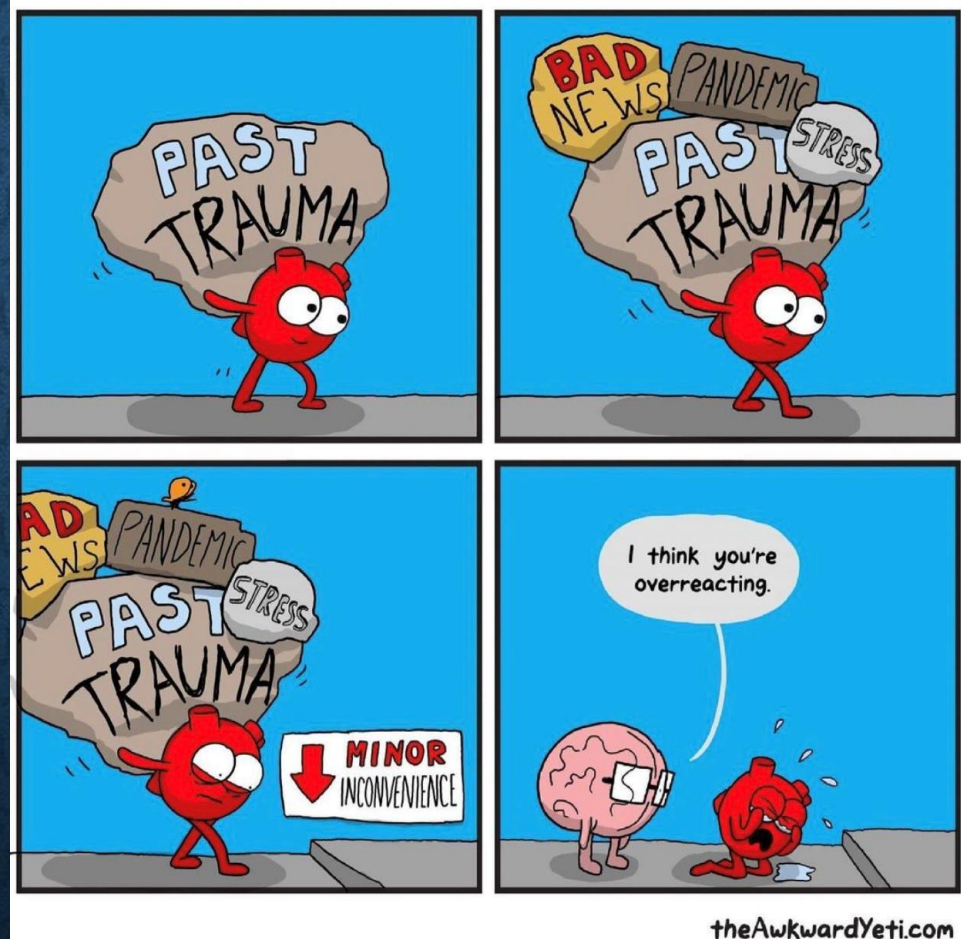
# PILEUPS OF TOXIC STRESS

## Uncomplicated Trauma

- Trauma experienced as an adult with no prior history of trauma, or trauma confined to a single incident/episode
  - Common examples: vehicle accident, mugging, natural disaster

## Complex Trauma

- Trauma experienced as a child or ongoing trauma as an adult
  - Common examples: intimate partner violence, child sexual abuse
  - Note: Betrayal trauma theory suggests that traumas involving interpersonal betrayal or institutional betrayal are more likely to result in complex trauma



theAwkwardYeti.com

## What are your Buffers

### BREAKOUT1: Buffers

- What buffers have you found helpful during the workday?
- Any modifications you are considering?
- How have you been or has someone else been a buffer during the work day?

# BRAIN BASICS: AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM (ANS)

Two complementary systems:

- Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS):  
“Fight or flight”
- Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS): “Rest and digest”
- Repeated exposure to trauma, especially when brain is still developing, can result in being “stuck” in SNS or PNS



## NEUROBIOLOGY

### HELPS US UNDERSTAND HOW OUR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONS ARE IMPACTED BY TOXIC STRESS/TRAUMA

#### Flip the Lid (Hand Model of the Brain)

Make a **Fist** with your thumb tucked inside your fingers. This is a model of your brain.



Figure 1. A model of the brain.

**Thumb** = Midbrain (Stem & Limbic) = Emotional Brain. This is where emotions and memories are processed. This is where the fight, flight & freeze is triggered.

**Fingers** = Cerebral Cortex = Rational Brain. Houses our ability to think and reason.

**Fingernails** = Prefrontal Cortex = Problem-Solving

When something triggers us, we are prone to “**Flip our Lid**” which means the Prefrontal Cortex (Fingernails) have a very poor connection with the Midbrain (Thumb), and we’re not able to access the logical, problem-solving part of our brain. Our emotions are overriding our ability to think clearly.

-Dr. Dan Siegel



Figure 2. Flipping your lid.

Challenges with:

- Memory
- Communication
- Sensory regulation
- Executive functioning
- Regulation

In Survival Mode – assessing threat constantly

In the **CHAT BOX** share what emotions you seeing, hearing about?

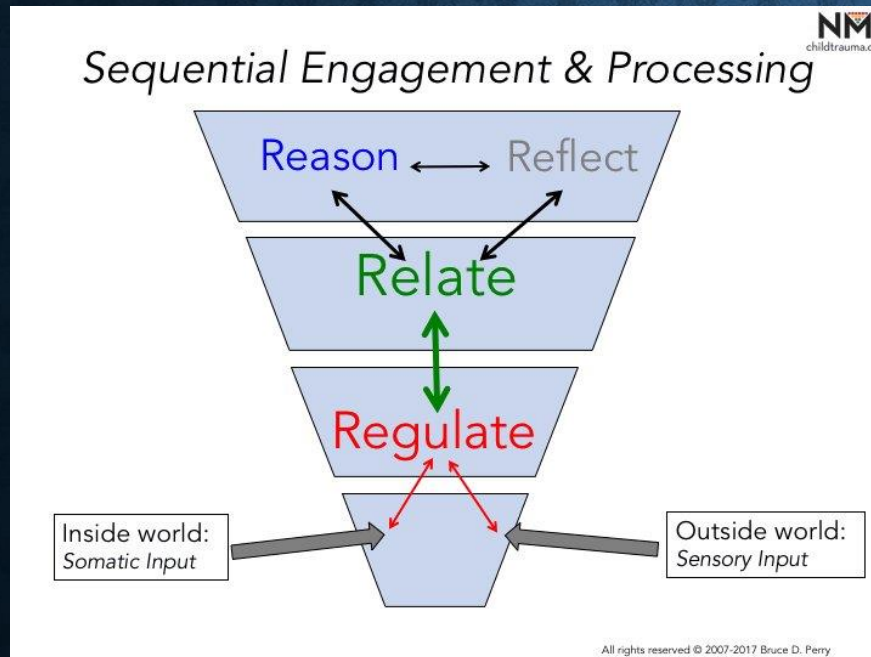
# FUNCTIONS IMPACTED

- SENSORY
- ATTENTION
- MEMORY
- EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

"Epidemics are hardly quiet occasions they are experienced and responded to in real time by the affected community and then later discovered, heralded, and explained by historians" –

Howard Markal, MD PhD

# B. PERRY NEUROSEQUENTIAL MODEL



KNOW WHY  
Rhythm  
Repetition  
Transition  
Rituals  
Safety  
Predictable

# VAN DER KOLK: PRECONDITION OF TRAUMA & TOXIC STRESS.

Think **WHY** and **HOW** can I create this:

1. Safety – fight, flight, freeze
2. Have a predictable environment
3. Connect with others and self (allow for self time as well)
4. Staying present—reduce numbing out.
5. Ways to take action (reduce immobility)
6. Sense of time and sequence—ways to remember things change
7. Find purpose—what is your purpose in this time as an individual, program, and organization

# H.O.P.E.

Positive Childhood Experiences questions asked how often the respondent:

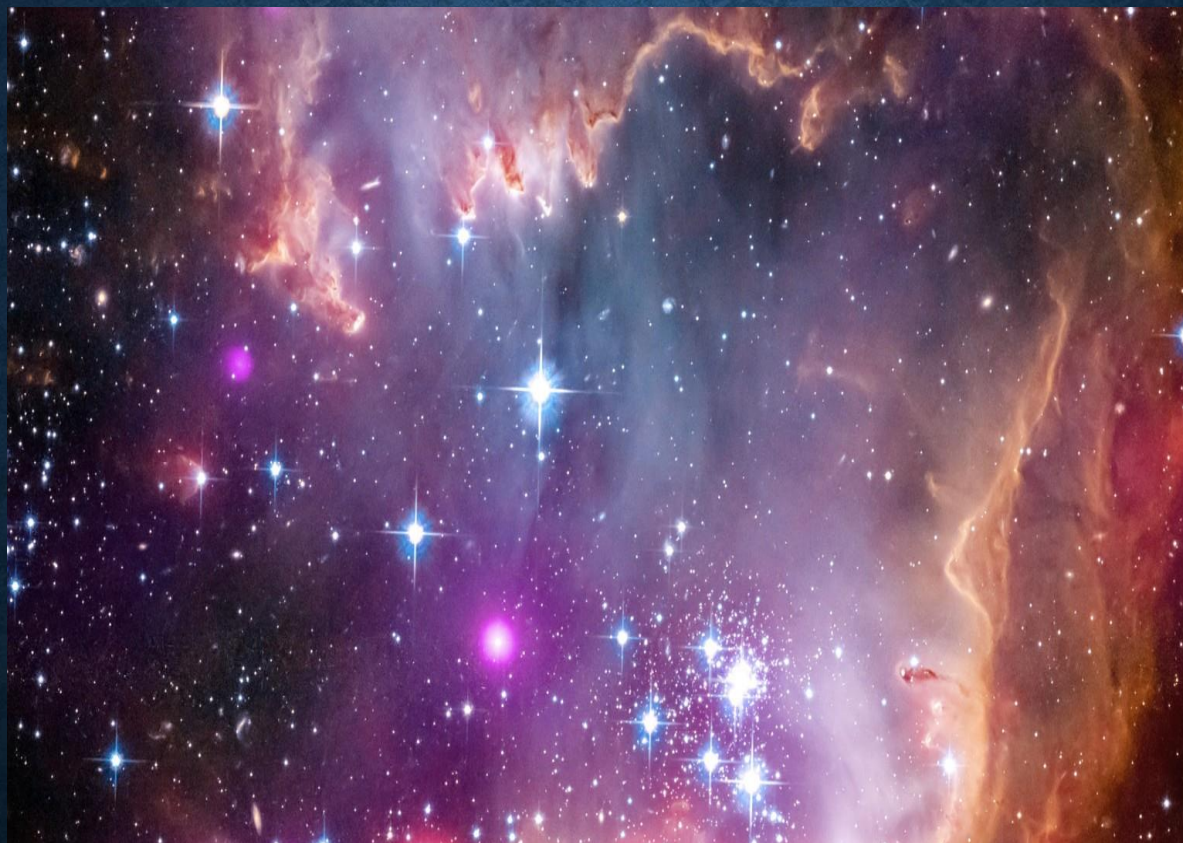
1. Felt able to talk to their family about feelings
2. Felt their family stood by them during difficult times
3. Enjoyed participating in community traditions
4. Felt a sense of belonging in high school
5. Felt supported by friends
6. Had at least two non-parent adults who took genuine interest in them
7. Felt safe and protected by an adult in their home

[BRFShandout2-18.pdf \(positiveexperience.org\)](#)

# HEALING PATHWAYS

Healing makes room for us to fight in  
the places where it's necessary and  
love in the places we long to.

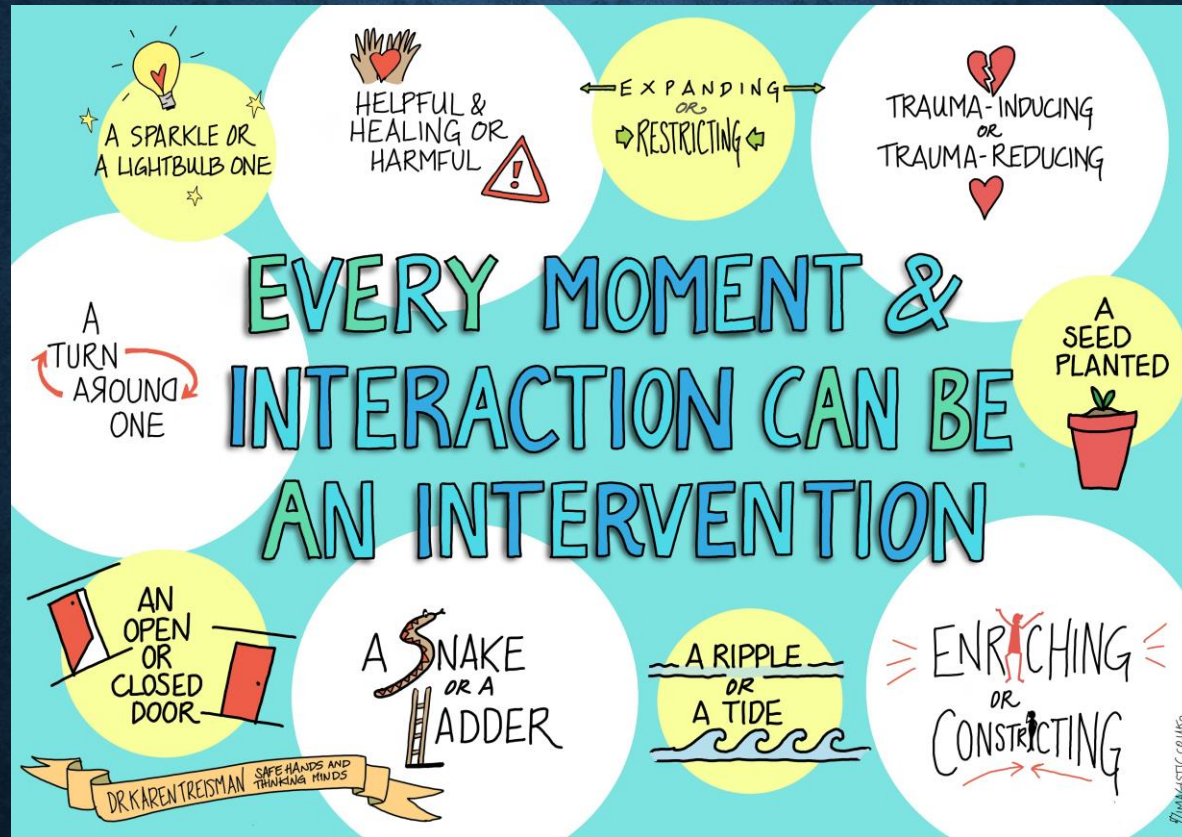
Prentis Hemphill



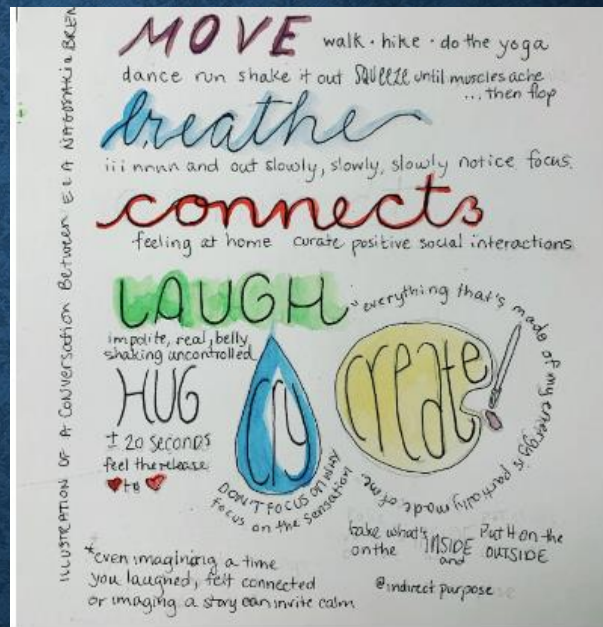
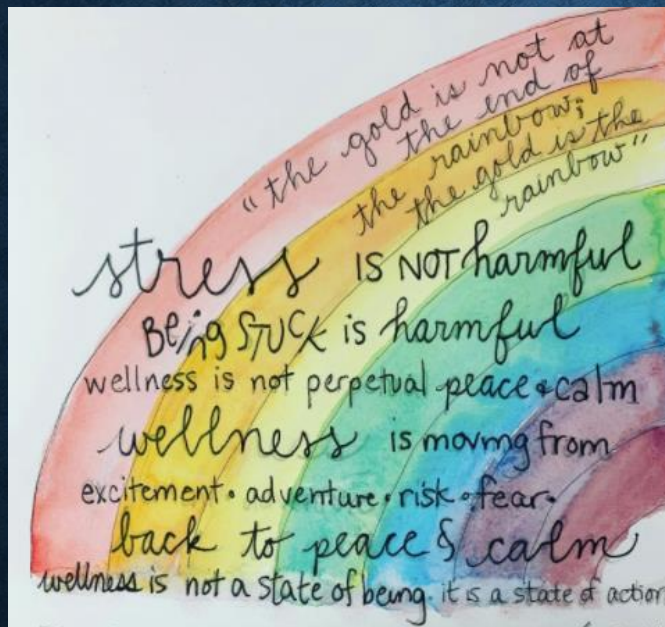
# SELF ASSESSMENT

- You have a ritual for staying hydrated each day?
- You practice meditation or quieting on a regular bases?
- You do rhythmic activity (walking, singing, music playing) on a regular basis?
- You get hugs from a human or animal daily?
- You do artistic/creative work each week?
- You have cried in the past week?
- You helped a colleague this week?
- You asked for help in the past week?

# APPRECIATION!



# #BETHEBUFFER



## Battling Burnout - Clever Education Solutions