

TRAUMA ON THE BODY

What trauma looks and feels like

WHAT DOES 'TRAUMA' MEAN?

Trauma is something that feels too much, too fast. Trauma happens when you have an out of control, frightening experience that disconnects you from all sense of safety, coping, and love.

TRAUMATIC EVENTS ARE BEYOND A YOUR CONTROL.

EVEN IF THE EVENT DID NOT CAUSE PHYSICAL DAMAGE, TRAUMA CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON A YOUR IDENTITY, NEGATIVELY EFFECTING YOUR MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT.

THERE IS NO SET LIST OF TRAUMATIC EVENTS. YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE EVENT AND THE MEANING YOU MAKE OF IT IS WHAT MAKES IT TRAUMATIC TO YOU.

What happens to your body

During a traumatic experience, your brain sets off a warning alarm. This warning alarm sets off a survival response, where you either fight, flight, or freeze.

FIGHT

- Crying
- Desire to punch
- Flexed/tight jaw, grinding teeth
- Fight in eyes, glaring, fight in voice
- Feelings of anger/rage
- Suicidal feelings
- Knotted stomach

FLIGHT

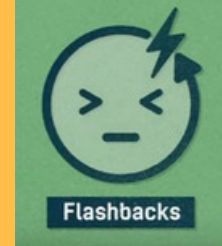
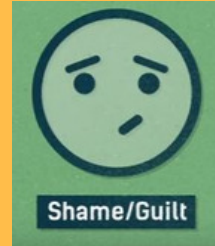
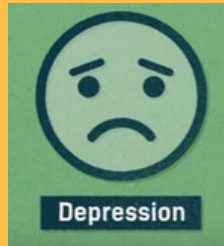
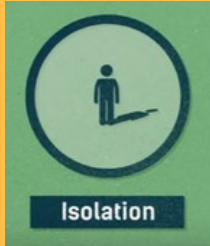
- Restless legs and feet
- Anxiety/shallow breathing
- Feeling trapped, tense
- Sense of running in life- one activity to the next
- Excessive exercise

FREEZE

- Feeling stuck in some part of your body
- Feeling cold/frozen, numb
- Sense of stiffness, heaviness
- Holding breath/restricted breathing
- Sense of dread



After trauma you can feel



WHAT IS A 'TRIGGER'?

Traumatic memories are stuck in your limbic system, but a trigger can set off an alarm that suddenly makes you remember or feel something. A trigger can be anything related to your traumatic experience: a colour, smell, sound, or sensation.



Trauma is a normal response. It can be scary and frustrating. Know that you have options, and you can heal over time.

YOU ARE RESILIENT. TRAUMA DOES NOT DEFINE YOU, AND YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH TRAUMA OVER TIME. BECAUSE TRAUMA AFFECTS THE WHOLE PERSON; MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT, RECOVERY HAPPENS BY VIEWING YOURSELF AS A WHOLE. THROUGH NURTURING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, BASIC PHYSICAL NEEDS (LIKE SLEEP AND FOOD), AND HAVING A SAFE HOME, YOU HAVE A GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER FROM TRAUMA. THE MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT WILL RESPOND TO ALL OF THESE SUPPORTS, AND HEALING CAN HAPPEN.

