

# THE IMPACT OF ACES LATER IN LIFE & THE HEALING PROCESS

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From the first breath of air, our experiences effect  
our development



# ACEs Are Not Destiny

People affected by ACEs are becoming the leaders of  
**S e l f - H e a l i n g   C o m m u n i t i e s**



# A Story of Resiliency





# We

have the power to  
shift the dynamics  
that lead to  
high ACE scores.





# Mental Well Being of the Community During the Pandemic

- ✓ Fear and anxiety about a pandemic (COVID-19) and what can happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in everyone in the community.
- ✓ Social distancing and school and work closures can make adults and students feel isolated and lonely thus increasing stress and anxiety.
- ✓ COVID-19 stress can cause fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, you or a family member's financial situation or job, or the loss of the support services you rely on.



# UPSTAIRS BRAIN, DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN

- Human brain – 2-story house
- Upstairs brain – not wired at birth, allows us to think, reason, learn, remember, and regulate our emotions. Takes time to become hardwired.
- Downstairs brain – mostly wired at birth, allows the newborn to eat, sleep, drink, stay warm or cool, and eliminate
- Repeated nurturing experiences nurture the upstairs brain
- If a child spends too much time being afraid, the brain reorganizes itself around the survival response – fight, flight, or freeze and the downstairs brain runs the show



# Experiences in School

- ✓ Think about a bad experience that you had in school with a teacher or staff member
- ✓ Think about a good experience that you had in school with a teacher or staff member







# Change of Mindset

- Consider what happened to you?  
Instead of what's wrong with you?
- They are not giving us a hard time;  
they are having a hard time.
- They often need attention; they  
aren't just seeking attention.
- Try time in instead of time out.
- They need connections and limits.

# Trauma-Informed Practices

- When an organization:
  - Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential paths for recovery
  - Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system
  - Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
  - Seeks to actively resist re-traumatization





# NON TRAUMA INFORMED

POWER OVER  
YOU CAN'T CHANGE  
JUDGING  
PEOPLE NEED FIXING FIRST  
OPERATE FROM THE DOMINANT CULTURE  
PEOPLE ARE OUT TO GET YOU  
RIGHT/WRONG  
HELPING  
"YOU'RE CRAZY!"  
COMPLIANCE/OBEDIENCE  
NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS FOR INFO  
PRESENTING ISSUE  
"US AND THEM"  
LABELS, PATHOLOGY  
FEAR-BASED  
I'M HERE TO FIX YOU  
DIDACTIC  
PEOPLE MAKE BAD CHOICES  
BEHAVIOR VIEWED AS PROBLEM  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?  
BLAME/SHAME  
GOAL IS TO DO THINGS THE 'RIGHT' WAY  
PRESCRIPTIVE  
PEOPLE ARE BAD  
CONSIDER ONLY RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

POWER WITH  
YOUR BRAIN IS 'PLASTIC'  
OBSERVING  
PEOPLE NEED SAFETY FIRST  
CULTURAL HUMILITY  
PEOPLE CAN LIVE UP TO THE TRUST YOU GIVE THEM  
MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS  
LEARNING  
"IT MAKES SENSE"  
EMPOWERMENT/COLLABORATION  
TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY  
WHOLE PERSON AND HISTORY  
WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER  
BEHAVIOR AS COMMUNICATION  
EMPATHY-BASED  
SUPPORT HEALING  
PARTICIPATORY  
PEOPLE WHO FEEL UNSAFE DO UNSAFE THINGS  
BEHAVIOR VIEWED AS SOLUTION  
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?  
RESPECT  
GOAL IS TO CONNECT  
CHOICE  
PEOPLE ARE DOING THE BEST THEY CAN  
CONSIDER ALSO LIVED EXPERIENCE

# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE



# Creating a Trauma-Informed Environment

Acknowledge

Everyone

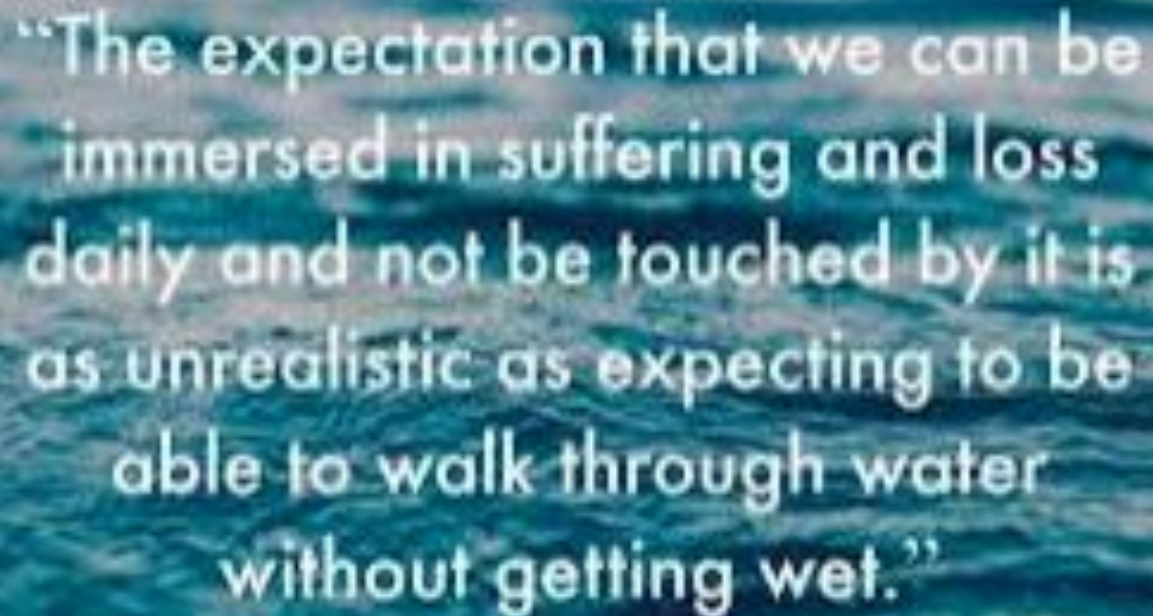
Use

Warm  
greeting

Make

Eye  
contact

# Compassion Fatigue



“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

Dr. Noomi Rochell Remen

- ❑ Chronic exhaustion
- ❑ Sleep disturbance
- ❑ Reduced feelings of sympathy or empathy
- ❑ Dreading working for or taking care of another and feeling guilty as a result
- ❑ Headaches
- ❑ Weight loss or gain
- ❑ Poor work-life balance
- ❑ Diminished sense of career fulfillment
- ❑ Feelings of irritability, anger, or anxiety
- ❑ Impaired decision-making



# Understanding Compassion Fatigue

- ❑ Mother Teresa
- ❑ Wrote in her plan – mandatory for her nuns to take off an entire year from duties every 4-5 years
- ❑ Allow them to heal from the effects of their care-giving work





"Taking care of myself  
doesn't mean 'me first'.  
It means 'me too.'"

L.R. Knott

[GoodTherapy.org](http://GoodTherapy.org)

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**Thank You**

