

A pair of hands is shown from a top-down perspective, gently cupping a small, bright yellow flower. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame, with the fingers slightly curled. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey, making the hands and the flower stand out. The overall mood is one of care and support.

# **Transforming Libraries Through Trauma-Informed Services**

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BE

PRESENT

MINDFUL

GRATEFUL

KIND

## AGENDA

- What is Trauma?
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
- Impact of Trauma and ACES on individual
- Trauma Trauma-informed services and Empathy
- Effective Communication Strategies
- Self-Care

## WHAT IS TRAUMA?

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

(SAMHSA)

Definition:

Individual trauma resulting from “an **event, series of events, or set of circumstances** that is 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.”

### EXAMPLES OF TRAUMATIC EVENTS

- Arrest or incarceration of self or a loved one
- Physical, Emotional or Sexual Assault
- Domestic Violence
- Hospitalization
- Divorce
- Deportation of a loved one
- Historical and Cultural Trauma
- Experiencing poverty
- Homelessness
- Crossing the border
- Experiencing natural disasters (hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, building collapse)



## ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE)

### WHAT ARE THEY?

Potentially traumatic events

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF ACES

- Experiencing violence, abuse or neglect
- Witnessing violence in the home or community
- Having a family member attempt or die by suicide

### WHEN DO THEY HAPPEN?

Occur in childhood (0-17 years old)

### CHILD'S ENVIRONMENT

Undermined safety, stability, and bonding.

Growing up in a household with: substance use or mental health problems, instability due to parental separation or household members being in jail or prison

# WHY ARE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES IMPORTANT?

They are linked to...



**CHRONIC HEALTH  
PROBLEMS**



**MENTAL ILLNESS**



**SUBSTANCE USE**



**NEGATIVE IMPACT  
ON RELATIONSHIPS**

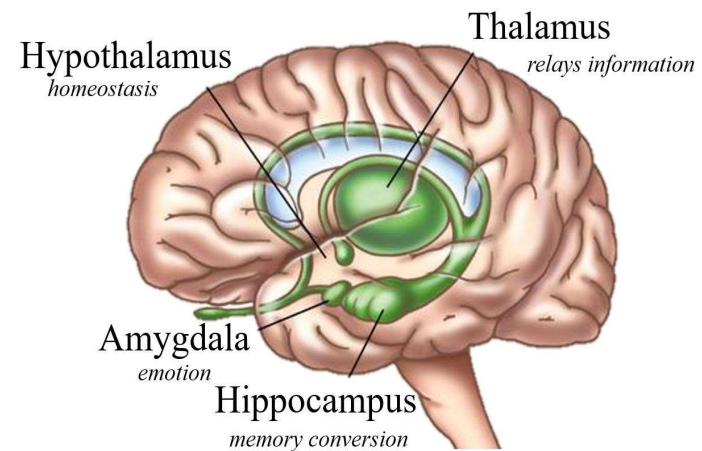


# NORMAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Photo by Adrien Converse on Unsplash

## OUR BRAIN – THE LIMBIC SYSTEM

# The Limbic System

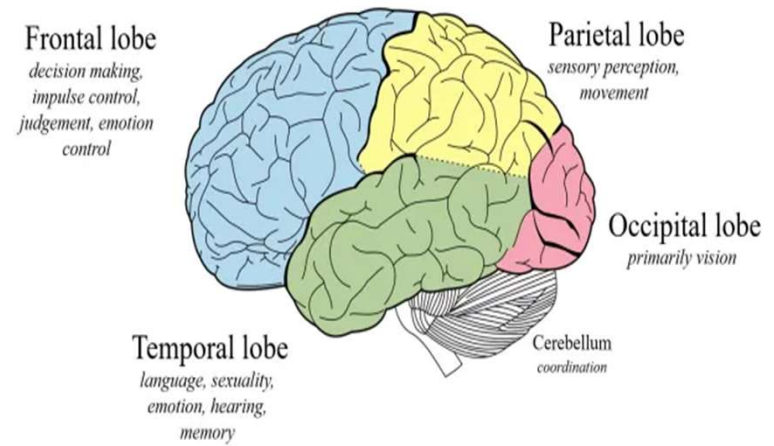


- ❑ Parts – Amygdala, Hippocampus, Thalamus and Hypothalamus.
- ❑ The limbic system is involved in behavior and emotional responses
  - ❑ Memory storage and retrieval
  - ❑ Fight, flight, or freeze
  - ❑ Response to stress or threats
  - ❑ No critical thinking / only reactionary
- ❑ Brain scans for real or perceived threats and information goes through the limbic system so that we respond.



## OUR BRAIN – FRONTAL LOBE

### The Four Lobes of the Brain



- ❑ Frontal Lobe: In charge of voluntary functions like reasoning, thinking, decision-making and judgment.
- ❑ Rational Part of the brain
  - ❑ Evaluate emotions and use experiences and judgments to make conscious responses / decisions
  - ❑ Not automatic response like the ones in the limbic system
  - ❑ Can often override the limbic system to approach a situation rationally



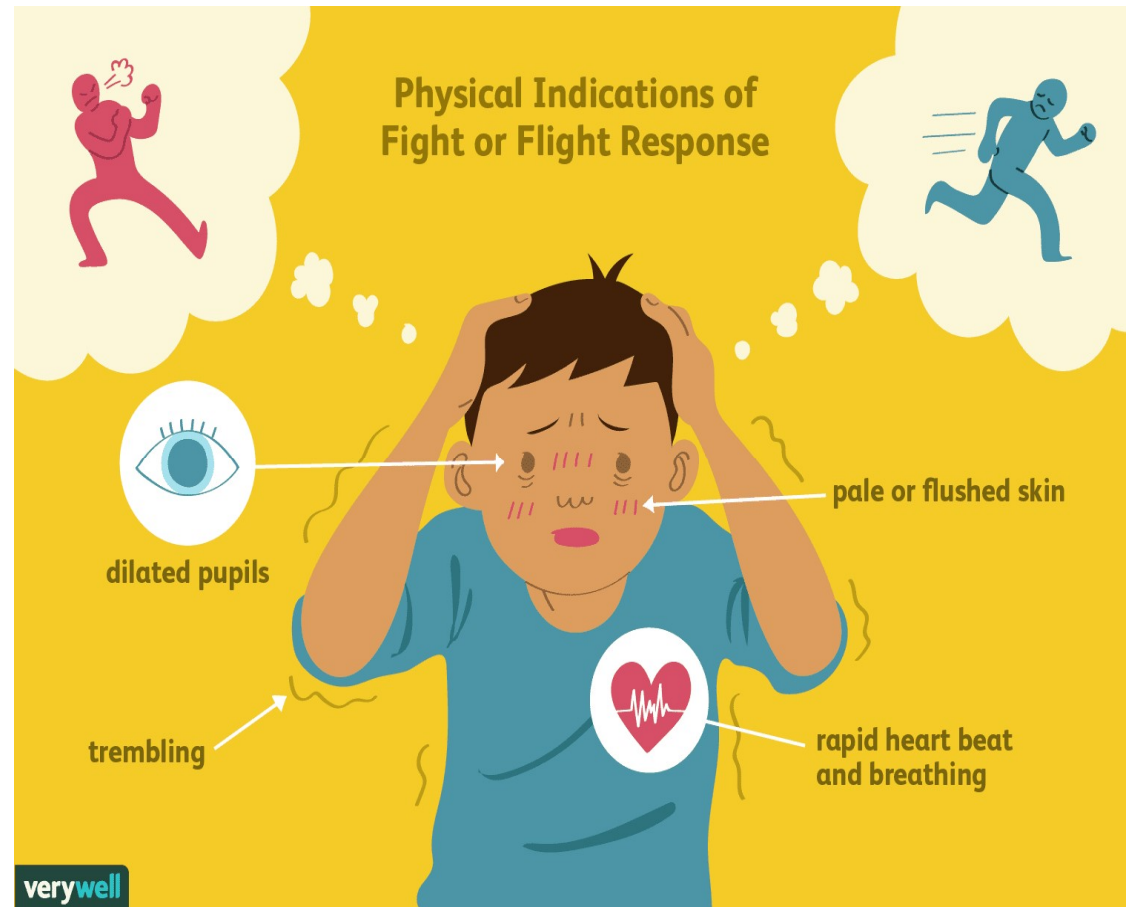
Fight,  
Flight,  
Freeze?

## WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR BODY...

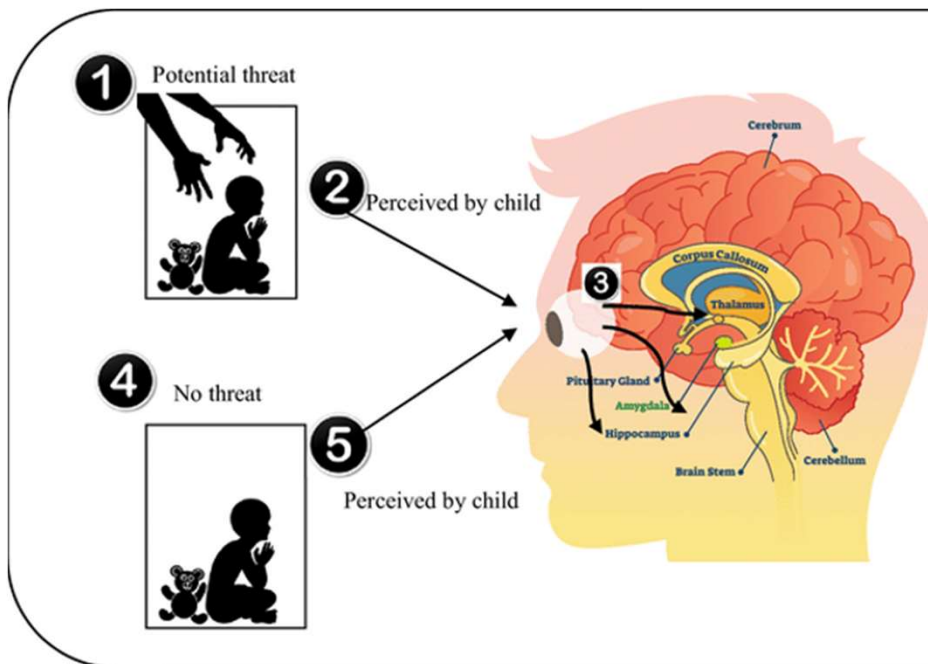
Certain cues (sound, smell, images, etc.) trigger stress hormones: adrenaline and cortisol.

Stress hormones cause:

- ❑ Blood vessels in the skin to constrict to lessen blood loss if injured
- ❑ Shut down digestive system to conserve glucose needed for energy to run or fight
- ❑ Increase heart rate to push blood flow
- ❑ Neck, shoulders, and back muscles constrict



# REACTIONARY COPING SKILLS



## EXAMPLES OF REACTIONARY COPING SKILLS:

- YELLING OR CRYING
- PHYSICALLY OR VERBALLY LASHING OUT.
- SHUTTING DOWN EMOTIONALLY
- WORKING HARD TO PLEASE EVERYONE



# TRAUMA-INFORMED SERVICES

Photo by [Sean Stratton](#) on Unsplash

## WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE/SERVICES?



- **INCORPORATES KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TRAUMA INTO SERVICES**
- **CREATE SAFE SPACES AND TRUST**
- **RESPECT AND COLLABORATION**



Photo by Helena Lopes on Unsplash

## 4 R'S OF TRAUMA INFORMED SERVICES

- **Realizes** the widespread impact of trauma
- **Recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others
  - **Responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Seeks to actively **resist** re-traumatization

## 6 KEY PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED SERVICES

1

**Safety:** Everyone throughout the organization should feel physically and psychologically safe. Including Staff.

2

**Trustworthiness and Transparency:** Agency operations are made with transparency; Actions match words, values and beliefs.

3

**Peer Support:** Key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety and empowerment. Individuals use their story and lived experience to promote recovery and healing.

4

**Collaboration & Mutuality:** Healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision making.

5

**Empowerment, Voice & Choice:** Individual's strengths and experiences are recognized and built upon.

6

**Cultural, Historical & Gender relevant:** Organization moves past cultural stereotypes and biases; offers access to gender responsive services.



TRAUMA-INFORMED  
SERVICES

SHIFTS THE FOCUS FROM:

“WHAT IS WRONG WITH  
YOU?”

TO

“WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?”



**WHAT IS EMPATHY?**





# **BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

**LACK OF EMOTIONAL  
REGULATION**

**INTERNAL BARRIERS**

**DESIRE TO CHANGE  
OTHERS' PERCEPTIONS**

# EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



## **UNHOOK EMOTIONALLY**

Do not take their  
behavior personally



## **SELF-AWARENESS**

Look at own patters.



## **WHAT IS ON OUR CONTROL**

Unable to change  
other's perceptions  
but we can change  
our own.

## EAR AS A CALMING TACTIC

**E**

Empathy:  
“I can see how frustrated you are, and I want to help”

**A**


Attention:  
“Let's talk about it so that I can understand what you are going through”

**R**

Respect:  
“I have respect for what you have done to deal with this problem/situation”



Photo by [Dustin Humes](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright white circle in the center of the horizon, surrounded by a gradient of orange and red. The ocean is dark blue with white foam from waves. In the foreground, a clear glass sphere sits on a wet, reflective beach, mirroring the sunset colors. The text "SELF-CARE" is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# SELF-CARE

Photo by [Joshua Woroniecki](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## CALMING STRATEGIES

The following are strategies for both emotional regulation and self-care

### BREATHE

5 deep and slow breathes... help regulate the stress response system

### GROUNDING

Bring attention to the present moment

### 5 SENSES

See, touch, hear, smell, and taste



Photo by [Joshua Woroniecki](#) on Unsplash



# SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

## SETTING BOUNDARIES

Your own boundaries, not what you want others to do or stop doing.

## NO IS A COMPLETE SENTENCE

No need to add an explanation. “I don’t want to join you at the event.”

## ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY

Walking  
Reading  
Painting  
Drawing  
Journaling



THANK YOU

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## RESOURCES

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>

Center for Disease Control <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>

Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the leading causes of death in Adults  
[https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(98\)00017-8/fulltext](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(98)00017-8/fulltext)

Clark, C., Classen, C. C, Fourn, A., & Shetty, M. (2015). Treating the trauma survivor: An essential guide to trauma-informed care. NY: Routledge.

PACES Connection <https://www.pacesconnection.com/blog/adverse-childhood-experiences-and-interpersonal-relationships>

Empathy video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

Psychology Today <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/5-types-people-who-can-ruin-your-life/201801/calming-upset-people-fast-ea>