Survivors' Network

ADOPTING TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

SESSION

OBJECTIVES

1) Understanding trauma-responses

2) Practical considerations in working sensitively with clients affected by trauma

SESSION

OBJECTIVE 1

Understanding trauma-responses

WHAT IS

TRAUMA?

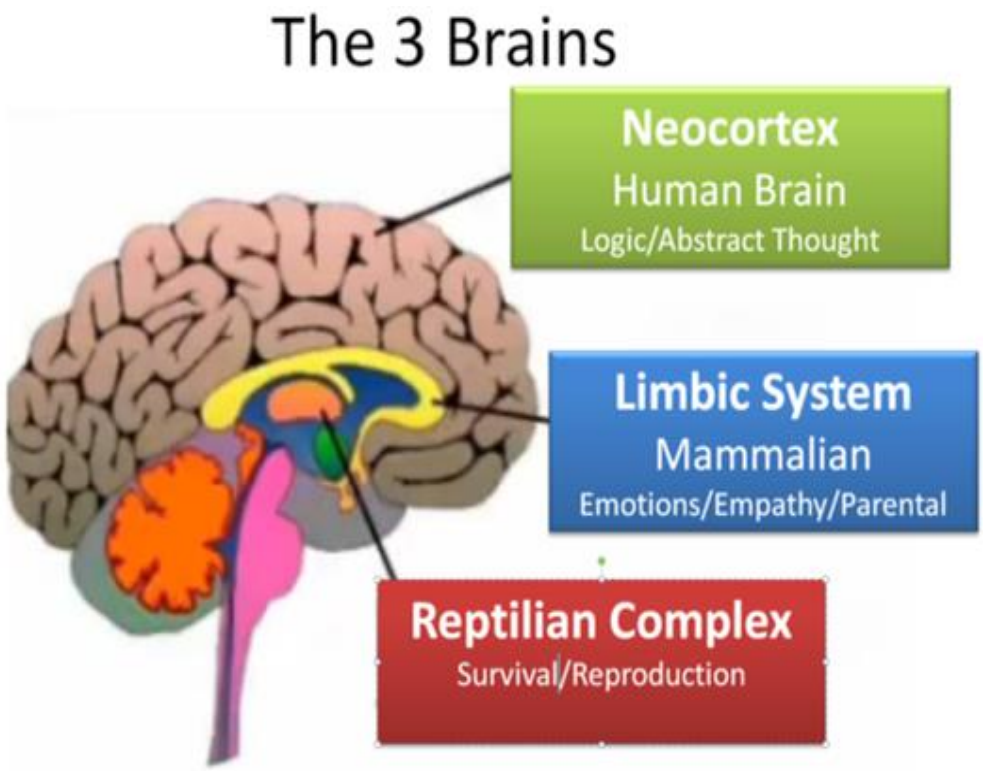
"Trauma is not what happens to a person, but what happens within them. In line with its Greek origins, **trauma** means 'a wound'- an unhealed one, and one the person is compelled to defend against by means of constricting his/her own ability to feel, to be present, to respond flexibly to situations."

(Gabor Maté)

Fear, helplessness, horror - OVERWHELM.

WHAT ARE THE 5 FEAR

REPONSES?



WHAT IS POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

DISORDER/PTSD?

Re-Experiencing: Re-experiencing, or reliving, the traumatic event.

Avoidance and emotional numbing: Actively avoiding people, places, or situations that remind you of the traumatic event, feeling numb or cut off from one's emotions or body.

Hyperarousal: an abnormal state of increased responsiveness to stimuli, such as increased levels of alertness, anxiety, and elevated heart and respiration rate.

Negative thoughts and beliefs: hopelessness, detachment, relationship difficulties, lack of interest in activities, depressive thoughts/feelings.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF

TRAUMA/PTSD

- Frequency
- The degree of perceived personal threat
- The developmental state of the child
- The relationship of the survivor to the perpetrator
- The survivor's resilience (ability to cope)
- Previous experience of trauma
- **The level of support the survivor has in their day-to-day life as well as the response by those around them**
- Access to support services- which may be particularly difficult for survivors from marginalised communities (e.g. TNBI survivors)

SESSION

OBJECTIVE 2

Practical considerations in working sensitively with clients affected by trauma

DR. DAN SIEGEL'S

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

Hyperarousal

Window of Tolerance

Hypoarousal

SIGNS OF

DISTRESS

If the client is in extreme distress, they may have difficulties in:

- Thinking about their options
- Understanding what you say to them
- Processing what is being discussed
- Retaining information

HOW TO CREATE A

SAFE SPACE

- Taking our clients seriously
- Client led; guided by them
- Respect; pace and choice; keeping consent central
- Providing information in unbiased manner
- Empathising, not pitying; non-judgmental and authentic
- Being mindful to avoid any of the dynamics of SVA/DVA
- Intersectionality

HOW TO CREATE A

SAFE SPACE

- Physical environment - quiet, confidential, comfortable
- Boundaries of our role- time, availability, confidentiality, safety and safeguarding
- Be aware that different people may need different responses, try to ask people what they need or want rather than assume
- Be aware that physical touch could be triggering or distressing
- What do we need to know vs what do we want to know; and be explicit in intentions; ambiguity can be threatening

HOW TO RETURN TO THE WINDOW OF

TOLERANCE

Hyperarousal

Dysregulation

Window of Tolerance

Dysregulation

Hypoarousal

GROUNDING

TECHNIQUES

Mental Grounding

- Counting games- count back in multiples of 3 from 100
- Focus on surroundings- describe 3 green things in the room

Physical Grounding

- Breathing is the only function of the Autonomic Nervous System that most people can bring under conscious control- square breathing, 7/11 breathing
- 'Anti-Freeze': if you feel either of you may be tipping into this response, then think about encouraging small movements, wiggle your fingers and toes, clench a stress ball, stomping, stretching

GROUNDING

TECHNIQUES

Soothing Grounding

- Safe Now: draw attention to the current, non-threatening, reality (e.g. "Right here, right now, nothing bad is happening.")
- Bring in what you know of your client's safe places, or discuss things they find reassuring

LEAVING

WITH CARE

Please consider what you need to keep safe and well in this work.

"Self-care is not about self-indulgence, it's about self-preservation..."

Audre Lorde

SPECIALIST

SUPPORT SERVICES

Sexual Violence Support Services

- Rape Crisis England and Wales (including 24/7 Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Line: 0808 500 222)
- Life Centre- counselling for survivors in West Sussex
- Survivors UK- Support for men and non-binary survivors of sexual violence

Support for Children and Young People & Their Parents/Carers

- NSPCC- 0808 800 5000/ Childline- 0800 1111
- MOSAC- supports all non-abusing parents and carers of survivors

OTHER SPECIALIST SUPPORT SERVICES CONT.

Domestic Violence Support

- National Domestic Abuse helpline – 0808 2000 247 - https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/
- Mankind - 01823 334244 - https://mankind.org.uk/
- Men's Advice Line - https://mensadviceline.org.uk/

Support For Minoritised Communities

- Galop- support for LGBTQ survivors of violence
- HERSANA CIC - support for Black women and girl survivors of gender-based violence

FEEL FREE TO ASK ANY

QUESTIONS

REFERENCES AND USEFUL RESOURCES

- https://survivorsnetwork.org.uk/resource/anti-racism-resources/
- https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/information-and-resources
- https://www.disabilityintersectionalitysummit.com/access-is-love/
- https://www.sinsinvalid.org/blog/10-principles-of-disability-justice
- https://www.iicsa.org.uk/publications/engagement
- https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f7d9f4addc689717e6ea200/t/604179671c37f52e3d9985f5/1614903663825/2020+%7C+The+Decriminalisation+of+Rape.pdf

Please let us know if there are any resources that you think we should add to this page!

INTERESTED TO LEARN MORE?

We are pleased to announce new dates for our 'Change the Culture' training events this March and April!

- **An Introduction to Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence.** 1st March 2024. This course is intended to offer an introductory understanding of sexual violence and the impact of this and will provide a good foundation to further learning. You can sign up HERE.

- **Responding to First Disclosures.** 15th March 2024. Ideal for people working directly with the public who may at some point be the person that a survivor of sexual assault first talks to about their abuse. You can sign up HERE.

- **Self-Care and Vicarious Trauma.** 22nd March 2024. This training is for anyone wanting to learn how those in helping roles might experience compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma and how to start considering managing the impact of stress using self-care strategies. You can sign up HERE.

- **Survivors and the Criminal Justice Process**. 5th April 2024. The course is for anyone wanting to learn more about the way in which the systems in place responds to survivors of rape and sexual assault, and how these crimes may be dealt with. You can sign up HERE.

- **Pre-Trial Conditions**. 18th April 2024. Ideal for therapists or practitioners where clients are likely to be involved in the criminal justice system. You can sign up HERE.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

For further Survivors' Network training, please visit our website or contact us at: **training@survivorsnetwork.org.uk**

This training was created by Helen Race (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Coordinator), and adapted by Kitty Gardner (Training Officer).

Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence and Abuse across Sussex

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