

Crisis Care

Building Resilience through
Trauma-Informed Care

Disclaimer

- I am not a trauma expert
- I am a palliative care chaplain who works in a level I trauma facility

Housekeeping

- Take breaks as needed
- This is to be a safe and sacred space
- Be respectful of one another and one's opinions, feelings and shared narratives
- At any time if what is shared or discussed triggers emotions, be aware and mindful to care for self or ask for assistance if needed
- 45 minutes allotted for presentation, 15 minutes for Q&A
- Use the chat feature for questions/comments if needed

Objectives

- Learn about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), the causes and impacts
- Learn about trauma & stress and how both relate to the ACEs
- Learn about trauma-informed care (TIC) and its principles
- Learn about resilience and how building resilience improves health and changes the narrative
- Learn about compassion and gratitude as connected to building resilience
- Commit to building personal resilience

Personal Resilience

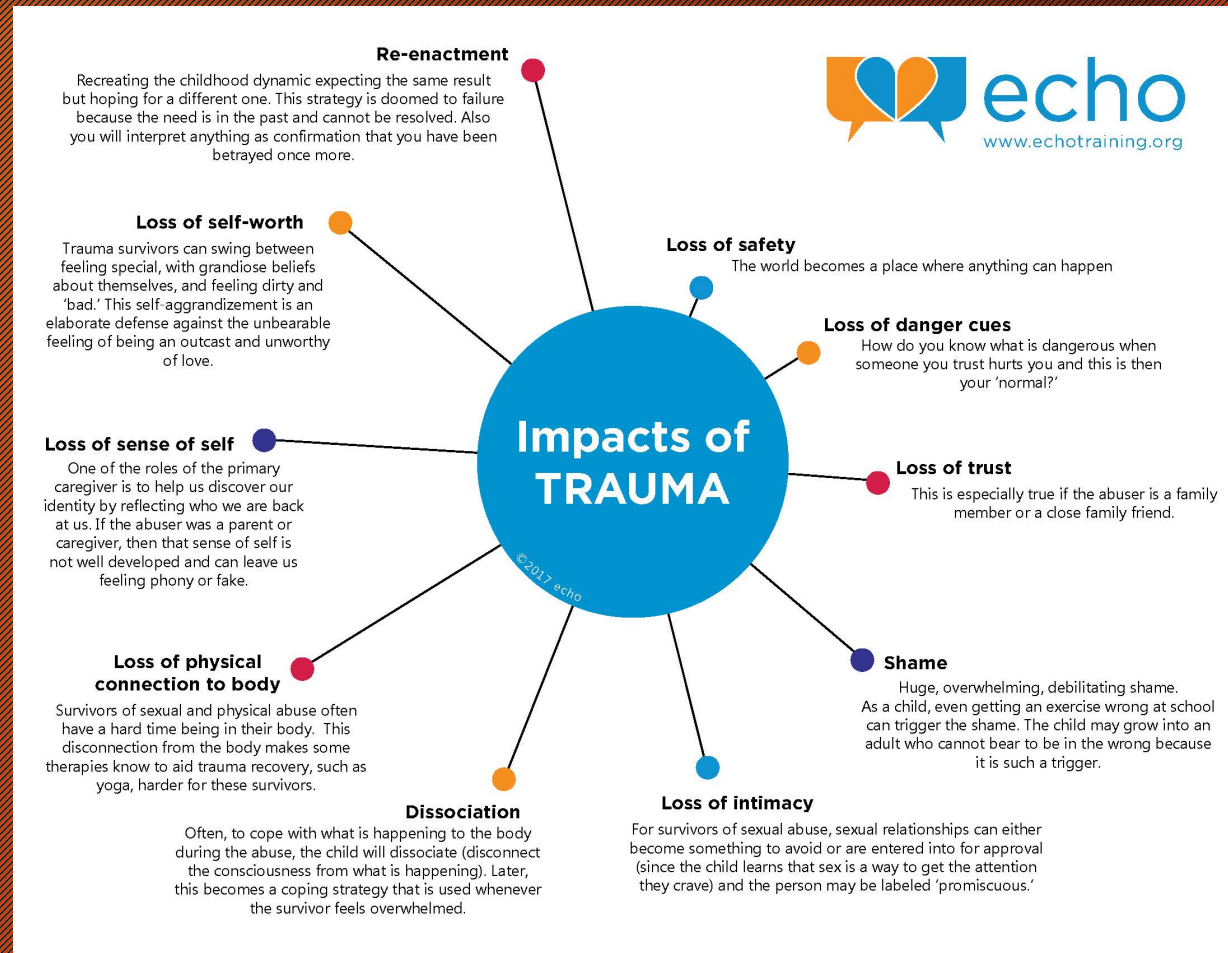
- Take three slow breaths
 - Breathe in the places where you feel safe (spaces and relationships)
 - Breathe out fear
 - Breathe in the spaces and relationships that bring you joy
 - Breathe out anxiety
 - Breathe in something for which you feel gratitude
 - Breathe out irritation or anger
- Continue breathing for a moment focused on those touchstones of safety, joy, and gratitude

What do you already know about:

- Trauma?
- The impact of trauma on human beings?
- Responses to trauma?

- Trauma may leave people oscillating between anger and numbness.

<https://www.echotraining.org/the-impact-of-trauma/>



What is Trauma?

- Trauma is a deeply disturbing or distressing experience
- Trauma is both a psychological and physiological response
 - Psychological trauma- damage to a person's psyche as a result of a deeply distressing event
 - Physiological trauma- injury or damage to a biological organism caused by physical harm from an external source
- Trauma is interpreted by the body as a life-threatening experience and/or threat to an individual's sense of safety

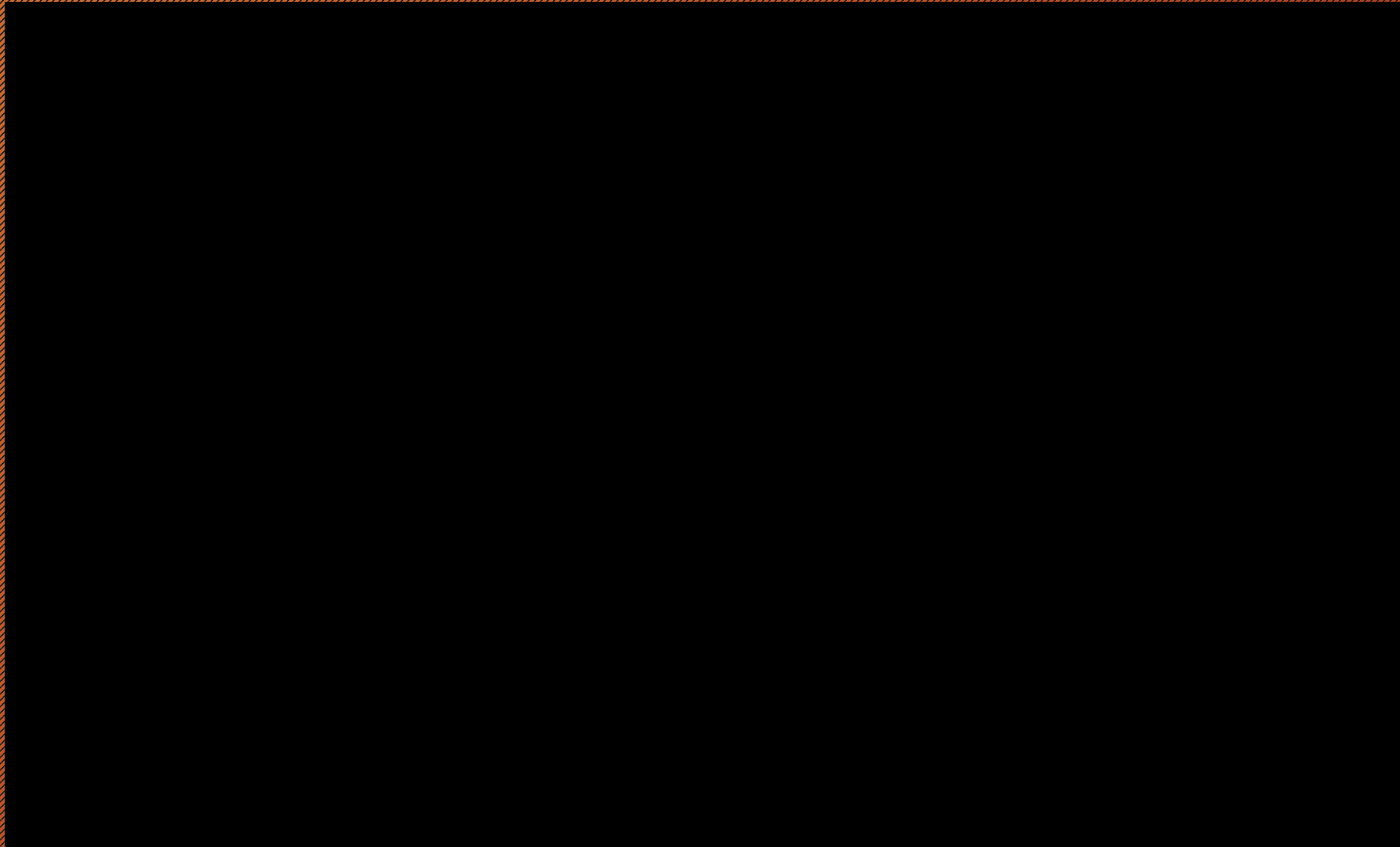


Examples of Traumatic Events?

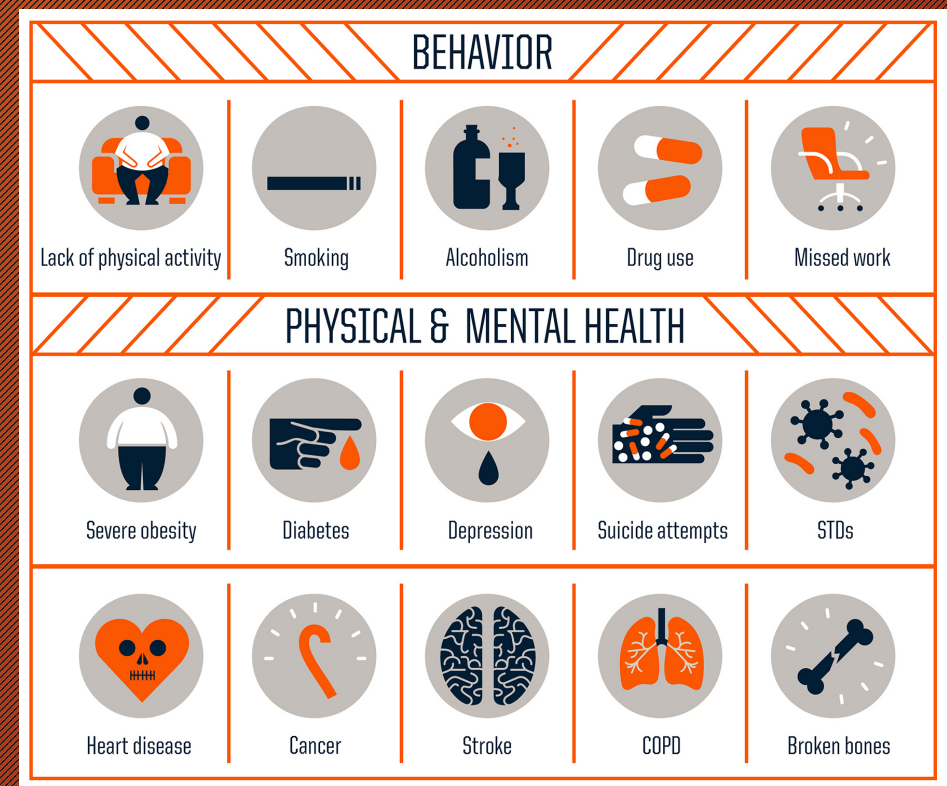
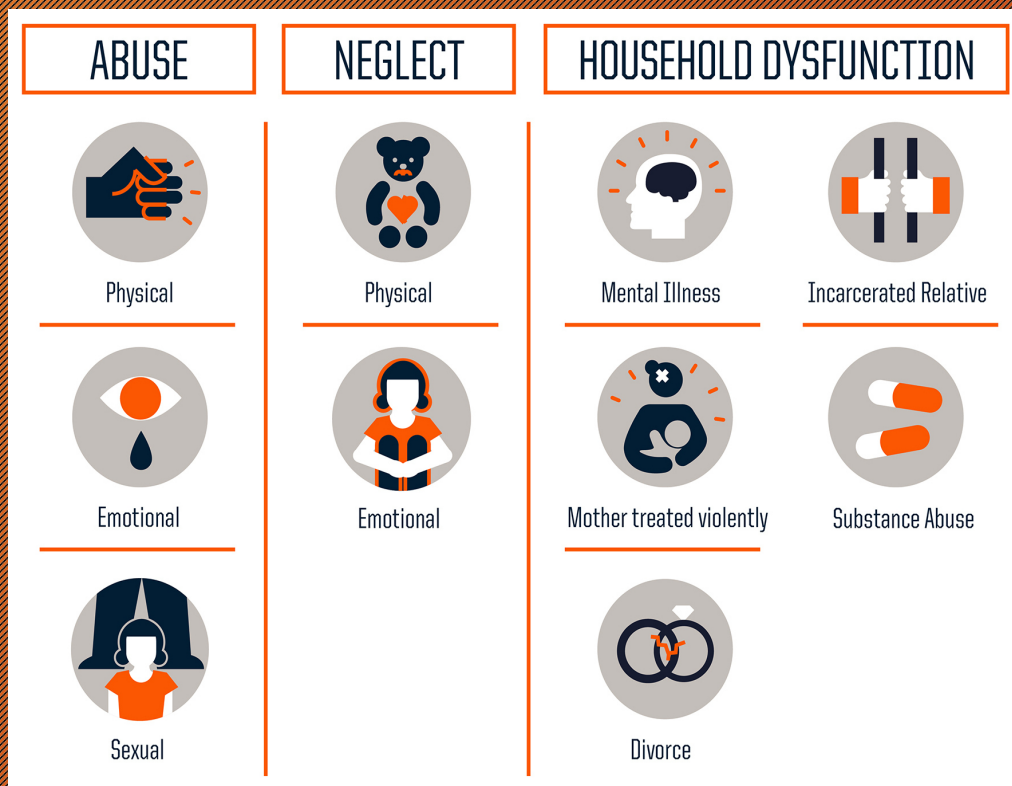
Examples of Traumatic Events

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Homelessness
- Abandonment
- Life-threatening illnesses
- Exposure to untreated substance abuse
- Death
- Bullying
- Separation/divorce
- Community violence
- Incarceration
- Terrorism
- Chronically chaotic environments
- Exposure to untreated mental illness
- Auto accidents
- Natural disasters
- Domestic violence
- Race-based trauma

ACEs Primer



ACEs Study



Trauma & Toxic Stress

- Trauma can create toxic stress
- All trauma creates stress.....but not all stress is the same

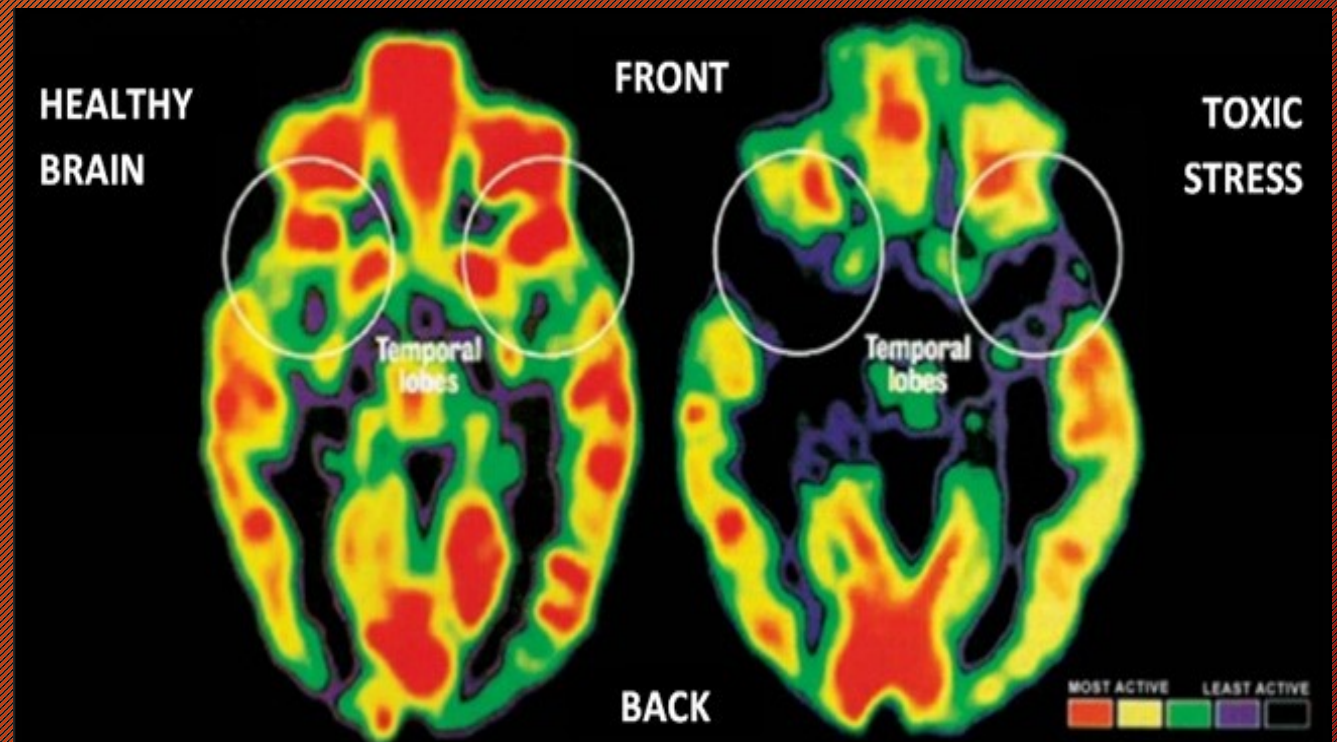
Toxic Stress

- Toxic stress response can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.
- When toxic stress response occur continually, or is triggered by multiple sources, it can have a cumulative toll on an individual’s physical and mental health—for a lifetime. The more adverse experiences in childhood, the greater the likelihood of developmental delays and later health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, substance abuse, and depression.
- Research also indicates that **supportive, responsive relationships** with caring adults as early in life as possible **can prevent or reverse the damaging effects** of toxic stress response.



Toxic Stress hurts us physically

- Hormonal changes: Risk for diabetes, depression, immune response, and cardiac health
- Neurological changes: Weakens connections to thinking parts of the brain, strengthens connections to survival parts reducing ability to cope with adversity
- Genetic changes: Turns genes on and off increases expression of mental illness, metabolic illness cardiac illness, and addiction



ACEs

Are traumatic experiences

As they accumulate, the impact of trauma increases



- A significant adverse event
- Impact over a long period
- Without help managing it
- Often amplified by multiple, concurrent ACEs

ACEs

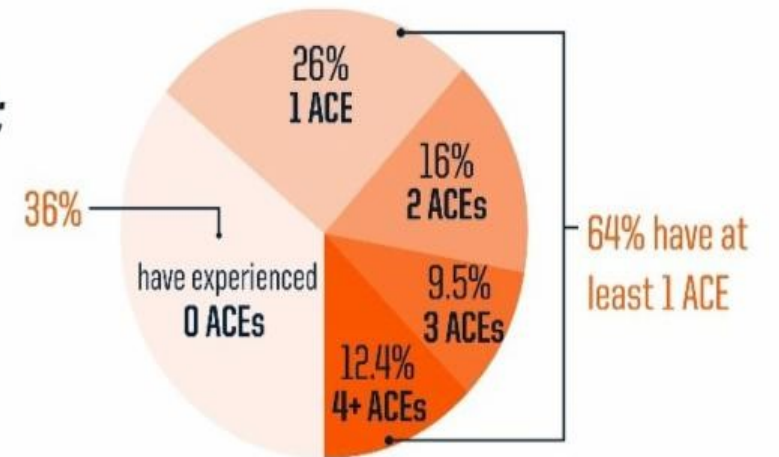
As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for negative health outcomes



WHAT IMPACT DO ACEs HAVE?

HOW PREVALENT ARE ACEs?

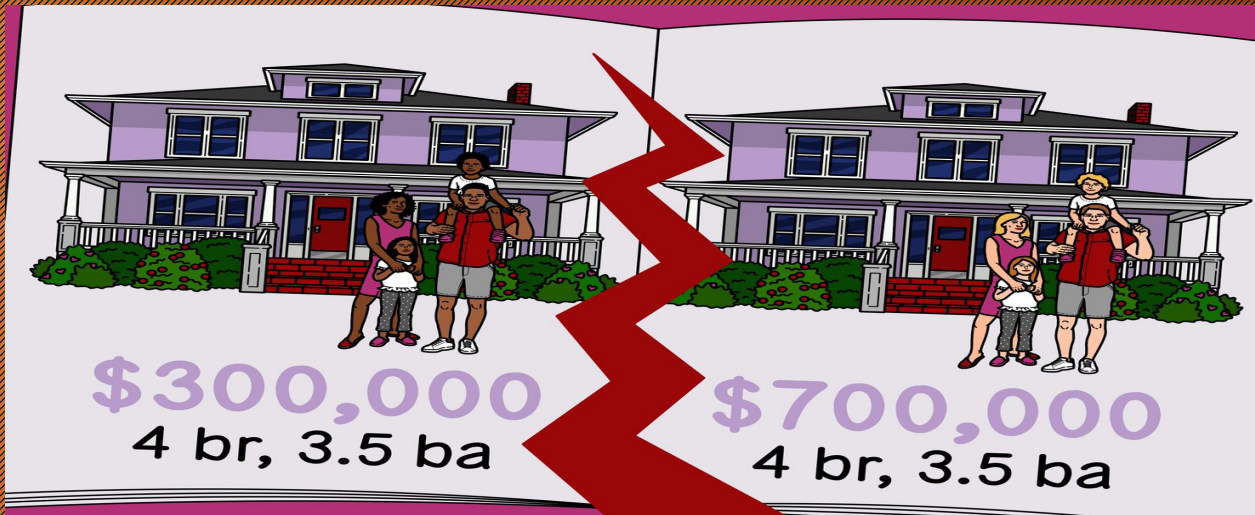
Of 17,000 ACE study participants:



What's Missing?



What's Missing?



**FOSTER
CARE**

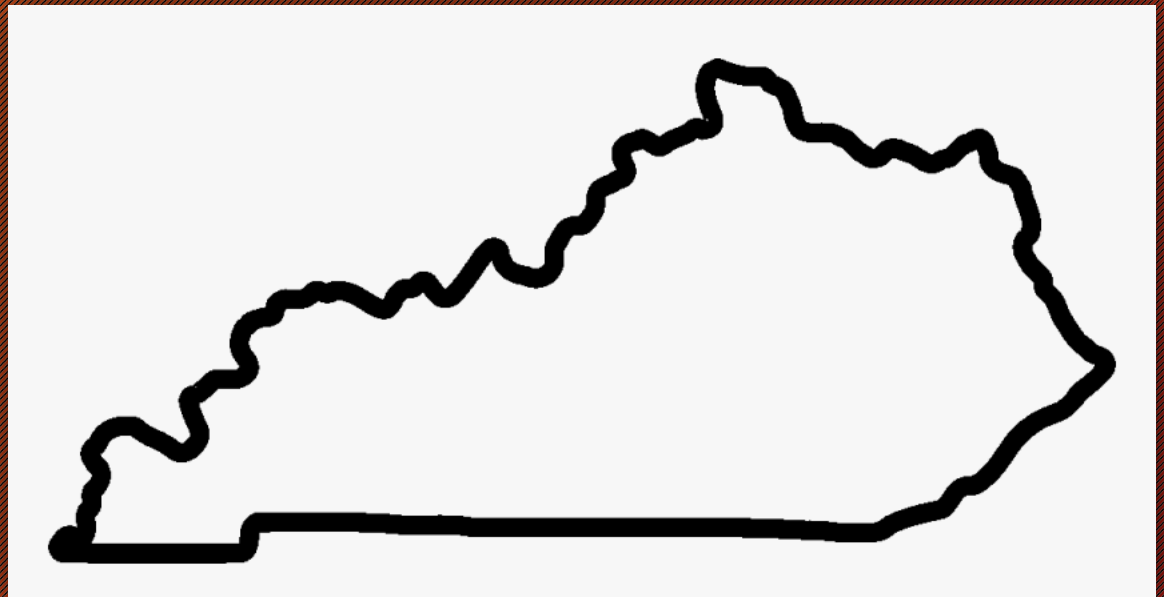
Racial Injustice

Racial Injustice is a SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF TRAUMA!

- ❖ Overt discrimination
- ❖ Micro-aggressions
- ❖ Economic inequality
- ❖ Criminal justice
- ❖ Child welfare

ACEs in Kentucky

- 64% of Americans have at least 1 ACE
- 64% of Kentuckians have at least 2 ACEs



Most common ACEs in Kentucky

- Child Abuse
- Divorce
- Incarcerated Relative
- Substance Abuse

What do you see in your congregations?

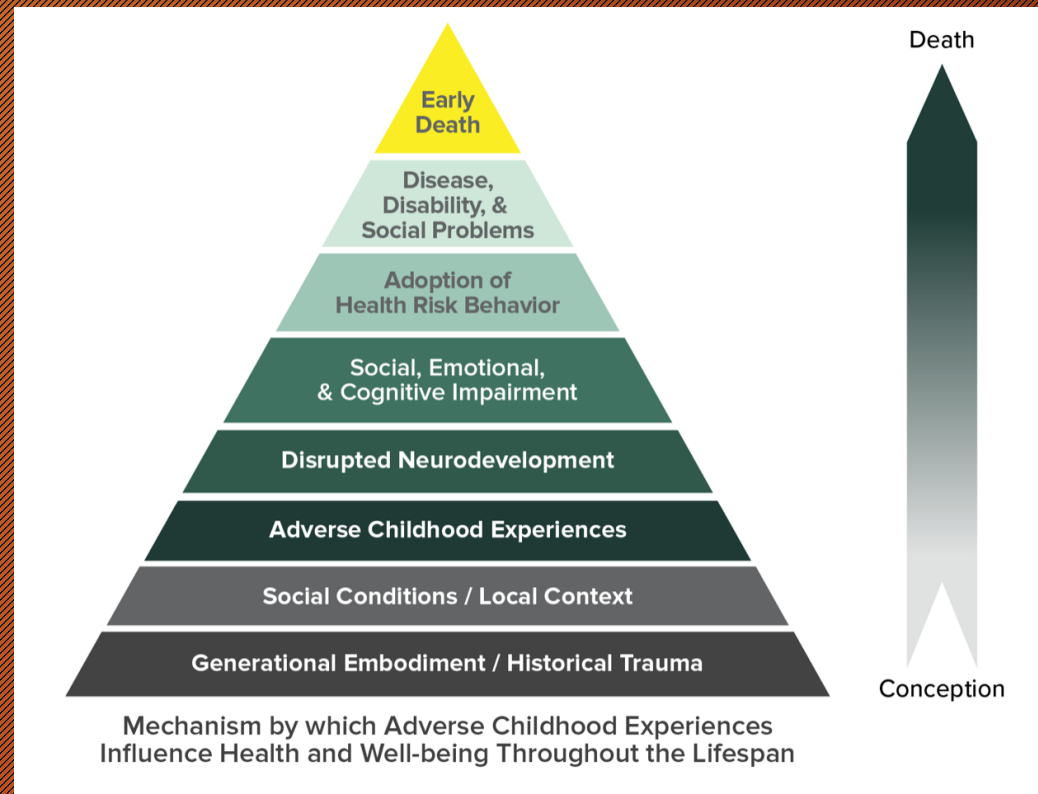
What problems might be linked to ACEs?



Problems often linked to ACEs

- ✓ Change in activity level
- ✓ Sleeping difficulties
- ✓ Substance use
- ✓ Disconnection
- ✓ Irritability, anger, and frustration
- ✓ Difficulty making decisions
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Difficulty coping
- ✓ Behavioral changes
- ✓ Changes in performance
- ✓ Hyper-arousal
- ✓ Tired and sleepy
- ✓ Difficulty with criticism or authority

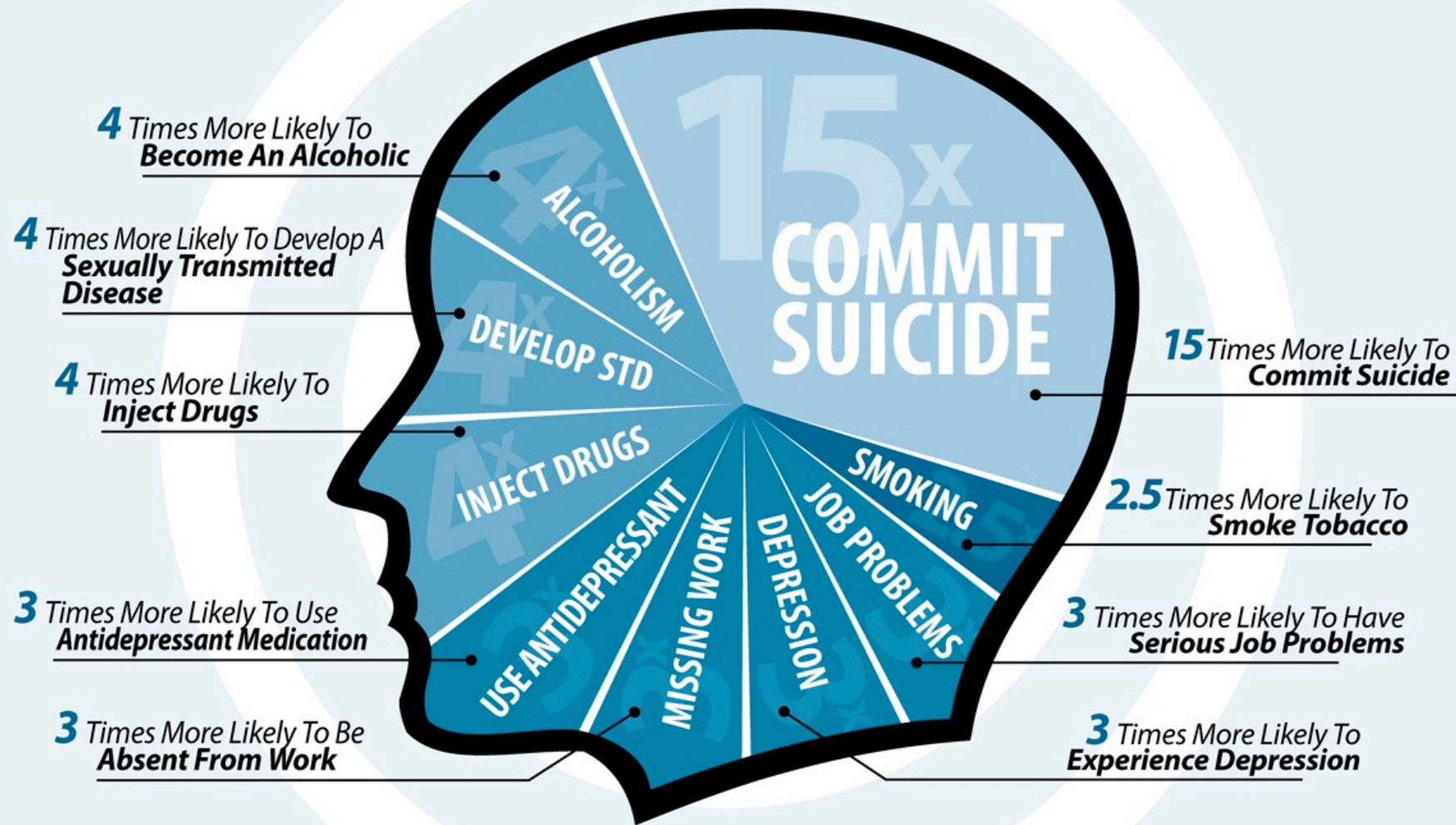
The ACE Pyramid represents the conceptual framework for the ACE Study. The ACE Study has uncovered how ACEs are strongly related to development of risk factors for disease, and well-being throughout the life course.



Neuroanatomical studies have identified changes in brain structures of those with PTSD which can lead to depression, substance abuse, personality and other mental disorders, and health problems.

- PTSD is considered to be a psychological injury rather than a mental illness.
- **Overstimulated amygdala:** The amygdala is responsible for survival-related threat identification, plus tagging memories with emotion. After trauma the **amygdala can get caught in a highly alert loop** in which it looks for and perceives threat everywhere.
- **Underactive hippocampus:** **Research** has shown that people with PTSD have smaller hippocampi. Because the hippocampus is crucial to storing and retrieving memories and distinguishing between past and present memories, people with PTSD can lose the ability to discriminate between past and present, resulting in flashbacks that seem real.
- **Ventromedial prefrontal cortex shrinkage** - Due to this **brain region shrinking**, the ability to regulate emotions is reduced in people with PTSD. The smaller size results in fear, anxiety, and extreme stress responses when the brain is triggered - even by things not connected to the original trauma.
- **Ineffective variability:** With PTSD, the hormones get out of whack and interfere with a body's ability to regulate itself, and the sympathetic nervous system stays highly activated. For example, **tests** show cortisol levels to be lower than normal in some studies of patients with PTSD, however, corticotropin-releasing factor in cerebrospinal fluid is increased. This state leads to fatigue of the body and many of its systems, especially the **adrenal**.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA ARE:



Congregations are lamenting

- Spiritual Trauma/Spiritual PTSD
 - COVID-19; shelter in place; isolation; loss (death) of members; the exodus of members; closings & mergers; virtual worship & meetings
- How can we be present in the moment?
 - Encourage to name the emotion/feeling
 - Honor the emotions through affirmation
 - Make space (safe and sacred) to deal with the emotion and explore how theology plays into it
 - Acknowledge spiritual & emotional illness
 - Allow our consciousness to explore the conversations of doom & gloom
 - Exploration can make better when you talk about it
 - Talk about the “what ifs” and “where do we go from here?”



guilty



proud



confused



sad



lonely



afraid



happy



jealous



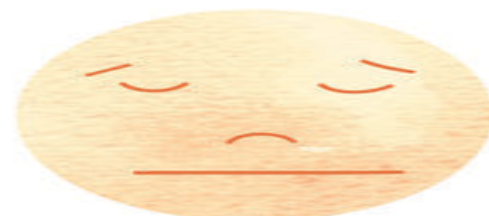
brave



mad



nervous



disappointed



frustrated



grateful



embarrassed



hopeful


Resilience



Resilience

- The ability to recover from stress, bounce back, recover, or rebound
- Stress and trauma are unavoidable but RESILIENCE IS POSSIBLE!



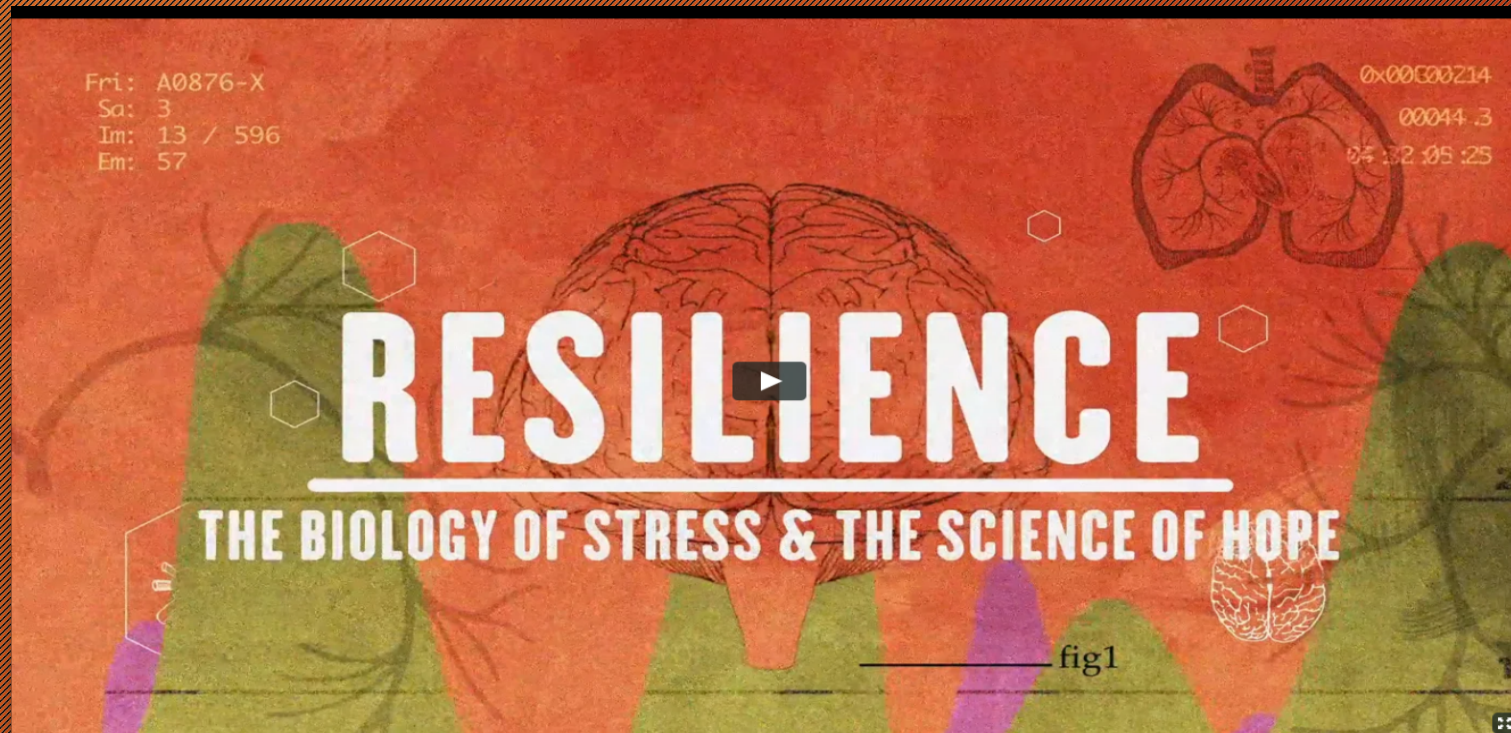


**BE STRONG, BE FEARLESS, BE
BEAUTIFUL. AND BELIEVE THAT
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WHEN
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE
THERE TO SUPPORT YOU.**

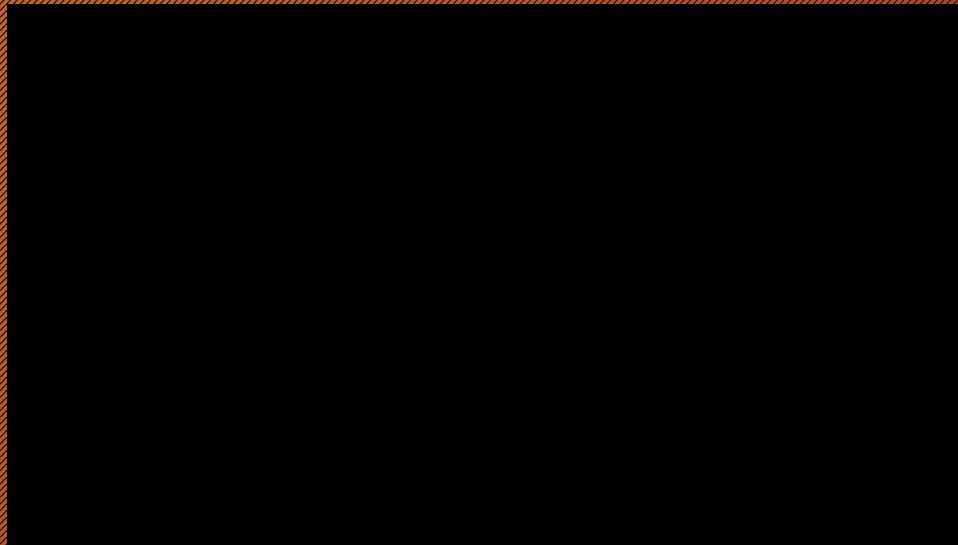
- MISTY COPELAND

Long term impacts in the research

Documentary on the Neurobiology of Trauma and Neuroplasticity

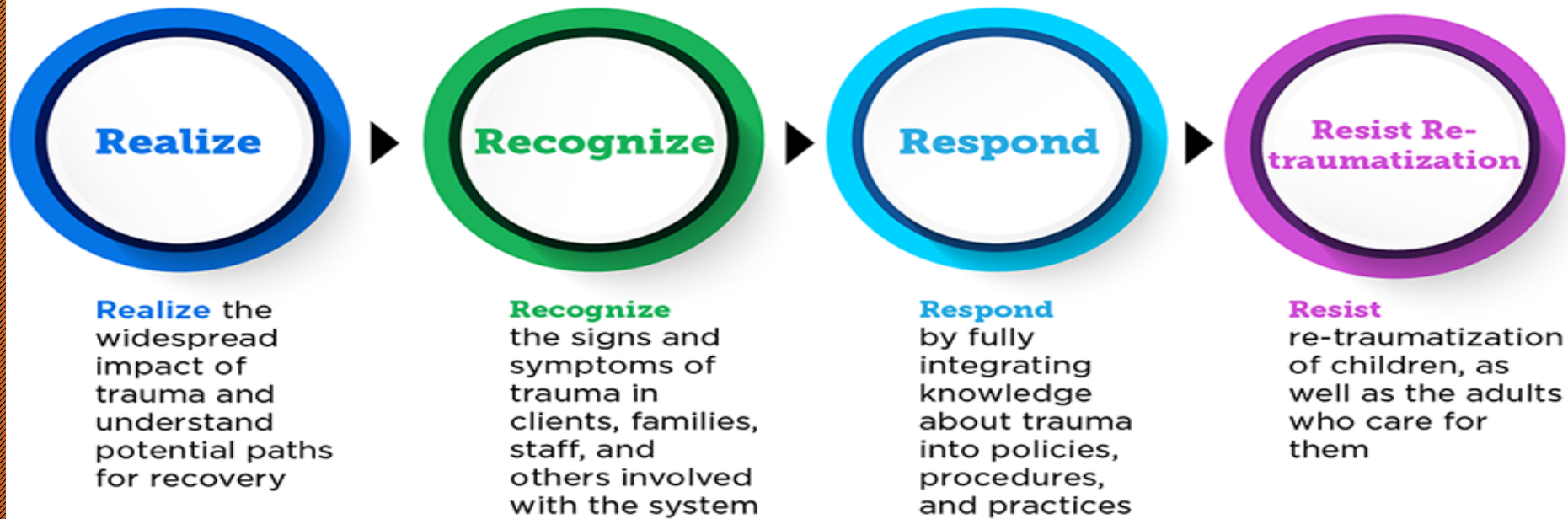


Neuroplasticity



4Rs for building Resilience

The Four Rs of Trauma-Informed Care



This figure is adapted from: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). SAMHSA's concept of trauma and Guidance for a trauma-informed approach. HHS publication no. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Trauma-Informed Care

- Trauma-informed care (TIC) recognizes and responds to the signs, symptoms, and risks of trauma to better support a person's health needs and who has experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress.

Source: <https://www.acesaware.org/ace-fundamentals/principles-of-trauma-informed-care/#>

Trauma-Informed Care Principles

- **Safety**
 - This includes creating spaces where people feel culturally, emotionally, and physically safe as well as an awareness of an individual's discomfort or unease.
- **Transparency and Trustworthiness**
 - This includes providing full and accurate information about what's happening and what's likely to happen next.
- **Choice**
 - This includes the recognition of the need for an approach that honors the individual's dignity.
- **Collaboration and Mutuality**
 - This includes the recognition that healing happens in relationships and partnerships with shared decision-making.
- **Empowerment**
 - This includes the recognition of an individual's strengths. These strengths are built on and validated.

You can help! You can change the story.....

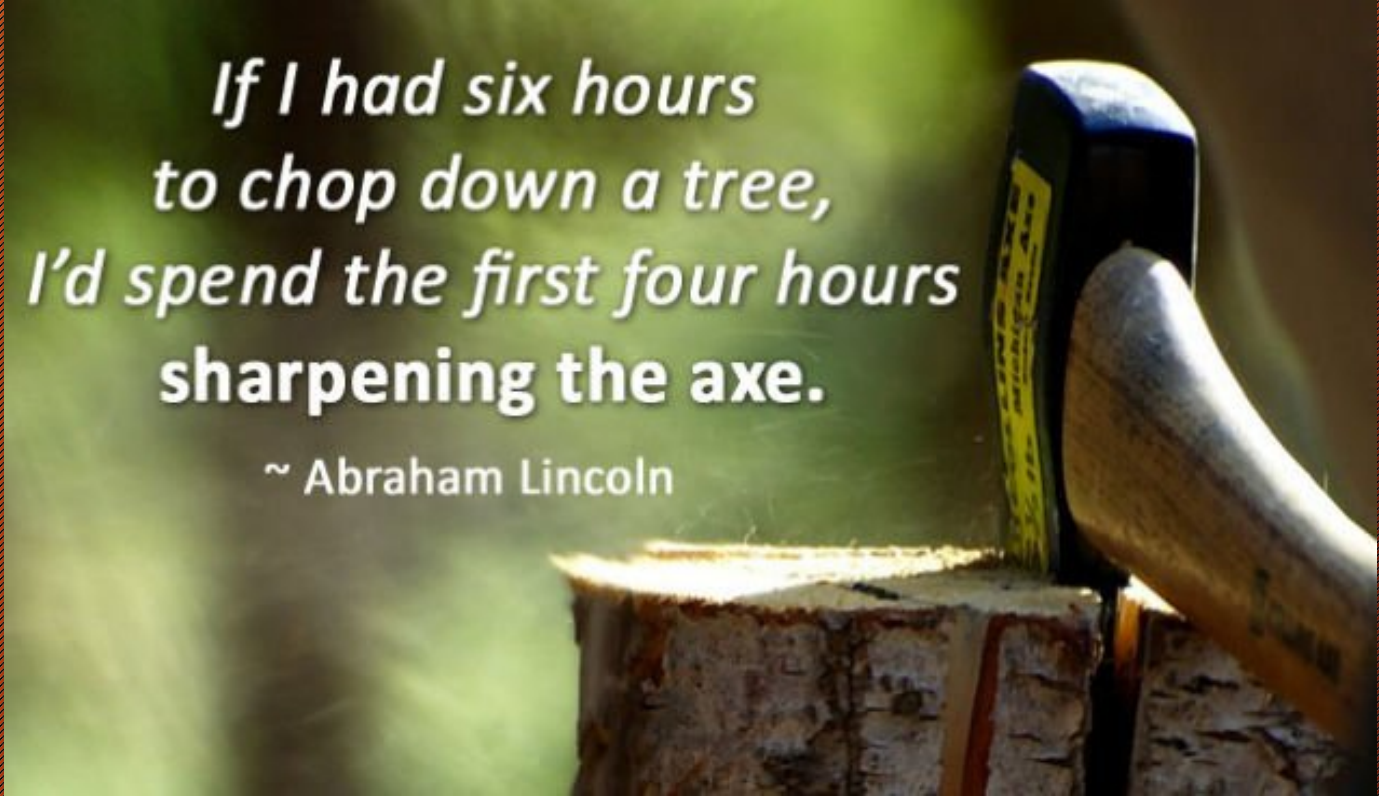
- Trauma-Informed Care is about BUILDING RESILIENCE
- By engaging Trauma-Informed Care principles (moving from “What’s wrong with you?” to “What happened to you?”) you can reduce some of the stress in the moment.
 - Respond with curiosity rather than judgment.
- By helping one to assess their strengths and resources, you can help connect them to their own network that helps reduce the toxicity of stress.
 - Don’t be their hero. Don’t abandon them. Don’t attempt to fix it/them. Help them connect to themselves and their physical, relational, and spiritual resources.

How will you build Personal Resilience?

- How do you tell when your “tank is empty?”
- How do you tell when you have NOT taken care of yourself?

Self-care is important - COMMIT TO IT

- One should spend more time in preparation
- We should invest in self-care
- If we don't we inadvertently damage our mind-body-spirit
- *Seek professional advice/care if needed*

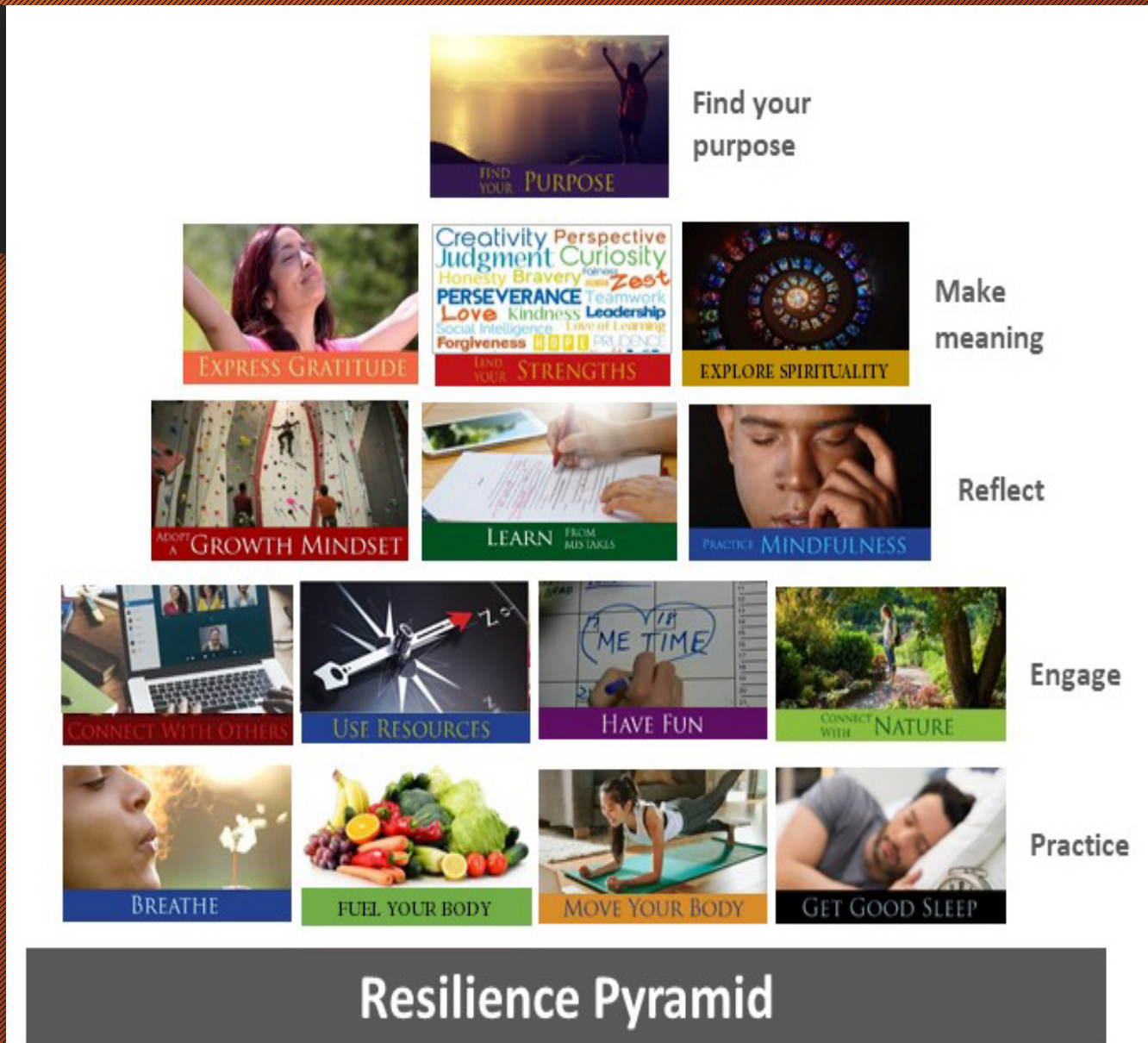


*If I had six hours
to chop down a tree,
I'd spend the first four hours
sharpening the axe.*

~ Abraham Lincoln

Resilience

- Practice calming breathing - eat well - move your body - get good rest
- Engage with others - have fun - connect with others - spend time with nature
- Reflect on life through mindfulness, develop growth mindset, learn from mistakes
- Make meaning by expressing gratitude, focus on your strengths, explore spiritual formation
- Be your best self - discover and embrace your purpose



Resilience

You have the capacity to create a new story with trauma & stress by building resilience!!!



"Born Again"
*Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature;
the old things pass away; behold, new things have come.
2 Corinthians 5:17, N.T. 63*

Resilience

- Human beings are wired for connection
 - Relational
 - Mind - Body - Spirit
 - Cognition - Emotion
- <http://trauma-recovery.ca/recovery/phases-of-trauma-recovery/>
- <http://trauma-recovery.ca/recovery/mindfulness/>

How to Build Resilience

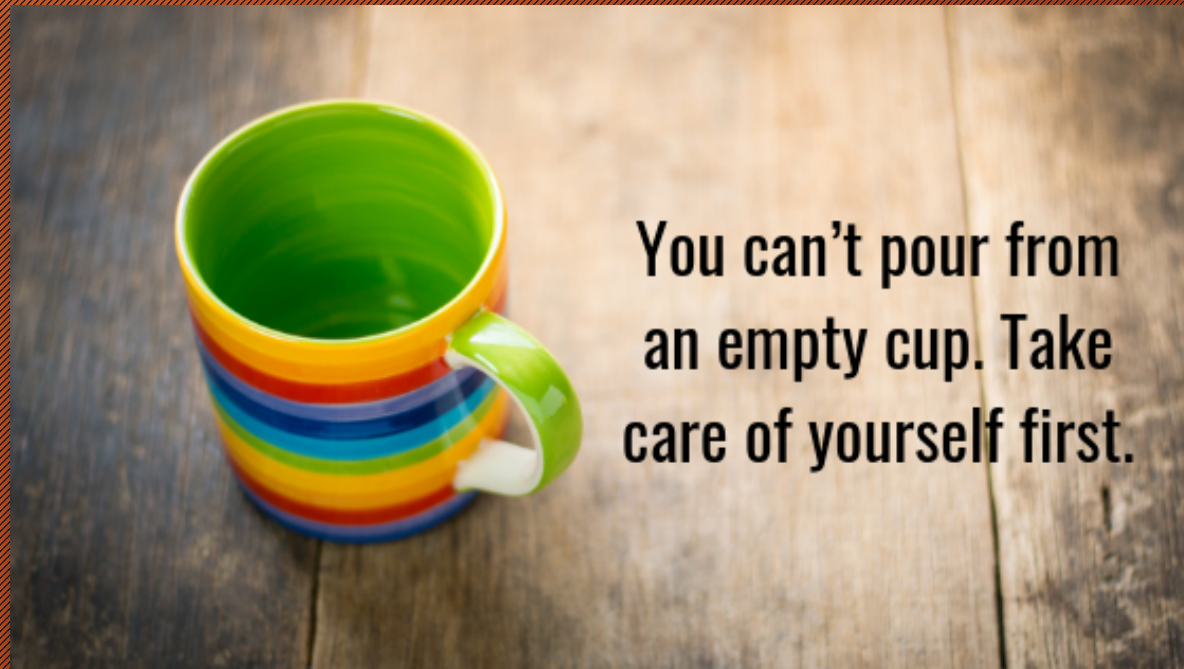


The Benefits of Compassion & Gratitude

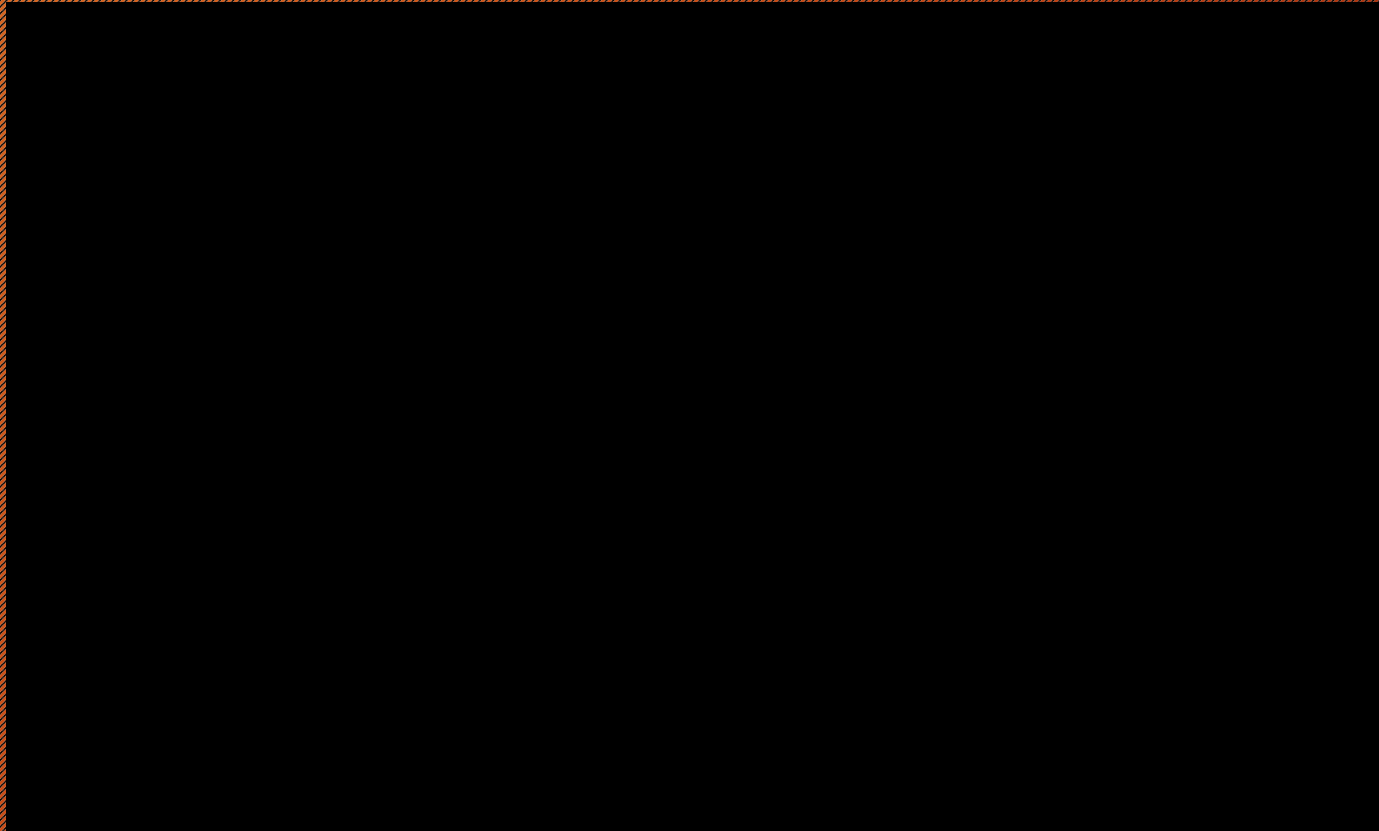
- Opens door to strong, positive & deeper relationships
- Intentional about meaning making and being purposeful
- Improves physical health
- Improves psychological health
- Improves empathy & communication, reduces aggression
- Improves sleep
- Improves self-esteem
- Increases resilience

Build Your Resilience Plan

- You will become stronger building your resilience
- You will be able to support people (i.e., congregation, community, family) you work with
- You can then help others to build their own resilience



I Will Survive



Additional Resources

- <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>
- <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/toxic-stress/tackling-toxic-stress/>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/resilience-in-positive-psychology/>

**Q&A
TIME**