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Introduction to the Neurobiology of Trauma

Sept 9, 2020

Presented by: Dr. Anjali Nandi, PhD, MAC, LAC Facilitated by: Greg Brown



Webinar Information

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Poll Questions

Poll questions may be asked during the webinar.

This is your time to weigh in with your thoughts.



Please respond promptly; polls are open for a short period of time.





Which of the following best describes your role?

- Victim Services / Victim Advocate
- Probation / Community Corrections
- Law Enforcement
- CAC Worker, Social Worker, Mental Health Worker
- Other

Learning Objectives

Understand the impact of trauma on the brain.

Explore what it means to be trauma-informed.

Learn strategies to effectively manage vicarious trauma.





Today's Presenter

Anjali Nandi, PhD, MAC, LAC

Associate,

National Criminal Justice Training Center

Why Trauma-Informed Care?

- It's a lens
- Not always visible
- Multi-generational
- Avoid re-traumatizing
- Reduce negative coping
- Decrease burnout
- Hurt people, hurt people



What is Trauma

- The experience of violence or victimization
- Threat to life or limb, loss of control
- Extreme stress that overwhelms the person's capacity to cope

Stress Continuum

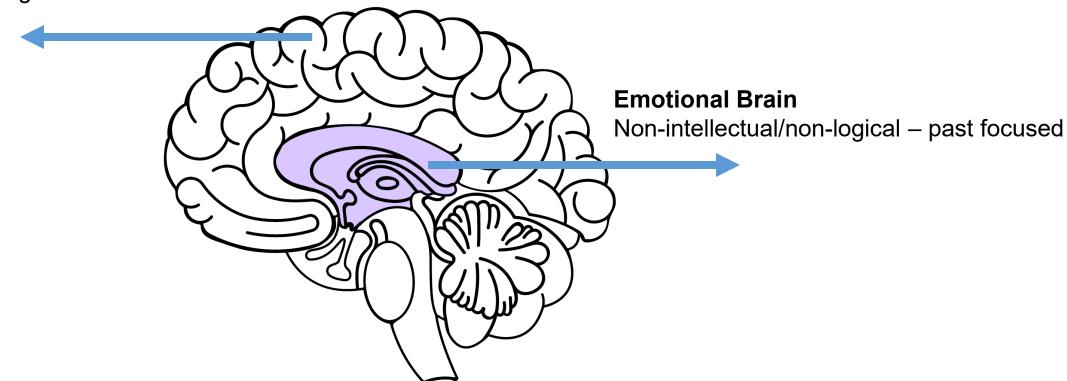
- Eustress
- Distress
- Short-term
- Long-term
- Traumatic
- Trauma response



Dr. Louise Aznavour, Psychologist

Intellectual (Logical) Brain

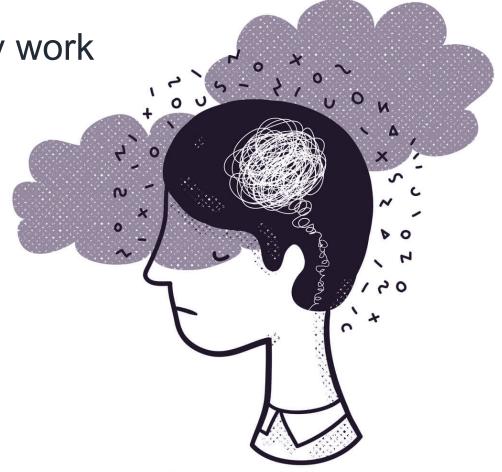
Forward looking – future & solution focused



Limbic Lounge

Changes the way your brain and body work

- Impairs your judgment
- Rewires your brain to run on stress chemicals
- Causes inflammation



ttps://www.foundationsrecoverynetwork.com/ways-drugs-can-cause-impaired-judgmen



Where do you find yourself on the trauma continuum?

- Vicarious trauma
- Compassion fatigue
- Chronic stress
- Short-term stress
- What continuum??

Impact of Trauma

- Loss of mass in frontal cortex
- Dysregulated emotional system
- Re-experiencing the event
- Emotional numbing
- Lack of self-regulation



What Does Being Trauma-Informed Mean?

- Avoid re-traumatizing
- Recognizing what trauma is
- Using a different lens
- Flexible with consequences
- Sensitive to fear

- Being patient
- Not taking it personally
- Facilitate safety
- Be consistent
- Know when to refer



Practical Tips

- Engage the person, build a relationship
- Provide a calm, soothing environment
- Give relaxed, unhurried attention
- Talk about their concerns
- Provide as much choice and control as possible
 - Making decisions develops the cortex
 - Involve the clients in decision-making
 - Avoid pathologizing behaviors



Organizational Symptoms:

- High absenteeism
- Inability for teams to work well together
- Desire among staff members to break rules
- Outbreaks of aggressive behaviors among staff
- Lack of flexibility among staff members
- Negativity towards management
- Strong reluctance toward change
- Inability of staff to believe improvement is possible
- Lack of a vision for the future

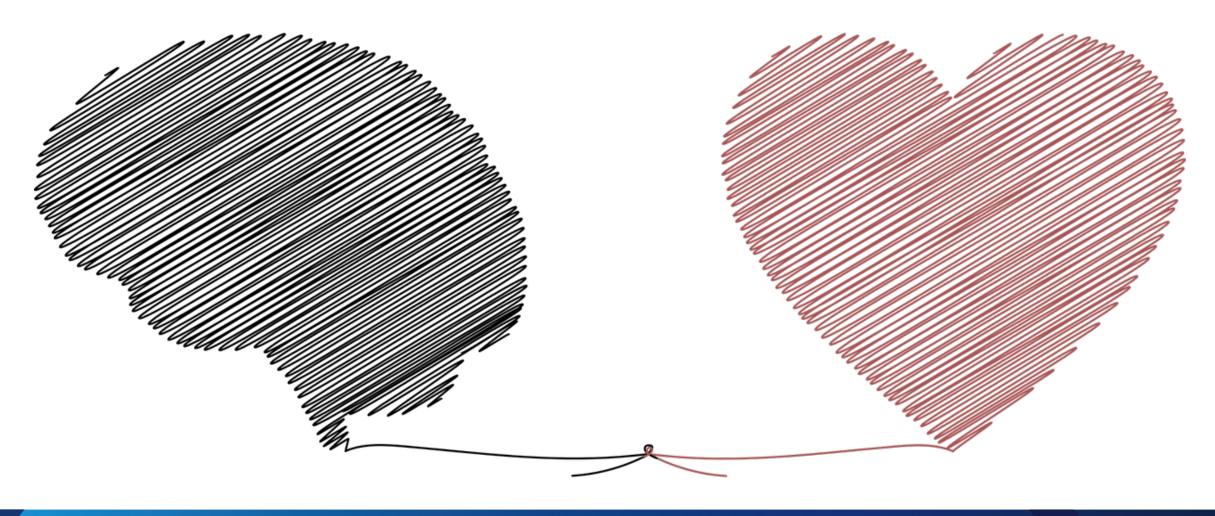


Warning Signs

- You get stressed easily.
- You have difficulty asserting yourself.
- You have a limited emotional vocabulary.
- You make assumptions quickly and defend them vehemently.
- You hold grudges.
- You don't let go of mistakes.
- You often feel misunderstood.
- You don't know your triggers.
- You don't get angry.
- You blame other people for how they make you feel.
- You're easily offended.



Boundaried Empathy



Un-Mirroring Ideas:

- Sit up straight
- Cross or uncross legs
- Change breathing
- Take a sip of water

- Stretch
- Take a deep breath
- Exhale
- Break eye contact

Don't Play Trauma Tag!



Self-Care

Something else I don't have time for and feel guilty that I don't do



In-the-Moment Care

Find your Happy Place!



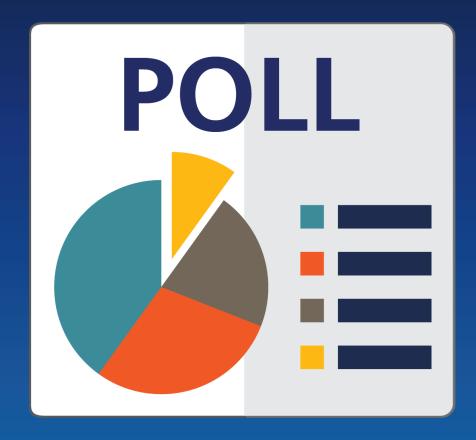


Take in the good.

The opposite of play is not work...

...the opposite of play is depression





What is your go-to for finding balance?

- Mindfulness
- Gratitude
- Social support
- Wellness (exercise etc.)
- I have no balance!

Activity

- Be social
- Go for a walk
- Journal
- Appreciate someone
- Sit quietly







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