Expanding the Adverse Childhood Experiences Model

Social Conditions and Historical Trauma

LINDA DOUGLAS M.ED.
CERTIFIED TRAUMA SERVICES SPECIALIST
NH COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

KEEP CALM AND PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Why is Understanding Trauma Important?

- To provide effective services we need to understand the life situations that may be contributing to the person's current problems
- Many current problems faced by the people we serve may be related to traumatic life experiences
- People who have experienced traumatic life events are often very sensitive to situations that remind them of the people, places or things involved in their traumatic event.
- These reminders, also known as triggers, may cause a person to relive the trauma and view the supportive agency a source of distress rather than a place of healing and wellness.

The ACE Study is an ongoing collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente.

Led by Co-principal Investigators Robert F. Anda, MD, MS, and Vincent J. Felitti, MD, the ACE Study is perhaps the largest scientific research study of its kind, analyzing the relationship between multiple categories of childhood trauma
(ACEs), and health and behavioral outcomes later in life.

The ACE conditions:
Before the age of 18

- Recurrent physical abuse
- Recurrent emotional abuse
- Contact sexual abuse
- An alcohol and/or drug abuser in the household
- An incarcerated household member
- Someone who is chronically depressed, mentally ill, institutionalized, or suicidal
- Mother is treated violently
- One or no parents
- Emotional or physical neglect

A Public Health Paradox

What are conventionally viewed
as Public Health *problems* are often personal
solutions to long-concealed
adverse childhood experiences.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Study: Impact Across the Lifespan

Adverse Childhood Experiences	Neurobiological Impacts and Health Risks	Long-term Health and Social Problems
The more types of adverse childhood experiences…	The greater the neurobiological impacts and health risks, and…	The more serious the lifelong consequences to health and well-being

Felitti, V.J., Anda, R. F., et. al., 1998

Factors contributing for likelihood of PTSD

- Genetic factors account for one-third of the overall risk
- Severity of the trauma
- Being female
- Being younger
- Having a history of childhood abuse
- Other psychiatric problems
- Belonging to a minority group
- Lower socioeconomic status
- Lower education level

Shaili Jain, 2019

Prevalence

- Lifetime prevalence in general population is 7%
- Prevalence in veterans in the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq is twenty per 100. The longer the deployment and the more intense the exposure, the higher the rate climbs.
- Higher rates are found in police officers, firefighters, and other first responders.
- Similar statistics show high rates in low-income women and teenagers living in high-crime inner-city areas.

Shaili Jain, MD 2019

Genogram of Trauma/Case Study

Maternal Grandparents
French -------Indigenous
Grandmother
Institutionalized in 40s for depression
Grandfather
Placed in Indian Boarding School at age 10
Alcoholic
Raised 5 children during the Great Depression

Paternal Grandparents
Irish/French Canadian --- Irish
Grandmother
Raised 11 children during the Great Depression
Married twice – both alcoholics
Grandfather
Abandoned family during Great Depression - alcoholic

Genogram of Trauma

Mother
At least 2 brothers who were alcoholics
At least two were physically abusive to children and wives
One brother was a pedophile
Had four children – one died before the age of 2
2 had medical traumas
Anxiety/Depression

Father
Had ten siblings – a number of whom were alcoholics
Korean War Veteran
Food addiction
PTSD
Anger issues

This Generation

Multiple addictions including alcohol, food, shopping, and gaming
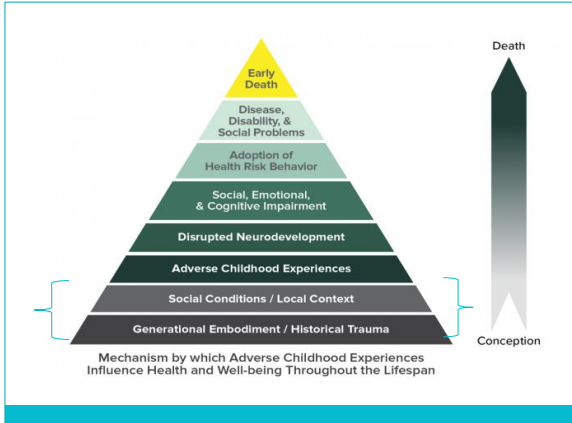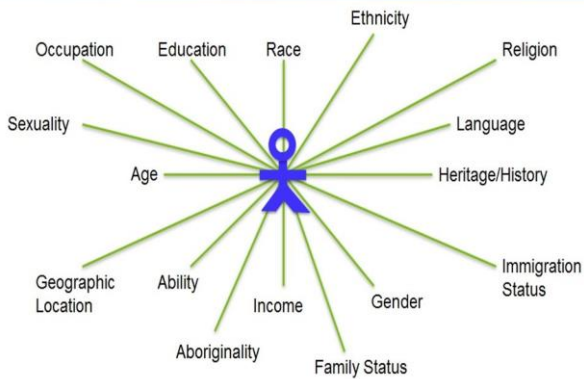Sexual assault victims
Depression, anxiety
Etc., etc.

ACEs not considered high but . . . . .

Expanding the Model

SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Social Location and Local Context

○

Safety and access to quality health care, economic opportunities, social connections, and social capital are all key determinants of the health over time.
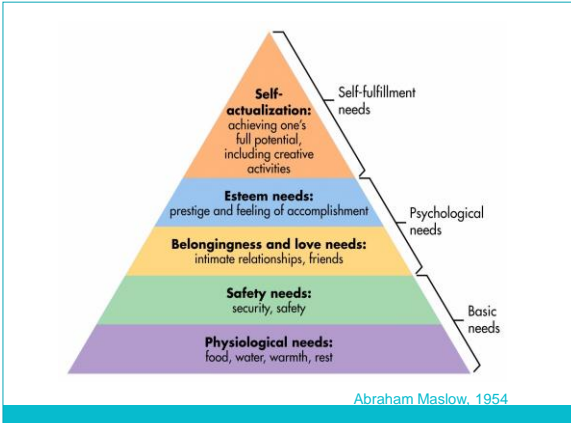

NH Social and Economic Factors

○

Child Poverty

Below 200% Poverty

Food Insecurity

○

Social Determinants of Health

Abraham Maslow, 1954

"Until we are willing to acknowledge that we collectively have not fulfilled the needs of developing humans throughout our evolution, and therefore as adults we are not operating at our optimal capacity as human organisms, we will continue to perpetuate the social conditions that hinder optimal development, all the while pretending that we adults are unaffected and traumatic childhoods are normal."
Elizabeth Perry

Historical and Cultural Trauma

"The collective experience of violence perpetrated against a group in the process of colonization that results in a humanitarian crisis for that community."

Brockie, Heinzelmann & Gill 2013

"Living under such difficult, oppressive circumstances can lead parents to formulate fear based 'survival messages' that they pass on to their children and grandchildren – ideas like "Don't ask for help – it's dangerous."

Elena Cherepanov 2019

(Quoted by Methot)

Shared Stress

Due to ongoing discrimination and micro-aggressions.

Causes hyperarousal, feelings of alienation, worries about future negative events and perceiving others as dangerous.

The feeling that you have to manage everything in your own community because you don't know what you will encounter in society at large.

Monnica Williams, 2018

(Quoted by Methot)

Loss of Cultural Control

- Altered sense of identity and self-perception
- Lack of personal agency
- A lack of faith in the value and meaning of their own lives

These structures were broken by the oppressive systems that dismantled their societies.

Suzanne Methot

Intergenerational Trauma

- First identified in the children of Holocaust survivors and descendants of Japanese people interred during the Second World War.
- Also identified in the children of American veterans of conflict including Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf Wars.
- 45% of American veterans' children exhibited "significant" signs of PTSD with 83% "elevated hostility" scores and more dysfunctional social and emotional problems.

SUZANNE METHOT

What is Epigenetics?

Epigenetics and Culture

- Some Indigenous peoples refer to this as "blood memory."
- Carried through generations through psycho-spiritual-biological processes that encompass the culture

Suzanne Methot

Epigenetic Modifications from ACES

The ACE most linked to epigenetic differences and vulnerability for health disparities in that of child abuse.

Labonte 2012

Direct physical abuse and observing the abuse of a mother have also been associated with great methylation level in the promoter region of the glucocorticoid receptor gene in leukocytes.

Tyrka, Price, Marsit, et. al. 2012

Similar methylation profiles are also reported in the peripheral blood of babies whose mothers were depress during the third trimester of pregnancy.
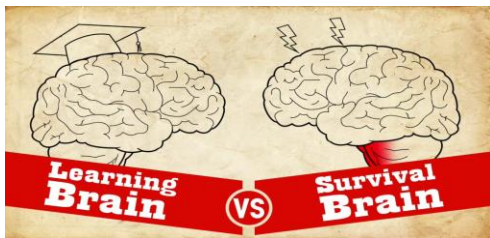
Oberlander, et al. 2008

Survivors Experience
Multiple Types of Trauma

- Childhood victimization increases risk for abuse as adolescent or adult
- Coping strategies may increase risk for being harmed
- Not learn have right to protect oneself from harm.
- Survivors also experience social, political, cultural, historical, & immigration-related trauma*
- Cultural and historical trauma can impact individuals and communities across generations
- Protective factors and resilience can mitigate
  - Can also be diminished, resulting in increased vulnerability and fewer opportunities to heal

*Fabri: Triple Trauma Paradigm; Root: Insidious trauma; Packard: Cultural and Historical Trauma

Learning Brain Vs. Survival

Video

Trauma Framework

- Normalizes human responses to trauma
- Recognizes that trauma is not the exception
- Shift understanding from symptoms to adaptations
- Shift from seeing symptoms to understanding survival strategies as coping mechanisms are overwhelmed
- An injury model

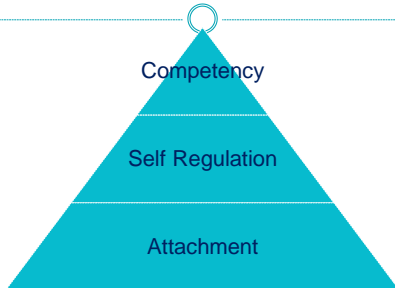**What's wrong with you? VS What happened to you?**

NCDVTMH

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The importance of a trauma-informed approach to health care

- With appropriate supports and intervention, people can overcome traumatic experiences.
- A trauma-informed approach reduces the ways that services may unintentionally exacerbate trauma-related issues.
- Staff (in all capacities) are less likely to experience issues related to vicarious trauma.
- The impact of the trauma-informed approach expands to the family of the person seeking services and then onto the great community.

Resiliency Building Blocks

Competency

Self Regulation

Attachment

Trauma-informed Approaches

- Use empowerment-based approach to counteract the experiences of abuse
  - Focus on strengths
  - Support empowerment through skill-building
  - Help create stability and supports

- Empathic engagement that provides:
  - Information & choices
  - Respect, connection, and hope
  - Access to tools, resources, and skills   34

References

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Angelis, Tori, The Legacy of Trauma, APA, February 2019, Vol 50, No. 2

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T. F. Oberlander, J. Weinberg, M. Papsdorf, R. Grunau, S. Misri, and A. M. Devlin, "Prenatal exposure to maternal depression, neonatal methylation of human glucocorticoid receptor gene (NR3C1) and infant cortisol

Jain, Shaili, M.D. *The Unspeakable Mind* – Stories of Trauma and Healing from the Frontlines of PTSD Science, Harper Collins, 2019

Resources

- National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health
  http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/
- Family Homelessness Resource Center
  http://homeless.samhsa.gov/organization/national-center-on-family-homelessness-39.aspx
- ACES Connection http://acestoohigh.com/
- Trauma and Justice Center of SAMHSA
  http://www.samhsa.gov/traumaJustice/
- Open Doors NHCADSV Blog
  http://opendoorsnh.blogspot.com/
- National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network
  http://www.nctsn.org/