The Impact of the Pandemic: Understanding global traumatic stress

Bobbi L. Beale, PsyD
Senior Research Associate, Trainer & Consultant
Center for Innovative Practices, CWRU

March 2020 → COVID-19 in Ohio!

- What’s going to happen????
- Stay Safe Ohio Order
- Social Distancing & Masks
- School & Childcare closings
Primary areas of concern

1) physical safety & illness
2) financial safety & the economy
3) psychological safety & the toll of separation from each other

Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, MD
Author | The Body Keeps the score

Trauma Preconditions:
- Lack of predictability
- Immobility
- Loss of connection

Traumatic Stress Symptoms:
1. Numbing out and spacing out
2. Loss of sense of time/sequences
3. Loss of safety
4. Loss of sense of purpose

Bessel van der Kolk, MD on the Global Coronavirus Crisis: Steering Ourselves and Our Clients Through New and Developing Traumas. Free webinar:
https://catalog.pesi.com/item/57744/
A little neuroscience helps everyone

- ACE Study and Trauma prevalence
- Stress Response Patterns
- The Super Highway of Reactivity
- Engagement & Supportive Interactions

The Brain Matters

- When a person is calm or in a mild state of arousal, the cerebral cortex is in control.
- Learning, and treatment, and executive functions, all take place in the cerebral cortex.
Trauma Impacts Our Neurodevelopment

Trauma’s impact:
- Disrupts development
- Creating developmental gaps
- Limits access to the cerebral cortex
- Due to being stuck in the stress response

The Adverse Childhood Experience Study

- 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.
- 18,000 participants!
- The majority of participants were 50+ (62%),
- were white (77%),
- and had attended college (72%).
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Bobbi.Beale@case.edu

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Missing Traumas

What’s missing? And why?
• School & community violence
• Disasters & accidents
• Invasive or prolonged medical procedures
• Discrimination & oppression
• POVERTY

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Traumas, Triggers & Other Things

• Big T vs. Little t
• What fires together, wires together
• Over interpretations
• Punishment & Shame
• Score 4 or more
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ACEs Across the Lifespan

ACE Score and Health Risk

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Developmental Experience

Optimal Developmental Experience

Brain Process Under Typical Conditions

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Alarm System “Express Route”

Survival skills save us; what’s wrong with that?

Fight Flight Freeze

Survival Skills

Stress Response System

Trauma & Chronic Stress

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With repeated stress, the “Express Route” becomes the SUPERHIGHWAY of Reactivity.

**Superhighway of Reactivity**

*Survival skills usually help us to...*
- escape or deter perceived threats
- alleviate pain or distress caused by a perceived inescapable threat

*Survival skills typically look like...*
- Impulsivity
- Aggression
- Self-centered

Activated Stress Response System = Trauma Responses = Survival Skills
Welcome **everyone** to chronic stress by way of...

**COVID-19**

**Trauma & Chronic Stress**

**Stress Response System**

**Survival Skills**

**Fight**

**Flight**

**Freeze**

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Welcome to being a foster kid.
Now, more than ever, we have to be trauma informed!

**TIC should adhere to the 4 R’s**

- **Realize** the widespread impact of trauma and the pathways to recovery
- **Recognize** trauma signs and symptoms
- **Respond** by integrating knowledge about trauma into all facets of service delivery & life
- **Resist** re-traumatization by decreasing unnecessary triggers and by not punishing survival skills
What can we do about it?

EXPECT RESILIENCY

Resiliency is an EXPECTATION and not an exception for youth with significant emotional and/or behavioral challenges. Resiliency is an ordinary process available to all youth.

~Ann Masten

Resiliency Definition

Resiliency Leadership Ohio, 2006

Resiliency is an inner capacity that when nurtured, facilitated, and supported by others, empowers children, youth, and families to successfully meet life’s challenges with a sense of self-determination, mastery, hope, and well-being.

Nurtured

Facilitated

Supported

Family, Faith & Friends

Services, Supports & Accommodations

Community Safety, Education & Opportunities
Thank You!

Please direct questions or concerns to:
Bobbi.Beale@case.edu

For additional information and resources related to trauma, resiliency and treatment, visit CIP’s websites:

• ResiliencyOhio.org/
• WraparoundOhio.org/
• IHBTOhio.org/

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