A wooden mannequin torso is shown from the back, holding a large, plush red heart. The background is a warm, textured brown. In the top right corner, there is a solid red vertical rectangle.

Trauma informed care: compassion from the inside out for professionals serving children, adults & families

October 7, 2020

32nd Annual Suicide
Prevention Conference

Shayne McNichols, LMSW



About me

Shayne McNichols

Black Woman (she/her)

Located in Grand Rapids, MI

Graduate of Grand Valley State University

Licensed Master Social Worker – Clinical and
Macro

Employed in Foster and Adoption Care, Non-
profit, & College Setting – 11 years

Owner and Lead Therapist, Blossom Counseling
Center for Personal Growth and Development,
LLC

Public Speaker and Community Collaborator

AGENDA

An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is visible above the water line, while the much larger, submerged part is visible below. A red vertical bar is on the right side of the image.

Psycho-education of Trauma

- Definition and types
- Symptoms
- Brain impact
- Serena's Journey

Trauma-Informed Care

- Know Your Why/Helping Profession
- Compassion Fatigue
- Evaluation
- Recommendations

Self-care

Resources

Trauma

A close-up photograph of a person's hands covering their face, with long dark hair framing the scene. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the skin and the length of the hair.

- ▶ Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being (SAMHSA, 2019).
- ▶ Trauma can be defined as a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing (The Center for Treatment of Anxiety and Mood Disorders, 2017).
- ▶ Trauma is a specific type of stress that reflects exposure to terrible events generally outside the range of daily human experience that are emotionally painful, intense, and distressing. (Powers-Lott, 2015)









Childhood/adolescent trauma statistics

- ▶ More than **two thirds of children** reported at least one traumatic event by age 16.
- ▶ The national average of child abuse and neglect victims in 2015 was 683,000, or 9.2 victims per 1,000 children.
- ▶ Each year, the number of youth requiring hospital treatment for physical assault-related injuries would fill **every seat in 9 stadiums**.
- ▶ 1 in 5 high school students was bullied at school; 1 in 6 experienced cyberbullying.

(SAMSHA, April 2020)

Young adult/adult statistics

- ▶ 60% of adults report experiencing abuse or other difficult family circumstances during their childhood
- ▶ 7.5 million women aged 15-44 with impaired ability to get pregnant or carry a baby to term.
- ▶ Direct correlation between childhood traumatic events and risk of adulthood health problems.
- ▶ Feeling unsafe as a child = feeling unsafe as an adult.

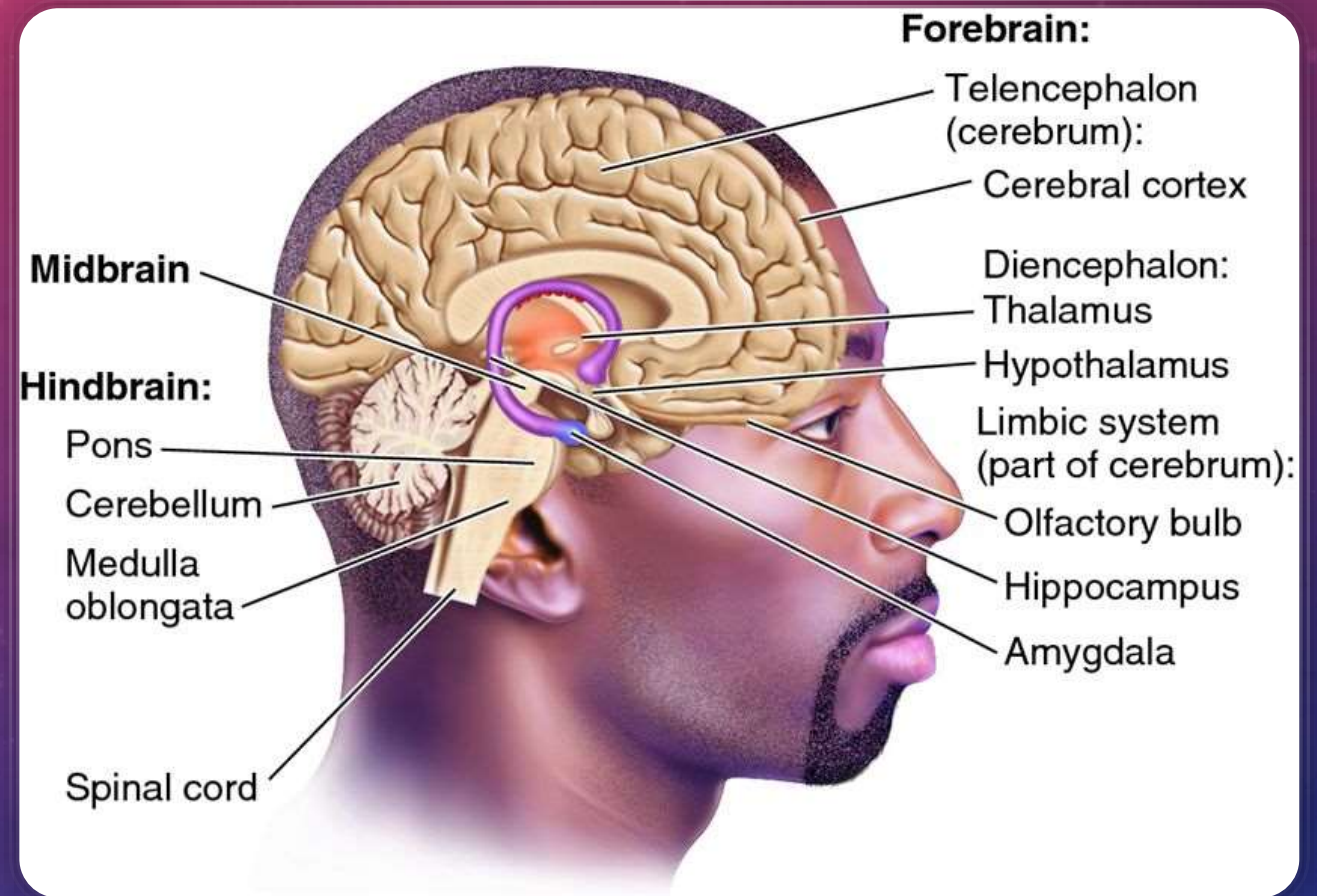
(Two Backpacks, 2017)



IMPACT OF Traumatic stress & the brain

- 1. The prefrontal cortex (PFC), known as the “Thinking Center” - UA
- 2. The anterior cingulate cortex (ACC), known as the “Emotion Regulation Center” - UA
- 3. The amygdala, known as the “Fear Center” - OA

Hyperactive nervous system



The Cognitive Model



Situation
something happens



→ **Thought**
the situation is
interpreted



→ **Emotion**
a feeling occurs as a
result of the thought



→ **Behavior**
an action in response to
the emotion

"Serena's journey"



BABY SERENA

- ▶ Biological mother was a drug abuser.
- ▶ Born with a positive meconium screen for illicit drugs.
- ▶ Heightened startle response
- ▶ Serena removed from mother's custody and placed in an emergency foster placement.
- ▶ Mother's rights get terminated.



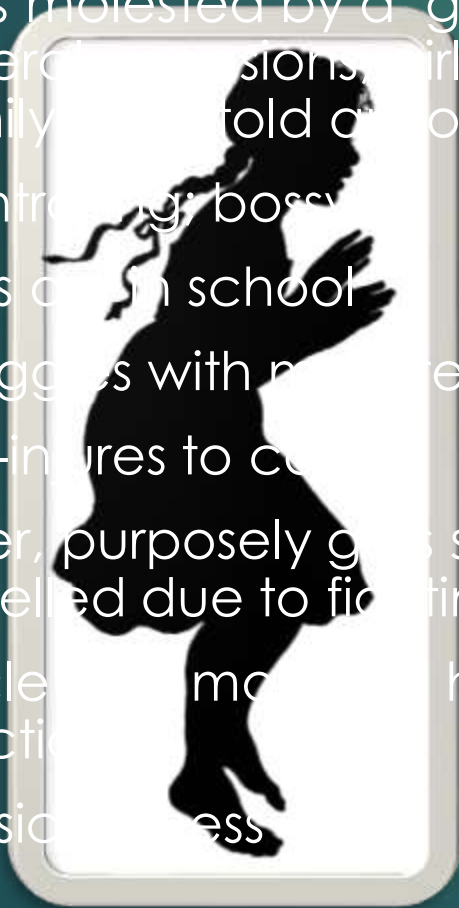
EARLY CHILDHOOD SERENA



- ▶ One of 4 children in the adoptive home (middle child)
- ▶ Molested by adoptive paternal uncle at 5 years of age
- ▶ Uncle's messages of manipulation:
 - "I'll buy you an ice cream if you stay quiet."
 - "You'll get in trouble if you do tell."
- ▶ Hopeless, helpless, silenced, & misunderstood.
- ▶ Wets the bed.
- ▶ Poor reasoning skills.
- ▶ Poor memory.
- ▶ Doesn't make eye contact with others.
- ▶ Inability to be soothed.
- ▶ Anger outbursts.

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD serena

- ▶ Was molested by a girl in school on several occasions, girl threatened to kill family if not told anyone.
- ▶ Controlling; bossy
- ▶ Acts out in school
- ▶ Struggles with new teachers
- ▶ Self-injures to cope
- ▶ Later, purposely gets suspended, then expelled due to fighting, age 10
- ▶ Uncle's mom, mother frequents family functions
- ▶ Physically fit



Early ADOLESCENT serena

- ▶ Strict father
- ▶ Fading relationship with mother.
- ▶ Labeled, "The troubled child."
- ▶ No longer a virgin by 12 years old.
- ▶ Guilt.
- ▶ Alternative school attendee in new school district.
- ▶ Drug use – surrendered to internal messages of being "damaged goods."
- ▶ Nightmares nightly; daytime fatigue.
- ▶ Eating problems.
- ▶ Flashbacks



Late adolescent/early adulthood serena



- ▶ Pregnant, then miscarries at 16 years of age.
- ▶ Dysfunctional romantic relationships, abusive.
- ▶ Spoke up about molestation to close family friend; paranoid about disclosure.
- ▶ Mistrusting of adults.
- ▶ Strained spirituality.
- ▶ Low self-esteem.
- ▶ Suicidal ideation.
- ▶ Social media bullying.
- ▶ Birth parents died, house fire (grief).
- ▶ Adoptive father, Stage 4 Prostate Cancer

COMPLEX TRAUMA/complex ptsd

Complex trauma describes both children's exposure to multiple traumatic events—often of an invasive, interpersonal nature—and the wide-ranging, long-term effects of this exposure. These events are severe and pervasive, such as abuse or profound neglect.

- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network




Adulthood/family serena



... then there's you!!



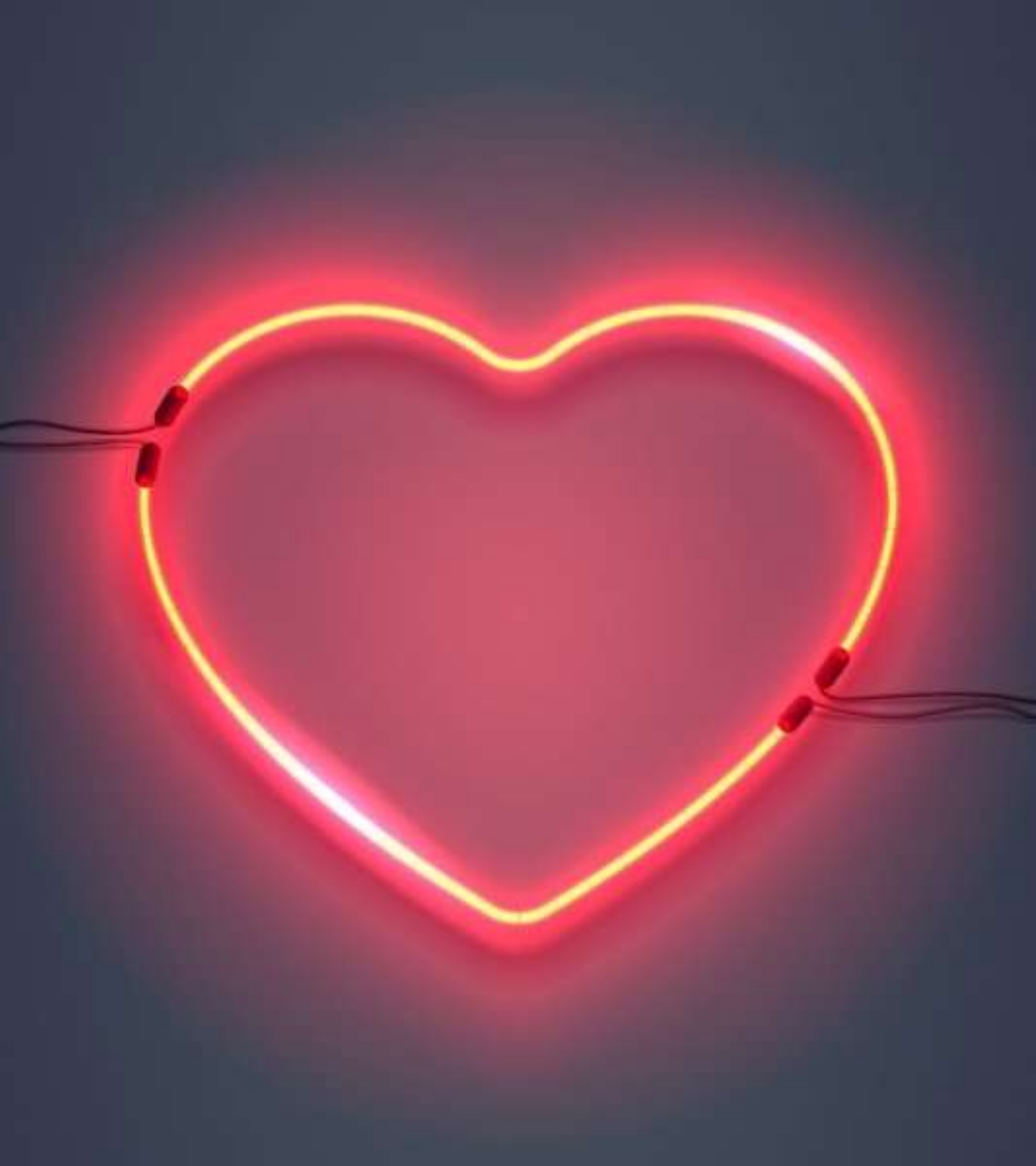
The image features two women in silhouette, facing each other in profile. They appear to be in a conversation, with one woman's hand near the other's shoulder. The background is a dark, uniform grey. In the top right corner, there is a solid red rectangular block. The text 'How do you respond?' is centered in white, bold font.

How do you respond?

Trauma and our responses to it cannot be understood outside the context of human *relationships*. Whether people have survived an earthquake or have been repeatedly sexually abused, what matter most is how those experiences affect their relationships - to their loved ones, to themselves and to the world.

- The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog, 2006





SIX PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

1. **Safety**
2. **Trustworthiness and Transparency**
3. **Peer Support**
4. **Collaboration and Mutuality**
5. **Empowerment, Voice, and Control**
6. **Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues**

(Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018)



Trauma-informed care



SERENA'S New perspective





**What is
Your
why?**



IMPASSION



A red heart is painted on a surface of cracked, dry earth. The heart is the central focus, and the cracks in the earth radiate outwards from it. The text 'Compassion fatigue' is written in white, underlined font across the middle of the heart. A solid red rectangle is located in the top right corner of the image.

Compassion fatigue

Compassion Fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people or animals in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper.

-Dr. Charles Figley

Compassion Fatigue is Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The experience of the Compassion fatigued

Patricia Smith

Founder of Compassion Fatigue
Awareness Project and Healthy
Careiving, LLC

YouTube:
Ted Talk x
SanJuan Island
How to Manage
Compassion
Fatigue in
Caregivers



A stack of three smooth, rounded stones is shown on a sandy surface. The top stone is white and has the word "Mind" written on it in a dark, serif font. The middle stone is light grey and has the word "Body" written on it in a dark, serif font. The bottom stone is dark grey and has the word "Spirit" written on it in a light, serif font. The stones are stacked in a slightly off-center, balanced manner.

Mind

Body

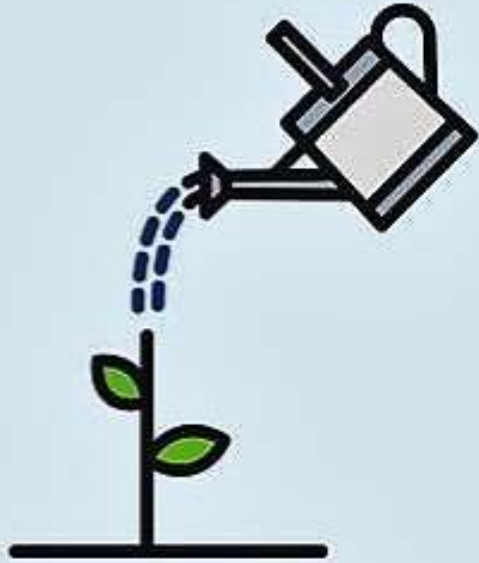
Spirit

HOLISTIC VIEW



self-care

Self-care tips



**YOU GOTTA
NOURISH
TO FLOURISH**

- ▶ Check in with yourself.
- ▶ Breathe
- ▶ Foster a healthy supportive network (formal and natural)
- ▶ Be still.
- ▶ Forgive
- ▶ Unplug
- ▶ Sleep/Rest
- ▶ Abandon comparisons
- ▶ Stress/depression/anxiety may tempt you to hide – Engage instead.
- ▶ Therapy
- ▶ Spiritual connections

Self-compassion

Care for yourself in the same way you do others.



Apps

- ▶ HeadSpace
- ▶ Provider Resilience
- ▶ T2 Health
- ▶ PTSD Coach
- ▶ Breathing Zone
- ▶ Mood Notes
- ▶ Pacifica

Websites

- ▶ NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
- ▶ uLifeline Screening
- ▶ National Institute of Mental Health
- ▶ Helpguide.org
- ▶ SAMHSA-HRSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Health Resources and Services Administration)
- ▶ Compassion Fatigue Awareness

Questions??

Shayne McNichols, LMSW – Clinical & Macro

Blossom Counseling Center for Personal Growth & Development,
LLC

blossomcounselingcenter@gmail.com

Instagram & Facebook: @blossomcounselingcenter

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