

Impact of Trauma, Violence and Stress on Health

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Trauma, Violence and Stress

Trauma is experienced at the intersections!

Trauma bears the scars of the myths, microaggressions, hatred, oppression, and violence done in that context.



Intersectionality is the social, personal, and often political context where we experience trauma.

How I move through the world, how I'm treated, the messages I receive and my history, *especially when it includes oppression and marginalization*, matter.

Trauma Experiences

*Violence, abuse,
oppression,
marginalization...*

- The brain is equipped to respond intensely to these dangerous situations and experiences

Trauma Response

- Brain response
 - **A NATURAL response to an unhealthy/abnormal amount of stress**
 - Avoidance/survival
 - Prolonged trauma responses and health consequences
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- ▶ Triggered by health practitioner interaction
 - ▶ Behaviors misinterpreted by practitioner
 - ▶ Unable to access services

Power, Privilege, and Surviving Trauma

- Trauma does not occur in a vacuum—it occurs within the personal, social (and often political) *context of the person* and their **intersecting identities**: race, class, ability, gender identity and expression, first language, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status, body size, etc.
 - Both victimization and oppression depend on myth, not fact
 - Both are about power and control, “power over”
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Power, Privilege, and Surviving Trauma

Both victimization and oppression can have a traumatic impact

- Both can change self definition or identity
- Both victimization and oppression can change one's world view
- **Both trauma and oppression signal our brain and body in similar ways**

Tactics of Abuse & Oppression

- ▶ Emotional Abuse
 - ▶ Economic Abuse
 - ▶ Isolation
 - ▶ Privilege of Status
 - ▶ Using Children
 - ▶ Minimizing, Denying and Blaming
 - ▶ Intimidation and Threats
 - ▶ Using Violence
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Generational Trauma

Domestic and Sexual Violence

- Gender based violence, sexual objectification, sex trafficking, sexual slavery
 - VAW in slavery, migration, war, colonization, and poverty
 - Abusers force pregnancy, disallow safer sex methods, disallow birth control
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The adaptations made to survive manage and overcome traumas happen by pulling on strengths and wisdom from
who we are.

Healing and resilience grows when we can bring our full selves into that process—when intersecting roles, identities, experiences and needs are welcome and safe.



We must struggle in the intersections of how violence, trauma and invisibility of some narratives and lives goes unnoticed

Trauma informed responses to violence and oppression call us all to do better!

