

Sustainable Wellness: Helping the Helpers Cultivating Calm Beyond the Pandemic

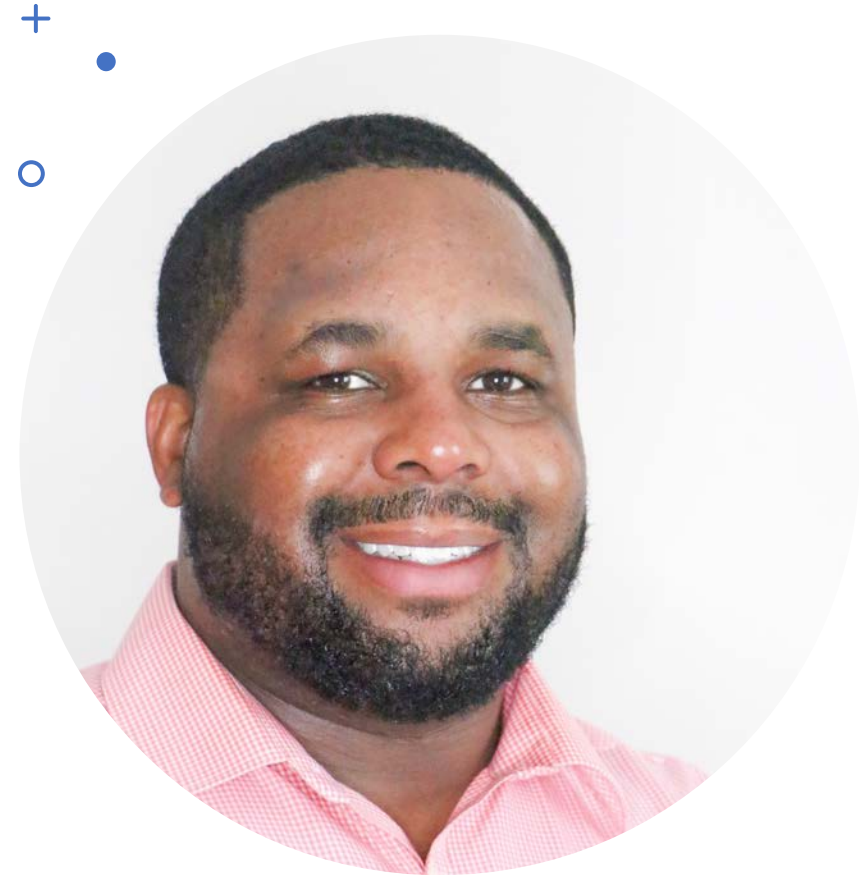
By Brandon Jones, M.A.
Executive Director
Minnesota Association
for Children's Mental
Health
(MACMH)



Trainer:

Brandon Jones, M.A.

- Newly Appoint Executive Director of Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health
- A Professor, Consultant, and former Psychotherapist
- B.A. in Sociology from the University of Minnesota, a Masters in Community Psychology from Metropolitan State University, and a Masters in Psychotherapy (MFT) from Adler Graduate School
- 2013 Bush Foundation Leadership Fellow





My Goal for Today

- My only Goal of the day is to get you to **Shift** your **Lens**
- Expand your **Worldview**
- **Disrupt** Your Current Thought Process.
- Provide some **Context**



QUESTION...

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC?



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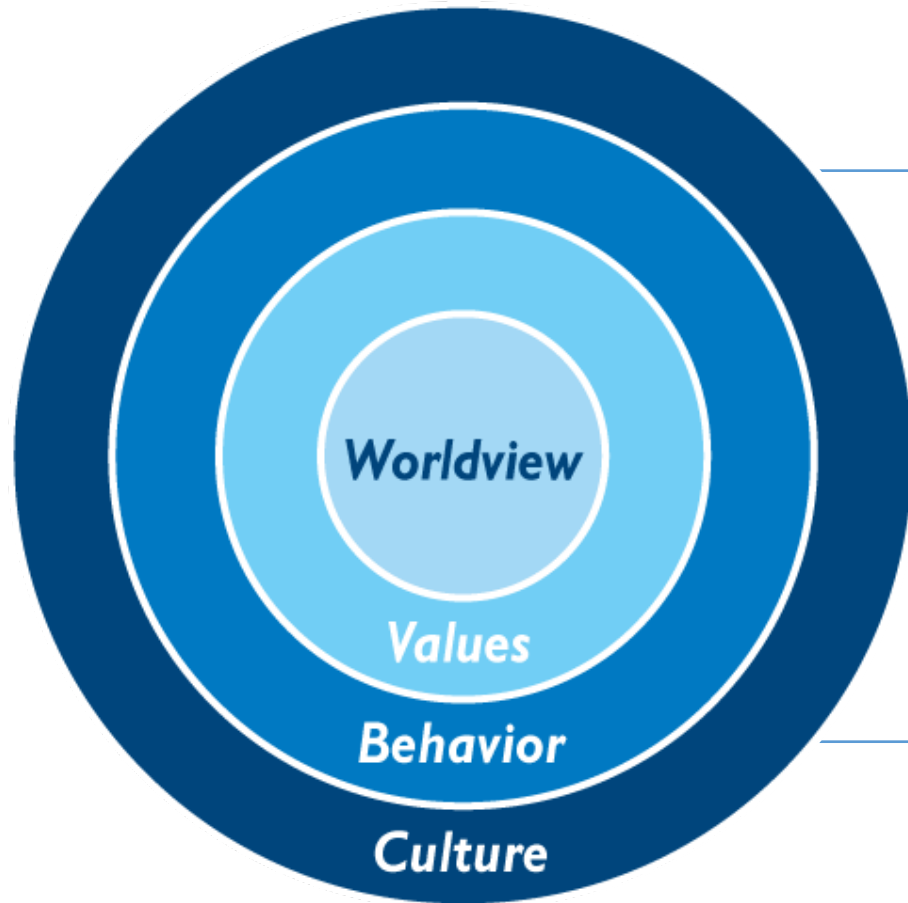
UNDERSTANDING YOUR WORLDVIEW

WORLDVIEW
DEFINED:

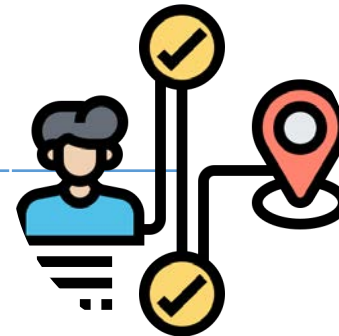
A PARTICULAR
PHILOSOPHY OF
LIFE OR
CONCEPTION OF
THE WORLD.



Worldview Dynamics



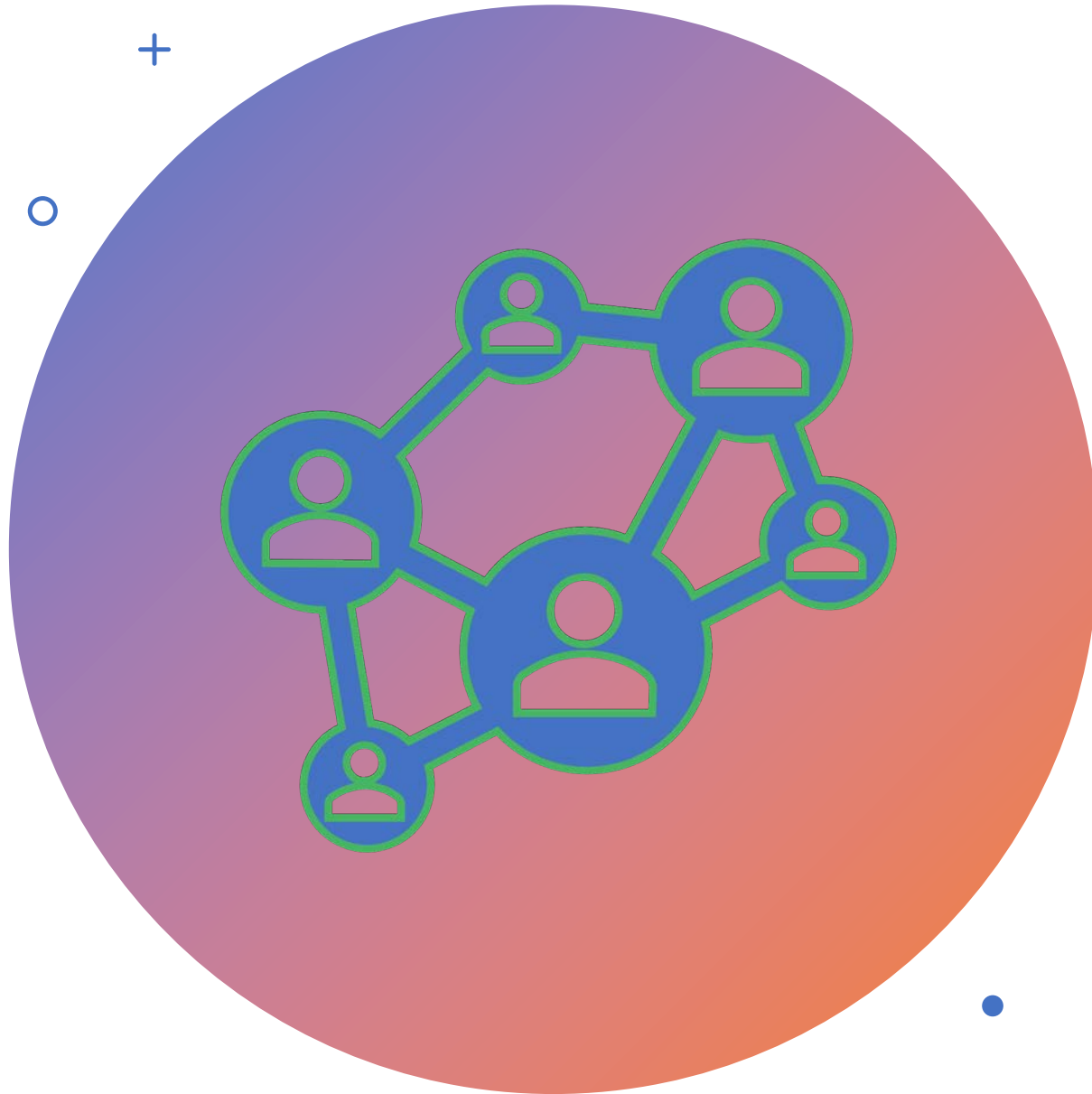
Influences



Experiences

The background of the slide is a large, irregular orange watercolor splash. The splash is centered and has a textured, painterly appearance with various shades of orange and some darker spots. It is surrounded by a white background with some faint orange splatters and dots.

Stress During COVID-19



Welcome to the New Normal...

We Are Adjusting To A New World In The Moment

- Remote Working
- Distant Learning
- Social Distancing
- Sheltering In Place
- Pandemics
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Variants
- Vaccines
- Booster Shots!

WE ARE IN A STATE OF GRIEF!

WE HAVE LOST THE FOLLOWING...

Access

Our “Normal”
Routine

The Ability Of
Choice

Connection

Opportunities

Lives Of
Loved Ones



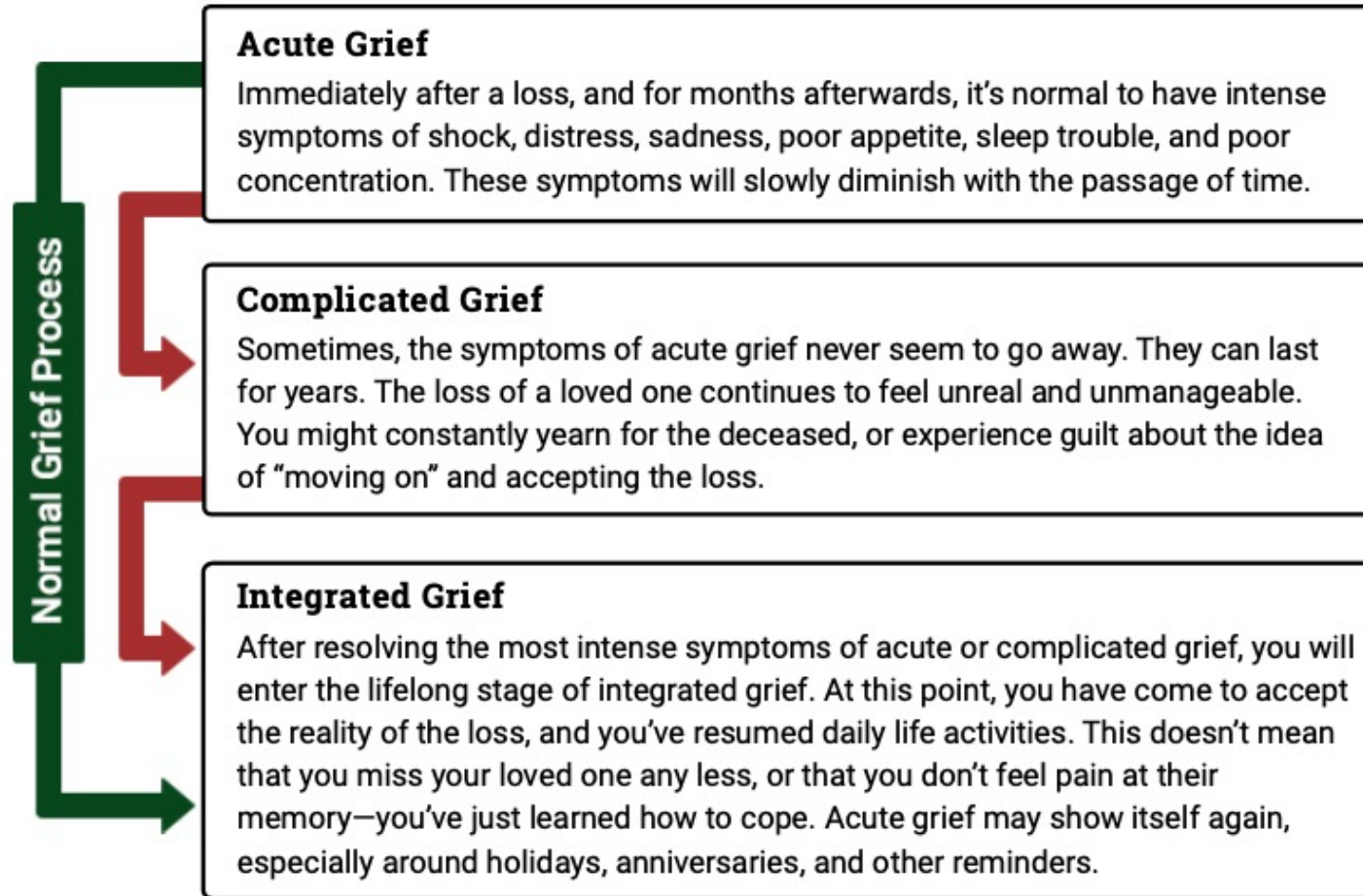
THIS IS WHAT WE CALL AMBIGUOUS LOSS



GRIEF AND AMBIGUOUS LOSS

The natural emotional response
resulting from a significant loss.





Managing Grief and Ambiguous Loss



Languishing

Languishing is a sense of stagnation and emptiness. It feels as if you're muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield. And it might be the dominant emotion of 2021.

- According to the New Times



DEPRESSION

- Untreated depression is a more intense feeling of sadness, hopelessness, and anger or frustration that lasts much longer, such as for weeks, months, or longer.
- These feelings make it hard for you to function as you normally would or participate in your usual activities.
- You may also have trouble focusing and feel like you have little to no motivation or energy. You may not even feel like seeing your best friends.
- Depression can make you feel like it is hard to enjoy life or even get through the day.



ANXIETY

- Uncomfortable or distressed or when it interferes with doing things that you want or need to do.
- Anxiety can include worry, fear, over-arousal, panic attacks, agitation, difficulty concentrating, avoidance.

Understanding Stress and Distress



Stress: Is both experienced shared with others (objective reality) but also perceptions experienced within the body and mind (subjective reality).

Distress: Describes a person's internal state of dysregulation and often, disorganization. (What is happening to me right now?)

Types of stress responses

POSITIVE



A normal and essential part of healthy development

EXAMPLES

*getting a vaccine,
first day of school*

TOLERABLE



Response to a more severe stressor, limited in duration

EXAMPLES

*loss of a loved one,
a broken bone*

TOXIC



Experiencing strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity

EXAMPLES

*physical or emotional abuse,
exposure to violence*

Normal reactions to stress

How do we recognize this?

Causes of stress can be:

- Internal – arising from within the individual
- External – arising from the external events and demands


The effects of stress can be:

- Physical
- Psychological
- Behavioral
- Cognitive



A DEEP EMOTIONAL WOUND!

closely
connected to
Toxic Stress or
Toxic
Environments



What is Trauma Informed Care

TIC is a strengths-based service delivery approach “that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment”.

- (Hopper, Bassuk, & Olivet, 2010, p. 82)
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6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The CDC's [Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response \(OPHPR\)](#), in collaboration with SAMHSA's [National Center for Trauma-Informed Care \(NCTIC\)](#), developed and led a new training for OPHPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work. Participants learned SAMHSA'S six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach, including:



Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. On-going internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. The training provided by [OPHPR](#) and [NCTIC](#) was the first step for CDC to view emergency preparedness and response through a trauma-informed lens.

Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level.



How Trauma makes an Impact



- Individuals who have survived trauma vary widely in how they experience and express traumatic stress reactions.
- Traumatic stress reactions vary in severity; they are often measured by the level of impairment or distress that clients report and are determined by the multiple factors that characterize the trauma itself, individual history and characteristics, developmental factors, sociocultural attributes, and available resources.

How Trauma Impacts an Individual's Worldview

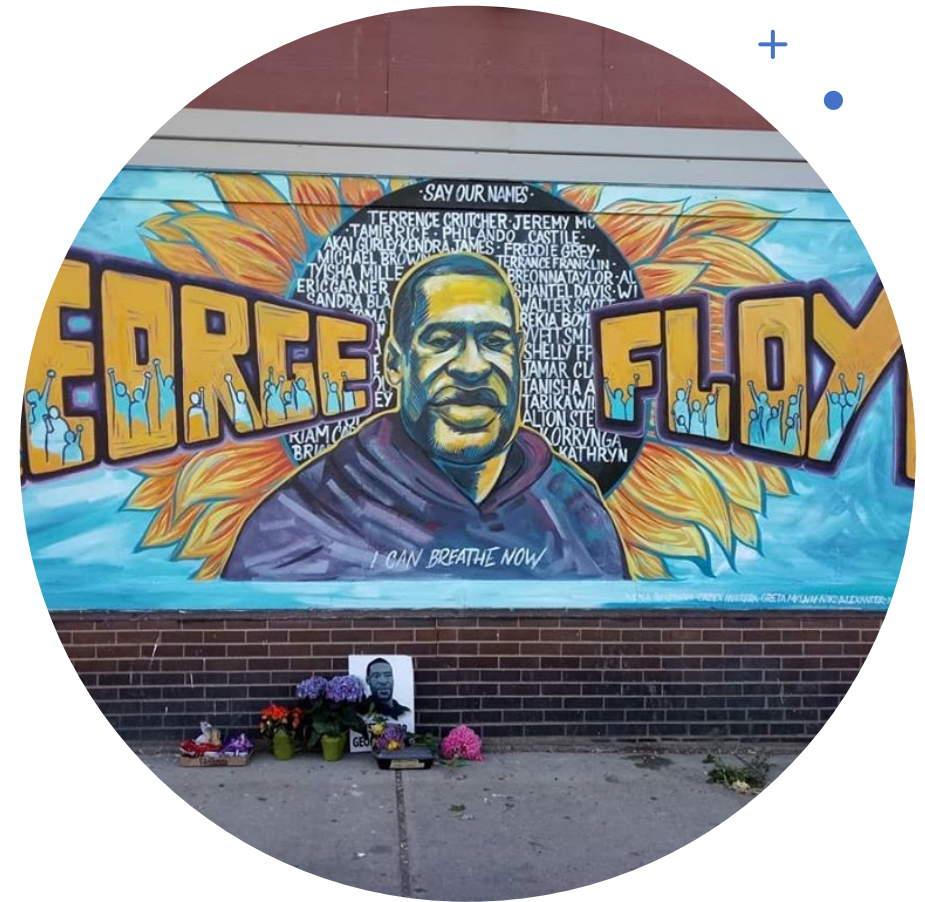
The characteristics of the trauma and the subsequent traumatic stress reactions can dramatically influence how individuals respond to the environment, relationships, interventions, and treatment services, and those same characteristics can also shape the assumptions that individuals make about:

- Their world (e.g., their view of others, sense of safety)
- Their future (e.g., hopefulness, fear of a foreshortened future)
- Themselves (e.g., feeling resilient, feeling incompetent in regulating emotions).

Racial Trauma

Racial trauma or race-based stress comes from dealing with racial harassment, racial violence, or institutional racism.

It is often compared to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as the symptoms are similar with irritability, hypervigilance, anxiety and depression.



Racial Trauma

Race-based traumatic stress is the cumulative effects of experiencing and witnessing discrimination and even death of another person of same race.

- **Institutional racism**
- **Microaggressions**
- **Historical or personal memory of racism**



Racial Battle Fatigue

- “cumulative result of a natural race-related stress response to distressing mental and emotional conditions. These conditions emerged from constantly facing racially dismissive, demeaning, insensitive and/or hostile racial environments and individuals.”

• - *Dr. William Smith*

Racial oppression is a traumatic form of interpersonal violence which can lacerate the spirit, scar the soul, and puncture the psyche.

- Dr. Kenneth Hardy


How are we
adjusting?

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+ • 3 ○ Conditions Related to the Impact of Stressors

- **Secondary Traumatic Stress:** Characterized by the presence of PTSD symptoms caused by at least one indirect exposure to traumatic material.
- **Compassion Fatigue:** described as the “cost of caring” for others in emotional and physical pain. Characterized by pronounced change in helper’s ability to feel empathy for patients, loved ones and co-workers.
- **Burnout:** Characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced feeling of personal accomplishment.



Secondary Traumatic Stress

is the emotional duress that results when an individual hears or shares elements of the firsthand **trauma** experiences of another.

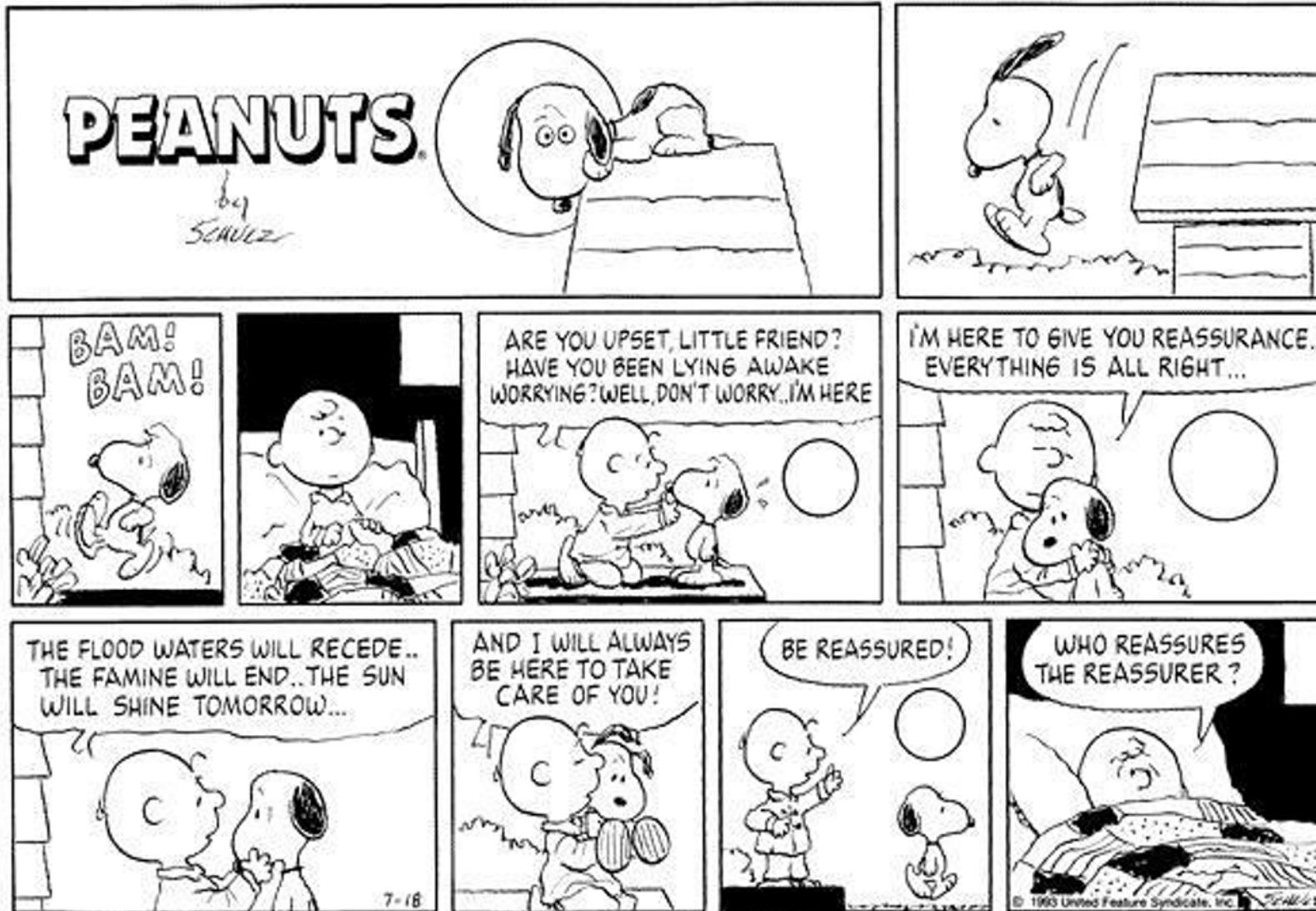


Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Hypervigilance
- Re-experiencing
- Hopelessness
- Professional helplessness
- Guilt
- Avoidance
- Social withdrawal
- Minimizing
- Cynicism/anger
- Sleeplessness
- Insensitivity to violence
- Illness
- Fear
- Depersonalization
- Connected to act of hearing/empathizing with traumatic stories



COMPASSION FATIGUE



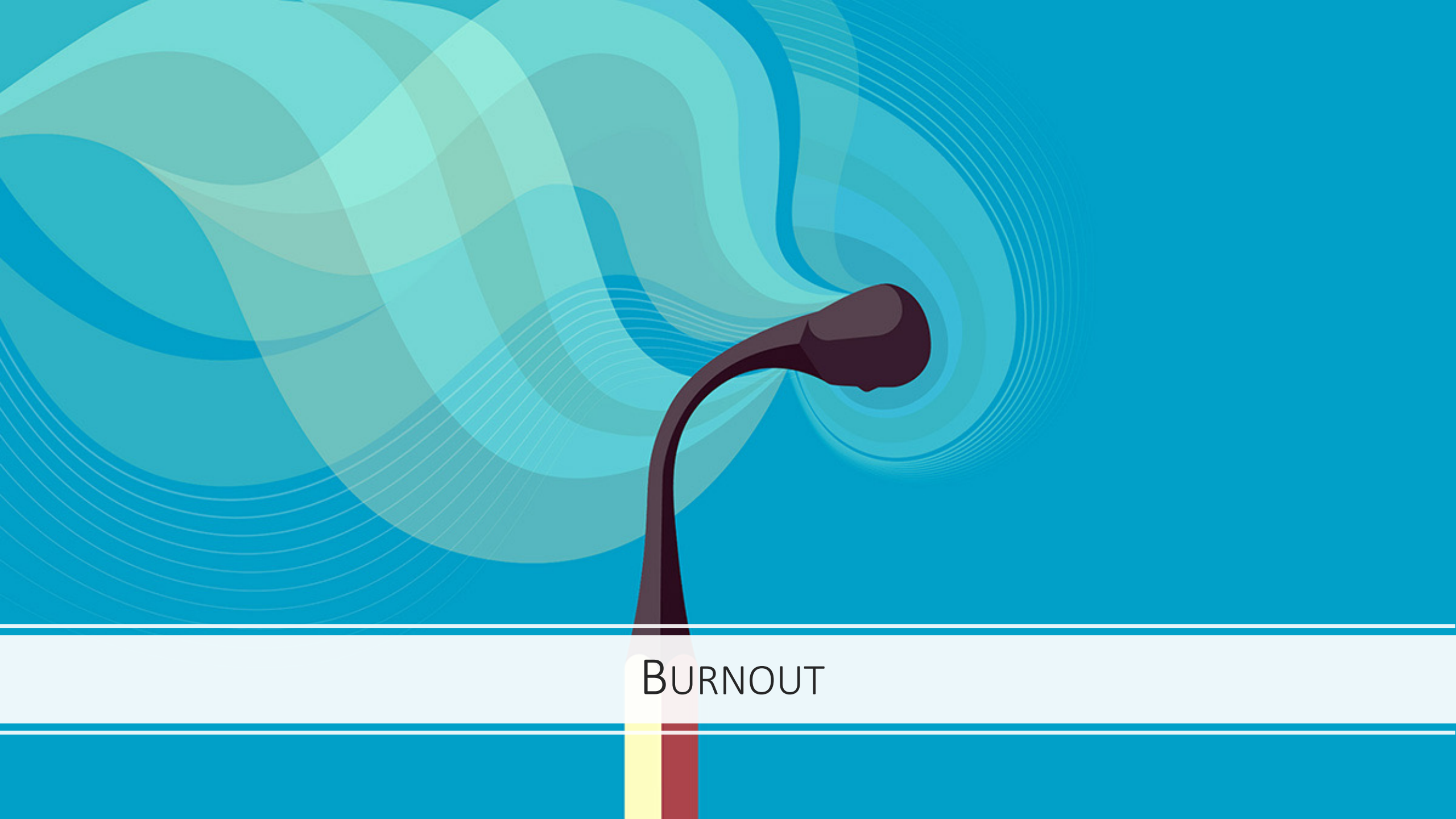
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Compassion Fatigue

- Emotional exhaustion
- Reduced sense of personal accomplishment
- Mental exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Decreased in sense of efficacy
- Physical exhaustion
- Connected to act of hearing/empathizing with traumatic stories



BURNOUT

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Burnout

- Difficulty sleeping (particularly on Sundays)
- Avoidance of work-urge to take a sick day
- Difficulty concentrating and finishing tasks
- Feeling overwhelmed by the workload
- Sense of inadequacy to handle the tasks assigned
- Withdrawing from colleagues
- General irritation toward work
- Connected to work related stress



QUESTION...

HOW IS STRESS AND TRAUMA SHOWING UP IN YOUR WORK?

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What Is Healing?

A person wearing a red beanie and a backpack is seen from behind, looking out over a dense forest of tall evergreen trees. In the distance, a large, rugged mountain peak with patches of snow is visible under a clear sky. The scene is peaceful and natural.

Healing is...

A consistent process of efforts to create peace, balance, and justice.

Why Do We Need Healing???

Life is Hard

We all Face
Challenges

There is no
guarantee that
things will be okay.



Trauma Informed Care in a Virtual World

What is
Work-Life
Balance in a
Virtual
World!?!?



Understanding Our Wellness Domains

WELLBEING



- Wellbeing Wheel -



Dimensions:

Environment:

- Personal Environment
- Relationship with Nature
- Global Environmental Health

Health:

- Diet & Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Sleep
- Thoughts & Emotions
- Stress Mastery

Relationships:

- Personal Relationships

Security:

- Safety
- Facing Fear
- Relationship to Money

Purpose:

- Life Purpose
- Spirituality

Community:

- Community Wellbeing

additional resources available at <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/what-wellbeing>

created by Dr. Mary Jo Kreitzer, *used with permission*
From the U of M Center for Spirituality and Healing Center



Shifting from Self-Care to Sustainable Wellness



Sustainability


- Sense of Social Support
- Sense of Meaning and Purpose
- Sense of Effectiveness

Ultimately, Sustaining ability is being Proactive in our self care.



Components of successful sustainability



- Individual activities
(physical activity, spirituality, mindfulness, meditation, therapy, humor, healthy eating,)
 - Activities with closest connections
(fun, sharing, exploration, adventure, quality time)
 - Meaningful support at work
(supervision, team building, ongoing assessments, accountability, learning opportunities)
 - Support within the field
(professional development, connections for consult)
- 

Sustainability is the best self care

Principles

- Balance your work and leisure time
- Prioritize the way in which you spend your time – do not allow others to waste it
- Control interruptions
- Allow time for thinking and the unexpected
- Delegate work whenever it is appropriate
- Be assertive – learn to say “no” both to unnecessary work and to taking on other people’s tasks
- Put past mistakes behind you – do not dwell on them
- Review significant problems and learn to manage them better – make realistic action plans

Circles of Support

#1 - CIRCLE OF INTIMACY

This circle is made up of people we love - people we feel safe with, are vulnerable with - including very close family members and very close friends.

#2 - CIRCLE OF FRIENDSHIP

This circle includes people who are good friends - people we have coffee or tea with, go out to dinner with, spend social time engaging with.

#3. CIRCLE OF PARTICIPATION

This circle comprises acquaintances from many different areas of our lives - school, work, church, social clubs. There's an opportunity for these people to move into the friendship or intimacy circles over time.

#4 - CIRCLE OF EXCHANGE

This circle includes those who are paid to be in our lives. Doctors, teachers, social workers, case managers, providers, etc. These relationships are purely transactional.

Circles of Support - Based on the work of Judith Snow, Jack Pearpoint, and Marsha Forest

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Post Traumatic Growth

Where do we go from here?



PTG definition

- Post-traumatic growth is positive psychological change experienced as a result of adversity and other challenges in order to rise to a higher level of functioning.
- Ultimately, Post Traumatic Growth highlights the benefits of emotional growth, stronger relationship bonds, and a different perspective on life.



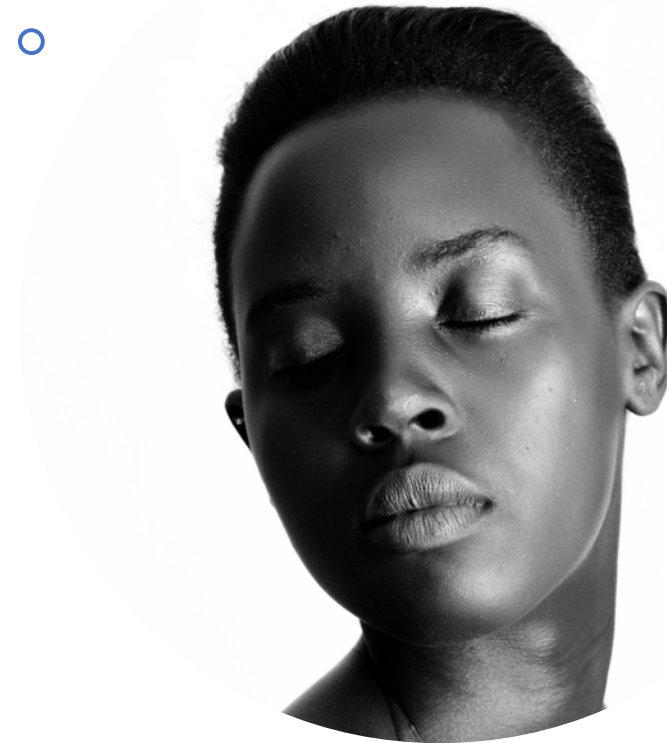


5 Domains of PTG



Personal Strength

- Trauma often leads to Self-doubt
- Recognizing your ability to handle challenges
- Increase your sense of capacities to survive and prevail
- We must believe in our possibilities



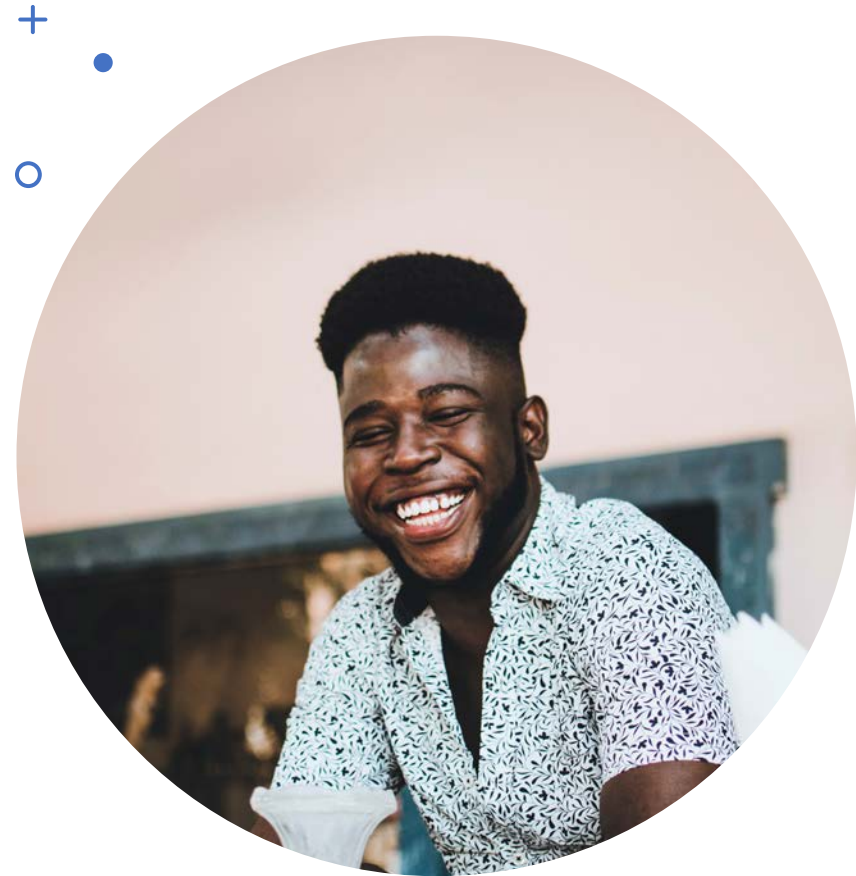
Healthy Relationships



- Finding supports and networks to help you move forward
- Set strong boundaries and let your expectations be known.
- Being afraid of being vulnerable is a major obstacle

Appreciation and Purpose of Life

- Understand what is important to you. What are the things you value and why?
- Do things that lead to a purpose.
- Small victories





Consecutive Constructive Choices

- Do not be afraid of new experiences. Explore new information, spaces, people
- Exposure and Consistency are key
- Have some compassion for yourself

Personal Development

- Do not be afraid of finding out who you truly are or who you want to be.
- What are you investing in yourself?
- Are you keeping it real with yourself?





Post Traumatic Growth

The process of post-traumatic growth can lead to improved relationships with others, more compassion, openness, appreciation for life, spiritual growth, personal strength, and a renewed sense of possibilities in the world.

Compassionate Accountability



COMPASSION



ACCOUNTABILITY

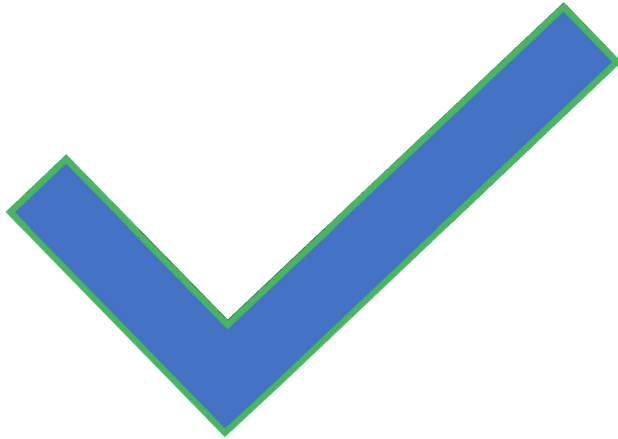
Compassionate Accountability

Sometimes we have found balance in discomfort.
Doing what is easy can have consequences like...

- **Compassion *without* accountability** can encourage chaos.
- **Accountability *without* compassion**, complacent, self-satisfying.
- **Swing back and forth**, we are not consistent, fair or clear.

Compassion Accountability: help us seek truth, understanding, forgiveness, justice, humility and leave others empowered without blame and excuses.

RESILIENCY



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- Resiliency is a quality that can help you recover from early life experiences and deep emotional wounds
- The ability to “bounce back” or adapt in the face of adversity or major life stress
- Everyone has an ability to be resilient and to become *even more* resilient

Final Thoughts...



You can be a **Resiliency Factor**. However, you must do the **self-work** first!

Otherwise, you can cause **more of a problem** than you are **attempting to solve**.



Please Remember

Healing is a Journey!

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