

TRAUMA BASICS

- What is trauma – Trauma is a normal, often emotional, reaction to a horrible event or extreme stress. The effects can be so severe that they interfere with an individual's ability to live a "normal" life.
- Trauma can affect anyone, during any stage of life. What is traumatic to one person may or may not be traumatic to another. Trauma is defined by the experience of the survivor.

WHAT TO REMEMBER?

The three E's of trauma:

- ▶ **Event** - Exposure to a traumatic or stressful event
- ▶ **Experience** - The individual's experience of these events or circumstances helps to determine whether it is a traumatic event.
- ▶ **Effect** – Refers to the effect that experience of the event has caused.

Secondary and vicarious trauma should NOT be ignored!

- Secondary trauma: The presence of PTSD symptoms caused by indirect exposure to other people's traumatic experiences.
- Vicarious trauma: The cumulative effect of working with traumatized individuals that leads to negative changes in how one views themselves, others, and the world.

WHAT TO REMEMBER?

ABC's of secondary trauma

- ▶ **Awareness** - of own needs, limits, emotions and resources
- ▶ **Balance** -of work and play; taking care of others and taking care of yourself
- ▶ **Connection** - to oneself, others and to something larger

WHO CAN HELP?

Therapists/Counselors (Graduate Degree, LMSW, LPC, MFT) - mainly work in private practice or mental health clinics.

- Therapists help people manage mental health disorders, such as depression or anxiety; help couples resolve relationship difficulties; assist families with interpersonal conflicts; or work with groups on specific topics, such as anger management or bereavement and loss issues
- Cannot prescribe medication

Psychologists (Advanced Degree, PhD, PsyD) – research and philosophically trained

- Cannot prescribe medication.
- Focuses extensively on psychotherapy and treating emotional and mental suffering in patients with behavioral intervention.
- Studies reasons and causes of behaviors.

Psychiatrists (Medical Degree) - are trained medical doctors.

- They can prescribe medications.
- Primarily focused on medication management.