

# Understanding Trauma





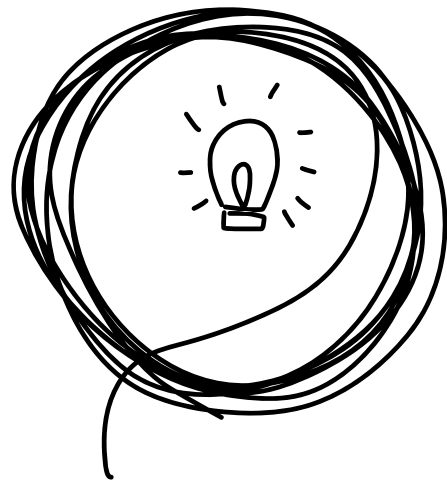


## **Lessons in Mental Health**

- Use this presentation as is, or view the Canva link for a fully modifiable template.
- Link: [Understanding Trauma Presentation](#)
- Canva is FREE for all teachers.
- You are welcome to download and use this resource for your personal and classroom needs. However, any redistribution, whether free or paid, or unauthorized publication online is strictly prohibited.

# **What Is Trauma?**

# Trauma



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Trauma is not just the event itself.

Trauma is the emotional, psychological, and physical response the body and brain have to an overwhelming or distressing experience.

# Trauma vs. Stress

*Trauma and Stress Are Not Always the Same*

## **STRESS**

- ✓ Usually temporary
- ✓ The body returns to normal after the stress passes
- ✓ Can sometimes help motivate us

## **TRAUMA**

- ✓ Can overwhelm a person's ability to cope
- ✓ May leave lasting emotional or physical effects
- ✓ Can affect a person's sense of safety

# Trauma Affects the Brain & Body

When a person experiences trauma, the body may go into:



Fight



Flight



Freeze



Fawn

Survival responses controlled by the nervous system.

# Big T Trauma

Little t trauma usually refers to experiences that are:

- ✓ Extreme
- ✓ Highly distressing
- ✓ Dangerous or life-threatening
- ✓ Deeply overwhelming

These experiences often involve serious harm, fear, or threat.

# Little t Trauma

Little t trauma usually refers to experiences that are:

- ✓ Emotionally painful
- ✓ Ongoing or repeated
- ✓ Personally distressing
- ✓ Difficult to cope with

These experiences may not seem extreme to others but can still create lasting emotional impact.



# Big T Trauma

- Physical or sexual assault
- Serious car accident
- Natural disaster

## Little t Trauma

- Discrimination or prejudice
- Divorce or chronic family conflict
- Ongoing bullying

# Possible Trauma Responses

Trauma responses can affect emotions, behaviors, thoughts, and even physical health. Trauma may include:

- ✓ Feeling constantly on edge
- ✓ Trouble sleeping
- ✓ Avoidance
- ✓ Strong emotional reactions
- ✓ Feeling numb or disconnected

# Healthy Ways to Cope With Trauma

Examples of healthy coping strategies:

- ✓ Talking to a trusted adult
- ✓ Therapy or counseling
- ✓ Exercise and movement
- ✓ Journaling
- ✓ Healthy sleep habits
- ✓ Supportive relationships
- ✓ Relaxation and grounding techniques

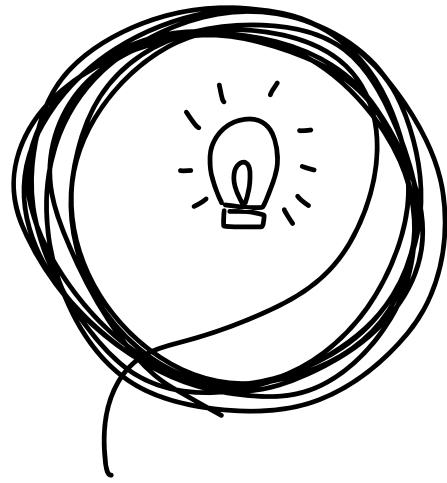
# Trauma Is Not Attention-Seeking

People respond to trauma in different ways, and trauma is not always visible. Responses to trauma can include:

- ✓ Talk openly
- ✓ Become quiet
- ✓ Avoid reminders
- ✓ Struggle emotionally
- ✓ Seem “fine” on the outside

We should avoid comparing, minimizing, or judging trauma.

# What Is PTSD?



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PTSD stands for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.  
PTSD is a mental health disorder that can develop after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event.



# Possible Symptoms Of PTSD

Not everyone who experiences trauma develops PTSD..but when they do a person may experience:

- ✓ Flashbacks
- ✓ Nightmares
- ✓ Avoidance
- ✓ Hypervigilance
- ✓ Emotional distress
- ✓ Difficulty sleeping

# **Individual Activity**

# Trauma Infographic Activity

Create an infographic explaining the difference between Big T Trauma and Little t Trauma. Include the following:

- ✓ A definition of trauma
- ✓ An explanation of Big T Trauma
- ✓ An explanation of little t trauma
- ✓ 5 examples of Big T Trauma
- ✓ 5 examples of little t trauma
- ✓ At least 2 healthy coping or support strategies
- ✓ A "5 Myths vs. Facts About Trauma"

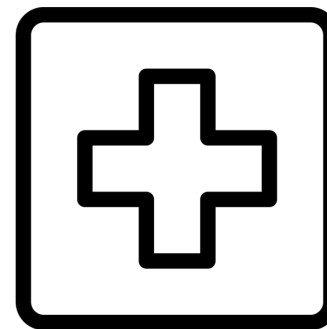
# Turning In Your Infographic

- Use Canva to create your infographic.
- Make sure to check your spelling.
- Download your completed infographic as a PDF.
- Upload Trauma Infographic

LEAD WITH COMPASSION, EDUCATE WITH PURPOSE.

*Until our next lesson*

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