

Understanding Trauma



Trauma refers to the emotional, psychological, and physical response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event. This could be a one-time event or ongoing stress.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), trauma is a widespread experience that affects people regardless of their age, gender, socioeconomic background, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Over 60% of adults in the U.S. report having experienced at least one traumatic event in their lifetime

Trauma isn't just about the event itself but the lasting impact it leaves on a person's mental and emotional well-being. Recovery is possible with the right support, coping strategies, and trauma-informed mental health care.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MIND & BODY

Trauma is Emotional & Physical



Trauma is not just emotional; it can also affect physical health. People who have experienced trauma may have chronic health issues like heart disease, digestive problems, or autoimmune disorders due to prolonged stress.



The body may remain in a heightened state of stress, leading to a "fight or flight" response long after the danger has passed.

THE HEALING JOURNEY

Many people who experience trauma recover with time and support. Factors like having a solid support system, practicing self-care, and developing coping skills can aid in healing.

Individuals who have practiced resilience are able to "bounce back" from trauma. Resilience is reinforced through positive relationships, self-compassion, and mental health care can improve recovery outcomes.

TYPES OF TRAUMA

Acute

Results from a single, isolated event (e.g., a car accident, natural disaster).

Chronic

Repeated and prolonged exposure to traumatic events (e.g., domestic violence, ongoing bullying).

Complex

Exposure to varied and multiple traumatic events, often of an interpersonal nature, over a long period (e.g., childhood abuse).

Vicarious

Secondary trauma experienced by individuals (e.g., first responders, caregivers) who hear or witness someone else's traumatic experiences.

WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

This approach recognized the prevalence of trauma and ensures that services do not retraumatize individuals. It emphasizes safety, trustworthiness, collaboration, and empowerment.

“Everyone has Mental Health”



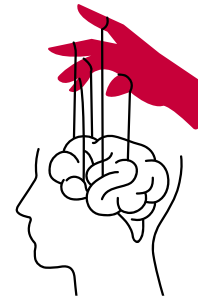
Mental health is part
of *being human*



It's not always illness,
it's experiences



Everyone will be
touched by it



It's *not* only the
bad stuff



It's impacted by
everything around us



You have the *power* to
make a difference

FACE *the* FIVE

Signs Everyone Needs to Know

Often our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members are suffering emotionally and don't recognize the symptoms or won't ask for help. If you recognize that you or someone else needs help, reach out, show compassion and a willingness to find a solution when the person may not have the will or drive to do it alone.

Here are five signs that may mean someone is in emotional pain and might need help:



PERSONALITY CHANGES

You may notice sudden or gradual changes in the way that someone typically behaves. People in this situation may behave in ways that don't seem to fit their values, or the person may just seem different.



UNCHARACTERISTICALLY ANGRY, ANXIOUS, AGITATED, OR MOODY

You may notice the person has more frequent problems controlling his or her temper and seems irritable or unable to calm down. People in more extreme situations of this kind may be unable to sleep or may explode in anger at a minor problem.



WITHDRAWAL OR ISOLATION FROM OTHER PEOPLE

Someone who used to be socially engaged may pull away from family and friends and stop taking part in activities that used to be enjoyable. In more severe cases the person may start failing to make it to work or school. Not to be confused with the behavior of someone who is more introverted, this sign is marked by a change in a person's typical sociability, as when someone pulls away from the social support typically available.



MAY NEGLECT SELF-CARE AND ENGAGE IN RISKY BEHAVIOR

You may notice a change in the person's level of personal care or an act of poor judgment. For instance, someone may let personal hygiene deteriorate, or the person may start abusing alcohol or illicit substances or engaging in other self-destructive behavior that may alienate loved ones.



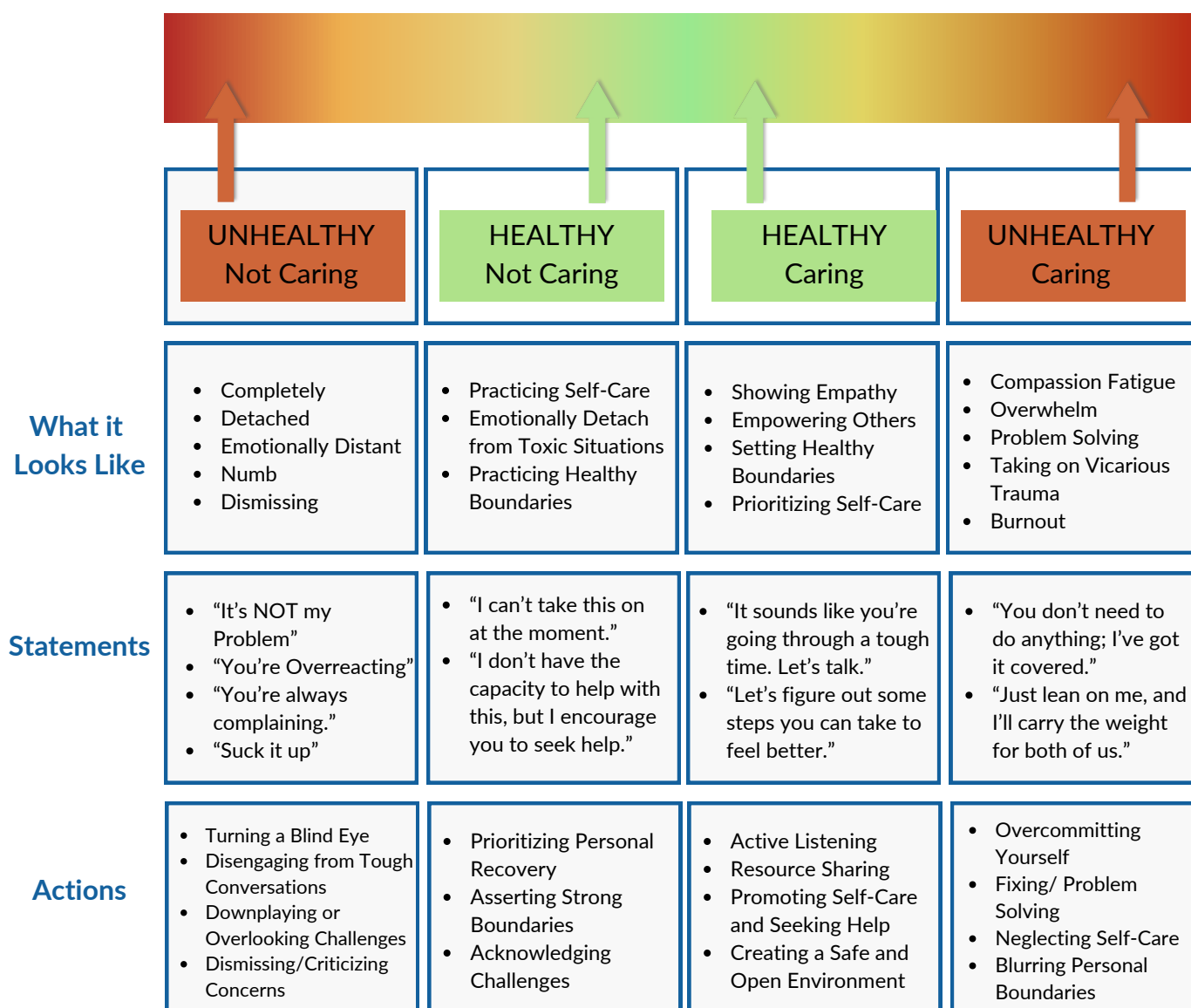
OVERCOME WITH HOPELESSNESS AND OVERWHELMED BY CIRCUMSTANCES

Have you noticed someone who used to be optimistic and now can't find anything to be hopeful about? That person may be suffering from extreme or prolonged grief, or feelings of worthlessness or guilt. People in this situation may say that the world would be better off without them, suggesting suicidal thinking.

Healthy Care *Boundaries*

Maintaining healthy boundaries is crucial for balancing support for others without shouldering their emotional burdens. These boundaries help define the extent of care you can offer while preserving your own mental well-being. Supporting others in their time of need doesn't mean self-abandonment. Setting clear boundaries helps you understand the limits of your care and empathy, preventing the shift into shouldering behaviors that can lead to resentment, overwhelm, and burnout.

Where do you sit on the scale between caring too little and caring too much?



MICRO-RESETS

15 MINUTES TO A MORE REGULATED YOU



Caregiving work is nonstop, the stakes are high, and the demands rarely pause. Yet your energy has limits—and ignoring those limits erodes clarity, presence, and sustainability. **Micro-resets are small, intentional pauses that help you regulate your nervous system**, sharpen focus, and model resilience for your team. These mini interventions can be scheduled on your calendar like any other meeting, used before or after key transitions, or simply sprinkled throughout your day. **Short practices like these are not indulgences; they are tools for self care.**

Four Core Reset Practices



Breath Resets (Fastest nervous system regulation)

Box Breathing: Inhale 4 • Hold 4 • Exhale 4 • Hold 4 (4x)

Physiological Sigh: Deep inhale • Small second sip • Long, slow exhale (3x)

4-7-8 Reset: Inhale 4 • Hold 7 • Exhale 8 (great before high-stakes conversations)



Sensory Grounding (Re-anchor to the present)

- **5-4-3-2-1 Scan:** 5 things you see • 4 feel • 3 hear • 2 smell • 1 taste
- **Temperature Shifts:** Press a cold object (water bottle, pen) to wrists or temples for 30 sec.



Micro-Movements (Release tension, boost energy)

- **90-Second Release:** Shoulder rolls forward/backward (10x each) • Gentle neck stretches
- **Stand & Shake:** Loosen knees, shake arms/shoulders for 30 sec.
- **Walking Micro-Break:** Slow walk for 30–60 sec. while focusing on your breath



Brain Pauses (Clear mental clutter)

- **90-Second Mind Clearing:** Eyes closed, let thoughts drift without judgment
- **One-Word Intention:** Pick a grounding word (clarity, calm, purpose) and breathe into it
- **Visual Reset:** Every 45 min., look at something 20 ft away for 20 sec.

PRO-TIP

SCHEDULE RESETS



Block 3–4 resets on your calendar daily. Even 2 minutes makes a difference.

MODEL SUSTAINABILITY



Share your reset practice out loud—your team will follow your lead.

FUEL YOURSELF



Treat resets as fuel, not indulgence.

ENERGIZING CONVERSATIONS AND MORE RESILIENT OUTCOMES.

Micro-resets are not a pause in the work. They are the work of sustainable leadership. These small but powerful practices build the stamina required to make clear decisions, respond with intention instead of reactivity, and stay grounded when pressures rise. They are not distractions from your leadership responsibilities—they are what allow you to carry them with integrity.

OPTIONAL READING FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER:

- Rest Is Resistance — Tricia Hersey
- The Practice of Adaptive Leadership — Heifetz, Linsky & Grashow
- We Can Do Hard Things Podcast: “Make Rest Your Revolution”





UNDERSTANDING PEER SUPPORT

WITH GIVE AN HOUR



WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support **BUILDS** resilience and **RECOVERY** through shared **LIVED** experiences. Peer supporters provide support, share knowledge, teach skills, and connect individuals with resources. These sessions are led by trained facilitators from diverse backgrounds who truly **UNDERSTAND** your experiences because they've lived them. *Peer support is not therapy or professional counseling.*

WHAT IS TIPS?

Give an Hour's peer support program, "TIPS," stands for Trauma Informed Peer Support, and is an evidence-informed and customizable peer support training program designed specifically for those affected by trauma.



PEER SUPPORT IS:

- ✓ OPEN TO ALL
- ✓ JUDGEMENT FREE
- ✓ COMMUNITY BUILDING
- ✓ LONG-TERM SUPPORT
- ✓ OTHERS LIKE YOU WHO JUST GET IT
- ✓ ASSESSIBLE/ VIRTUAL

1

Peer Supporters focus on wellness needs and strengths. They help their peer identify needs, build on strengths and resources, and help others in achieving goals.

2

TIPS Supporters provide support and ensure that all individuals served build on their self-care skills to achieve and/or maintain personally meaningful goals.

SELF-CARE CHECKLIST



Exercise regularly even if only for a short time



Take time off without guilt



Disconnect from social media



Learn & practice stress reducing techniques



Attend to your own healthcare needs



Seek and accept the help of others



Seek counseling when needed



Be mindful: Identify and acknowledge your thoughts, emotions, feelings, and challenges



Get adequate rest and nutrition



Set limits on your time and energy to protect your well-being.



Practice common humanity: through shared experiences, like peer support, online support groups



Set obtainable goals



Practice self-kindness



Celebrate small wins to remind yourself of your strength and resilience.



Express yourself through any activity that allows emotional release.