

# Wellness Wednesday

*Traumatic Experiences*



*Karen Haynes, Ph.D., LPC-S*



*Mrs. Curby Rogers-Mitchell, LPC*



**This week for Wellness  
Wednesday we will be  
continuing education on trauma.**

**There are many misconceptions about trauma.  
Some individuals may minimize their  
experiences by comparing it to others'  
experiences that seem more intense. This is  
very invalidating of your own emotions.**

*Your Pain Matters!*

# What is trauma?

Emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Psychological trauma can leave you struggling with upsetting emotions, memories, and anxiety that won't go away. It can also leave you feeling numb, disconnected, and unable to trust other people.

Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situation that leaves you feeling overwhelmed and isolated can result in trauma, even if it doesn't involve physical harm. It's not the objective circumstances that determine whether an event is traumatic, but your subjective emotional experience of the event. The more frightened and helpless you feel, the more likely you are to be traumatized.

(Robinson, Smith, Segal, 2020)





# Causes of Trauma

Trauma can be caused by numerous experiences. Trauma can be caused by one-time events, like a car accident. Trauma can also be caused by ongoing, relentless stress as well.



## *Life has taught me*

I am not always in control. Life is full of experiences, lessons, heartbreak, and pain. But, it has also shown me love, beauty, possibility, and new beginnings. Embrace it all. It makes us who we are, and after every storm comes a clear sky.

# Big T, Little T

**Big T** refers to an event that all people would deem traumatic. For example, everyone would say the Covid-19 pandemic has been traumatic or Hurricane Katrina/Ida.

**Little t** refers to events that are personal to a person experiencing a terrible event. For example, two people could be in a car accident. One person could walk away and be perfectly content while the other person is unable to drive for a period of time due to the fear they experienced.

**Big T's** and **little t's** are both difficult experiences to process and cannot be compared in levels of intensity.

# Trauma Responses



There are a variety of ways in which we respond to trauma including trouble sleeping, isolation, crying, irritability, hopelessness, stress, body aches, shame or guilt.

There is no correct way to respond to trauma. Our brains will do what is necessary to survive.

*Be kind to yourself and others.*

# ACE's

ACEs stands for Adverse Childhood Experiences.

These experiences can include emotional abuse, household violence, neglect, divorce, etc. If experiences are not processed and explored, they can lead to toxic stress.

**ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES - ACEs**

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?  
ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in a child's life:

 Physical Abuse	 Emotional Abuse	 Sexual Abuse	 Domestic Violence
 Parental Substance Abuse	 Mental Illness	 Suicide or Death	 Crime or Imprisoned Family

Causing lifelong medical, mental & social suffering

 American SPCC  
American Society for the Positive Care of Children

[americanspcc.org](http://americanspcc.org)  
The Nation's Voice for Children  
\*Center for Disease Control



Healing doesn't mean  
the pain never existed.  
It means the damage  
no longer controls  
our lives.



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# Road to Recovery

Move your body- this helps to release endorphins and get your body to shift.


- ◆ Use grounding techniques- Bring yourself to the present by getting attuned to your senses.
  - ◆ Change your environment- If you are isolating in your home, go out with a friend or take a walk.
  - ◆ Practice self-care- This can help with regulation and finding peace.
  - ◆ Emotions- Feel them. Allow yourself the space to feel whatever you may feel.
  - ◆ Support- We all need a sense of community where we can be loved on and validated.
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# Trigger Warning!



Do you know what triggers you and how it impacts you? Complete the document below to explore.

### Triggers

 **Trigger:** A stimulus—such as a person, place, situation, or thing—that contributes to an unwanted emotional or behavioral response.

**The Problem**

Describe the problem your triggers are contributing to. What's the worst-case scenario, if you are exposed to your triggers?


**Trigger Categories**

Just about anything can be a trigger. To begin exploring your own triggers, think about each of the categories listed below: Is there a specific emotion that acts as a trigger for you? How about a person or place? List your responses in the provided spaces.

<b>Emotional State</b>	
People	
Places	
Things	
Thoughts	
Activities / Situations	


**Tips for Dealing with Triggers**

- Oftentimes, the best way to deal with a trigger is to avoid it. This might mean making changes to your lifestyle, relationships, or daily routine.
- Create a strategy to deal with your triggers head on, just in case. Your strategy might include coping skills, a list of trusted people you can talk to, or rehearsed phrases to help you get out of a troublesome situation.
- Don't wait until the heat of the moment to test your coping strategy. Practice!

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## Triggers

### Triggers

 In this section, you will develop a plan for dealing with your three biggest triggers. Review your plan regularly, and practice each of the strategies.

Describe your three biggest triggers, in detail.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for avoiding or reducing exposure to each trigger.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for dealing with each trigger head on, when they cannot be avoided.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

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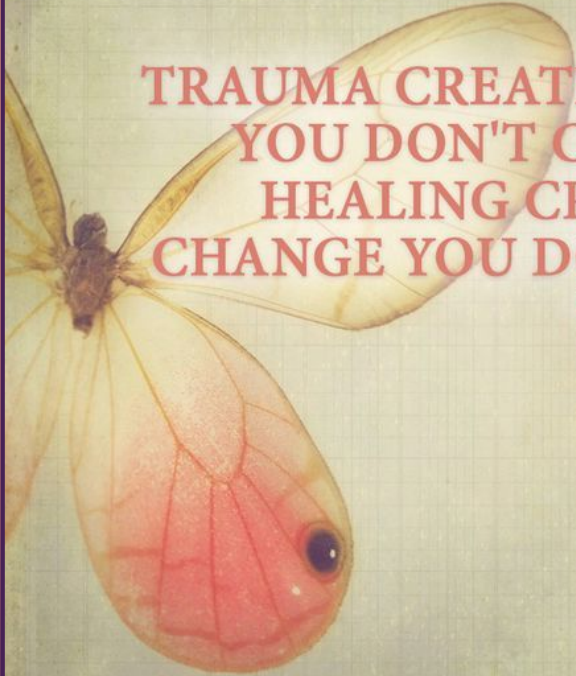


# Resources



- Crisis Hotline 832-416-1177
- National Suicide Prevention Line 800-273-8255
- enCOURAGE trauma center 832-582-5844
- Take a Mental Health Test - MHA Screening
- Employee Benefits / Employee Assistance Program





**TRAUMA CREATES CHANGE  
YOU DON'T CHOOSE.  
HEALING CREATES  
CHANGE YOU DO CHOOSE.**

MICHELE ROSENTHAL

HealthyPlace.com

# Topic Suggestions & Feedback

Click the Suggestion Box to submit your response.

Are there topics  
you would like to  
see discussed?  
We would  
*LOVE*  
To hear from you.

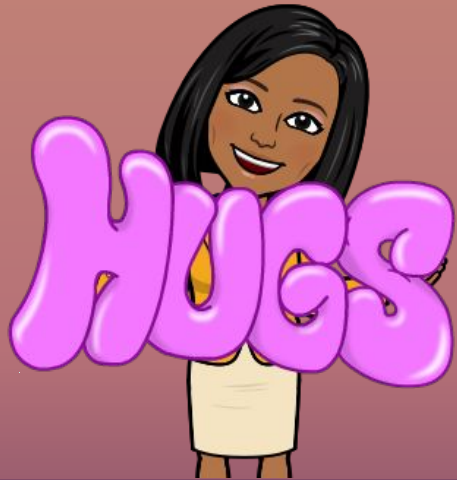


# Answer for Topic Suggestions & Feedback

10 Tips for Managing Your Heavy Workload



# Chat with a *PRO*



*Karen Haynes, Ph.D., LPC-S*

Licensed *PRO*fessional Counselor-Supervisor

Director for Mental Health and Social Services

Office: (832)386-1280

Email: [khaynes@galenaparkisd.com](mailto:khaynes@galenaparkisd.com)

HAVE A  
GOOD ONE!



*Mrs. Curby Rogers-Mitchell, LPC*

Licensed *PRO*fessional Counselor

Licensed Mental Health and Student Support Specialist

Office: (832)386-1319

Email: [ccrogers@galenaparkisd.com](mailto:ccrogers@galenaparkisd.com)