The Trauma of Living Through a Pandemic: Information and Resources for Yourself and Those You Coach

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Today’s Overview

What is trauma
Reactions to trauma
Unique aspects with the current pandemic
Coping Skills
Resources
What is trauma?

• A deeply disturbing or distressing experience
  • Often a lack of control
  • Personally experience, witnessing, or learning of a traumatic event

• Types of trauma
  • Big T vs. little t
  • Acute, chronic, complex
  • Insidious, vicarious/secondary
Reactions to Trauma

- Varies person to person
  - Temperament & personality
  - Resiliency factors
  - Coping abilities
  - Previous experiences of trauma
How to cope?

• With trauma in general
  • Creating safety
    • Physically
      • In the room, with others, living, day-to-day
    • Emotionally
      • Grounding techniques, coping
  • Processing
    • Narrative, group, discussing
  • Meaning-making
Reactions to Trauma

- Physical
  - Chest pain
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Nausea vomiting
  - Dizziness
  - Profuse sweating
  - Rapid heart rate
  - Body aches all over
  - **Muscles feel weak**
  - **Fatigue/tired**
  - **Headaches**
How to cope?  
With social distancing?

Create a routine

Sleep

Create your own spaces
Reactions to Trauma

• Thoughts
  • Unusual confusion
  • **Nightmares**
  • Disoriented
  • **Poor concentration**
  • Memory problems
  • Flashbacks
  • **Recurrent thoughts**
Reactions to Trauma

- Emotional
  - Anxious
  - Guilt
  - Grief
  - Fearful
  - Irritable/angry
  - Depressed
  - Numb
  - Regret
  - Feeling alone
  - Detached
  - Heartbroken
How to cope? With social distancing?

- Reach out to others
- Nutrition
- Self-care
Reactions to Trauma

• Behavioral
  • Withdrawning
  • Emotional outbursts
  • Loss/increase of appetite
  • Loss/increase of sleep
  • Substance use/abuse
  • Can’t sit still
  • Don’t want to move
  • “Zoned out”
  • Avoiding activities
How to cope? With social distancing?

- Dress for success
- Get outside!
- Move around
Unique Aspects with the Pandemic

- Various types of trauma
- Isolation/Socially
- Economically
- Loss & Grief
- Emotional responses
How to cope? With social distancing?

- Notice the helpers
- Help others
- Find a new hobby/long-term project
- Find lightness/humor
Reactions to Trauma - Unique Aspects with the Pandemic

- Possible delayed reaction
- Fear and anxiety
How to cope? With social distancing?

Expect behavioral issues
- Especially with children

Reframes
- "At least I get to..."

Goal setting
- Here and now
Resources

• How to help someone else out
  • Empathy
## Resources – Listening & Validation Skills

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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example Phrases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Use “I” statements</td>
<td>“I feel ___” vs. “You say/do ___”</td>
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</table>
| 2    | Avoid extremes | “You always/never/only ____”  
Importance of “and” language |
| 3    | Speak from your own experience | “I have noticed” vs. “Everyone thinks you ____” |
| 4    | Use tentative language if you’re unsure | “I’m wondering if ____” or “It could be possible that ____” |
| 5    | Reflect/summarize what has been said | “It sounds like you’ve been feeling frustrated.” |
| 6    | Check in for understanding | “What I’m hearing you say is ______. Did I get that correctly?” |
Resources

• How to find a provider
• PsychologyToday.com
• Insurance company
Questions?

Thank you!