

Gentle

TRAUMA ASSESSMENT



YOUR GENTLE TRAUMA ASSESSMENT



Symptoms of Trauma

Trauma is *not* just a case of full-blown PTSD. We can all suffer from traumatization to some degree, even if we don't get any official diagnosis... actually, even if we're not aware that we're carrying trauma in our system.

The symptoms of trauma manifest differently for each and every one of us. The Gentle Trauma Release Method© acknowledges a broader range of traumatic symptoms than officially recognized. According to the Gentle Trauma Release Method©, traumatic symptoms fall under one or more of these three categories:

1. Physical Symptoms
2. Emotional Symptoms
3. Cognitive & Motivational Symptoms

When the symptoms of trauma get unleashed, it almost feels like we're not the same person anymore. As if we're not the person we used to be. We may start to wonder if we ever will be...

When symptoms of trauma unfold, our life changes into one of struggle rather than the joyful, flowing existence that it could be.

One thing to know about symptoms of trauma is that they don't necessarily show up right after a traumatic event. There is a certain amount of stress and trauma that our system can take.

In other words, you are fine for a certain amount of time. But as soon as a critical mass of trauma and stress is reached, it is that proverbial last drop of even a small stressor that unleashes the symptoms of trauma.

What follows is a detailed overview of some of the most typical symptoms that a person can manifest once exposed to trauma and/or extremely high levels of stress.



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

CHECK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO YOU

- ☐ CHRONIC PAIN (E.G. NECK, SHOULDER, BACK PAIN)
- ☐ MUSCLE TENSION, MUSCLE ARMOURING
- ☐ PHYSICAL NUMBNESS (NOT FEELING PARTS OF THE BODY)
- ☐ MIGRAINES, CHRONIC HEADACHES
- ☐ SLEEP ISSUES (INSOMNIA, NIGHTMARES)
- ☐ DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS (E.G. IRRITABLE BOWEL)
- ☐ FIBROMYALGIA
- ☐ CHRONIC WEIGHT ISSUES
- ☐ EATING ISSUES
- ☐ CHRONIC FATIGUE
- ☐ DEPLETED ENERGY, EXHAUSTION
- ☐ TEETH GRINDING
- ☐ STUTTERING
- ☐ INVOLUNTARY CLENCHING (TEETH, FISTS ETC.)
- ☐ DEPENDENCE ON OUTSIDE SOURCES FOR STIMULATION OR SEDATION
- ☐ INEXPLICABLE ACHES AND PAINS
- ☐ DYSAUTONOMIA
- ☐ WEAK IMMUNITY, AUTO-IMMUNITY ISSUES



EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

CHECK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO YOU

- ☐ CONSTANT UNDERLYING ANXIETY
- ☐ PANIC ATTACKS
- ☐ PHOBIAS
- ☐ FEELING EMOTIONALLY NUMB (DISSOCIATED, DISCONNECTED)
- ☐ DEPRESSION, APATHY, LETHARGY
- ☐ EMOTIONAL OVERWHELM
- ☐ HYPERVIGILANCE
- ☐ FEELING "ON THE EDGE", AGITATION, IRRITABILITY
- ☐ EXCESSIVE WORRYING
- ☐ DIFFICULTY RELAXING
- ☐ FEELING LIKE LIFE IS AN ENDLESS BATTLE
- ☐ SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS, PESSIMISTIC THINKING
- ☐ OUTBURSTS OF ANGER/RAGE, SHORT TEMPER
- ☐ SELF-BLAME, SELF-DIRECTED ANGER
- ☐ FEELING VICTIMIZED OR BEING RE-VICTIMIZED
- ☐ TOXIC SHAME OR GUILT
- ☐ FEELING EMOTIONALLY "FROZEN"
- ☐ FEELINGS OF EMBARRASSMENT OR HUMILIATION



EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

CHECK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO YOU

- ☐ CO-DEPENDENCY
- ☐ NOT BEING ABLE TO PROTECT ONESELF
- ☐ NOT BEING ABLE TO STAND UP FOR ONESELF
- ☐ LOSING VOICE, NOT BEING ABLE TO SPEAK UP WHEN NEEDED
- ☐ POROUS BOUNDARIES
- ☐ LACK OF SELF-CARE, DIFFICULTY SELF-NURTURING
- ☐ LACKING A SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE WORLD
- ☐ FEELINGS OF ABANDONMENT
- ☐ FEELINGS OF BETRAYAL
- ☐ NOT TRUSTING IN THE GOODNESS OF THE WORLD
- ☐ LACK OF SELF-ACCEPTANCE
- ☐ DIFFICULTY FEELING SELF-COMPASSION
- ☐ LOW SELF-ESTEEM
- ☐ LACK OF SELF-WORTH
- ☐ CRYING OR SOBBING EPISODES
- ☐ EMOTIONAL FLASHBACKS - FEELING TERRIBLE ABOUT ONESELF (UNWORTHY, DESPICABLE, ASHAMED) WITHOUT REASON AND OUT OF THE BLUE



COGNITIVE & MOTIVATIONAL SYMPTOMS

CHECK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO YOU

- ☐ INABILITY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH IMPORTANT GOALS
- ☐ CONSISTENTLY FEELING STUCK WITH GOALS
- ☐ CHRONIC PROcrastINATION
- ☐ SELF-SABOTAGING
- ☐ CONCENTRATION ISSUES
- ☐ FUZZY, SCATTERED THINKING
- ☐ BRAIN FOG, MEMORY ISSUES
- ☐ FEELING CONFUSED OR DISORIENTED
- ☐ DISTORTED PERCEPTION OF TIME (E.G. LOSING CHUNKS OF TIME, TIME PASSES FASTER THAN PERCEIVED)
- ☐ FEELING LIKE FUTURE IS JUST REPETITION OF THE PAST
- ☐ FEELING LIKE EVERYTHING IS A LIFE OR DEATH SITUATION
- ☐ FEELING LIKE EVERYTHING IS AN EMERGENCY
- ☐ FREQUENTLY BLOWING THINGS OUT OF PROPORTION
- ☐ DIFFICULTY MAKING DECISIONS, AGONIZING OVER DECISIONS MADE
- ☐ NOT TRUSTING ONE'S GUT. ONE'S INSTINCTS
- ☐ LOSS OF MEANING AND PURPOSE
- ☐ LOSS OF CONNECTION TO OTHERS AND THE WORLD
- ☐ LOW RESILIENCE



COGNITIVE & MOTIVATIONAL SYMPTOMS

CHECK WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO YOU

- ☐ NO CLEAR, SOLID SENSE OF SELF
- ☐ SOCIAL DISENGAGEMENT
- ☐ WITHDRAWAL BEHAVIOURS (HERMIT-LIKE)
- ☐ ENGAGING IN RISKY BEHAVIORS
- ☐ STRONG, HARSH INNER CRITIC
- ☐ LOSING THE CAPACITY FOR INTIMACY (NOT JUST SEXUALLY) - DIFFICULTY LETTING OTHERS IN



EXPLORATION

WHEN YOU THINK OF YOUR LIFE, CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENED AND YOU WERE NEVER THE SAME SINCE?

CAN YOU THINK OF EVENTS OR SITUATIONS FROM YOUR LIFE THAT CHANGED YOU, BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY?

Time doesn't heal all wounds, but trauma release just might...



EXPLORATION

ARE THERE BOTHERSOME MEMORIES THAT YOU JUST CAN'T SHAKE OFF?
MEMORIES THAT YOU FEEL YOU STILL CARRY IN YOUR BODY?

ARE THERE ANY SITUATIONS INVOLVING "DIFFICULT" PEOPLE IN YOUR
LIFE THAT STAND OUT TO YOU?

And so we begin...

[illegible]

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The link between your symptoms and the events in your life

Reflection: Think of the symptoms from the three categories (physical, emotional, cognitive and motivational), especially the ones that appeared out of the blue or got significantly worse out of the blue. Can you see a connection between these symptoms and the events in your life that you listed on the previous pages?

If there were specific events, situations, people behind your symptoms, what would the connections be?

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Reflections continued...

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