



Understanding Trauma-Informed Peer Support and Post Traumatic Growth

© Patricia Clason, CPS, RCC, MHFA 2024

Note about Handouts

- Slides handout has been condensed – so you have the information without the slides for talking points or instructions
- PDFs will be sent to you after the session

Background on Development of Trauma-Informed Care

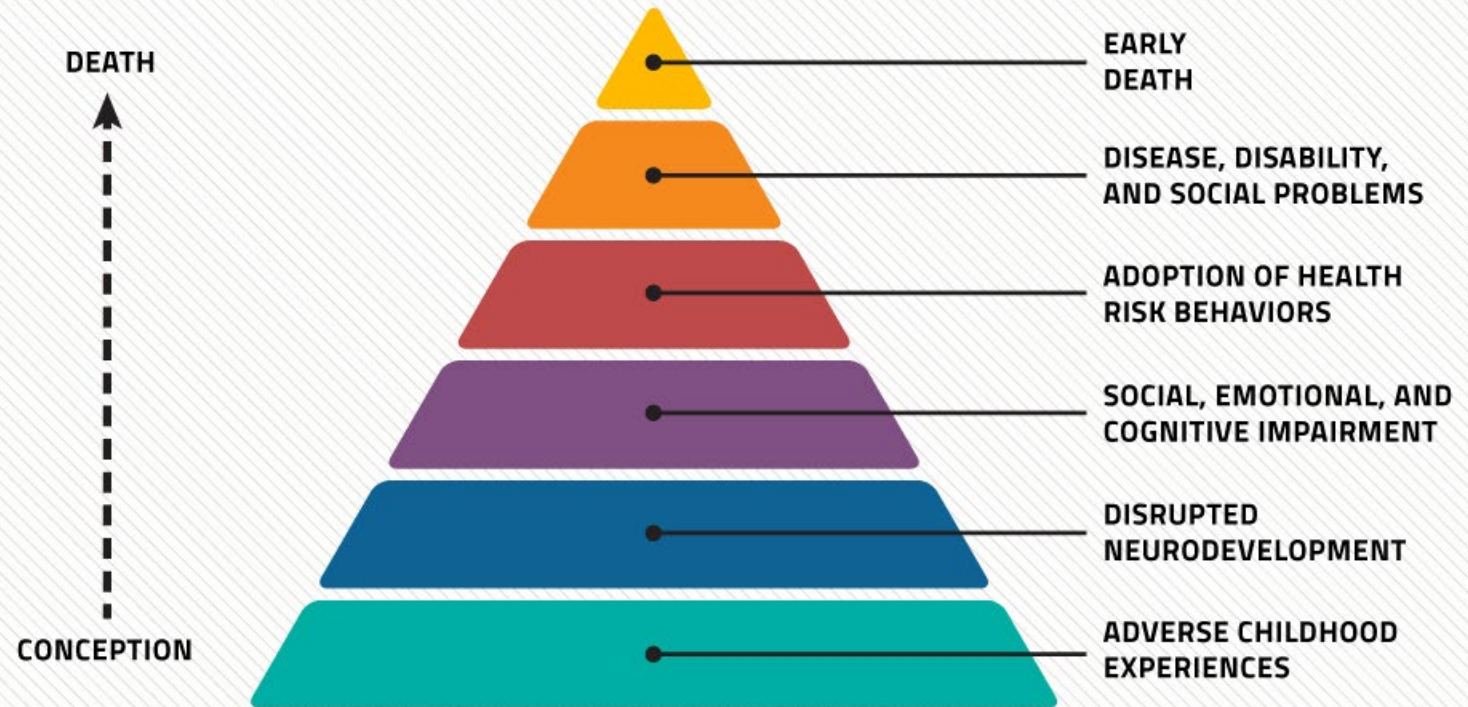
- 1960's – Beginning of recognition and research of PTSD as connected to military post-Vietnam
- 1970's - Feminist Movement – giving voice to survivors of interpersonal trauma
- 1980's –
 - Child Advocacy – awareness of child abuse and multi-disciplinary approaches
 - Greater understanding of post-trauma effects on individuals and general population
 - 1985 – International Society for Traumatic Stress was founded
 - 1989 – United States Department of Veterans Affairs had created the National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (www.ptsd.va.gov)

Background on Development of Trauma-Informed Care

- 1990's – Increased research/science – trauma-specific empirical research
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - 1994 – SAMHSA convened the Dare to Vision conference
 - 1998 of the Women, Co-Occurring Disorders and Violence Study, sponsored by SAMHSA
 - 1995-97 – ACES study – CDC and Kaiser Permanente

ACES

How Adverse Childhood Experiences Can Influence Health Throughout Life



Adapted from Felitti et al., 1998 and Whitfield CL at <http://www.cbwhit.com/ACEstudy.htm>.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Kaiser Permanente

[illegible]

Dictionary Definition of Trauma

- a deeply distressing or disturbing experience; emotional shock following a stressful event or physical injury, which may be associated with physical shock and sometimes leads to long term neurosis
- In medicine = physical injury

In Medicine

- Wound – laceration, breaking of the skin
- Injury – damage to the body, without breaking of the skin

In Psychology

- Trauma – emotional wound
- Neurosis – emotional injury



General Practice

Trauma is an experience that appears
to threaten one's life
with death or identity disintegration
– key element is helplessness



Trauma by the Numbers

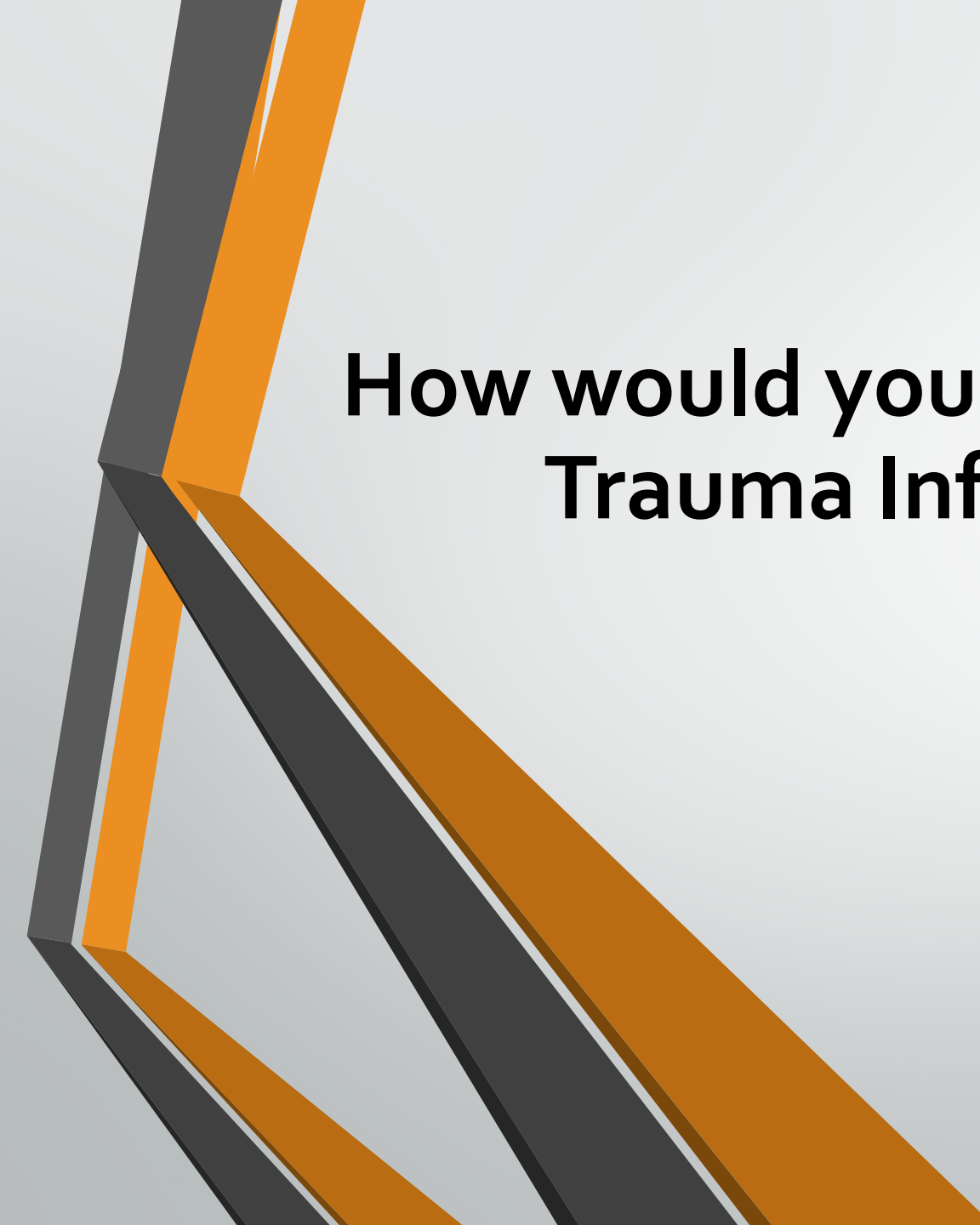
- **70%**
- Percentage of American adults who have experienced a traumatic event, according to the Sidran Foundation, which provides traumatic-stress education and advocacy. Some 20 percent of these people eventually develop PTSD.
- **16 million**
- Number of Americans currently suffering from PTSD — 5 percent of the population.
- **1 in 13**
- Estimated number of Americans who will develop PTSD during their lifetime — 8 percent of the population.



TODAY – EVERYONE?

THE GOOD NEWS...

Over 50% of people who experience trauma experience post-traumatic growth!!



**How would you define
Trauma Informed
Care?**





Trauma Informed Care

Trauma-informed organizations, programs, and services are based on an understanding of the vulnerabilities or triggers of trauma survivors that traditional service delivery approaches may exacerbate, so that these services and programs can be more supportive and avoid re-traumatization.



Key Elements – 3 R's - of Trauma-Informed Care

- **Realizing** the prevalence of trauma
- **Recognizing** how trauma affects all individuals involved, clients and providers
- **Responding** by putting this knowledge into practice

Trauma Informed Care

Trauma Informed Care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma *that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives.*

- Understanding how trauma has affected their lives
- Recognizing the vulnerabilities and triggers of trauma
- Practicing treatment that includes recovery and reducing the possibility of re-traumatization

Trauma Informed Care

“Trauma informed care embraces a perspective that highlights adaptation over symptoms and resilience over pathology.”

Elliot, Bjelajac, Fallott, Markoff, & Reed

Strength-based focus – apithology

Apithology

api·thol·o·gy (a pith I -j) n. pl. api·thol·o·gia

1. The [systemic] study of the nature of [wellness] and its causes, processes, development, and consequences. Also called [apico]-biology.
2. The anatomic or functional manifestations of [health]: the apithology of emergence.
3. A [conformance] or [adherence] to a [health generating] condition: “Neighborhoods were enabled by the self-reinforcing apithology of community engagement, independence, kindness”.

Trauma Informed Care Principles

- **Safety** – ensuring a physically and emotionally safe environment
- **Trustworthiness** – client responsibilities and tasks are clear, appropriate professional boundaries
- **Choice** – emphasizing and encouraging consumer choice and control
- **Collaboration** – collaborative approach, sharing power with the client
- **Empowerment** – stressing the development of client empowerment and skill building



Peer Support Values


Trauma Informed Care Values

- Understand the prevalence and impact of trauma
- Pursue the person's strength, choice and autonomy **(person-centered, strengths-based)**
- Providers earn trust
- Healing happens in relationships
- Provide holistic care **(connect with resources)**
- Share power **(peer right to make informed decisions)**
- Communicate with compassion
- Promote Safety
- Embrace diversity
- Respect human rights
- Physical and emotional engagement of the client in the healing process
- **Advocacy**



Key Components – Organizational Trauma Informed practices

- **Maximize physical and psychological safety**
- **Partner with Clients**
- **Identify Trauma-related needs of clients**
- **Enhance Client Well-Being and Resilience**
- **Enhance Family Well-Being and Resilience**
- **Enhance the Well-Being and Resilience of those working in the system**
- **Partner with Agencies and Systems that Interact with Clients**



Policies reflect a trauma-informed perspective

- **Support for personal practice of self-care**
 - Preventing Compassion Fatigue, Burn-Out and Secondary Trauma



12 Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress

- Traumatic experiences are inherently complex
- Trauma occurs within a broad context that includes a person's personal characteristics, life experiences and current circumstances
- Traumatic events often include general secondary adversities, life changes and distressing reminders in a person's daily life



12 Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress

- People exhibit a wide range of reactions to trauma and loss
- Danger and safety are core concerns in the life of a traumatized person
- Traumatic experiences often affect the whole family and broader systems (caregivers, teachers, employers)



12 Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress

- Protective and promotive factors can reduce the adverse affects of trauma
- Trauma and post-trauma adversities can strongly influence development in children and future growth and adjustment in adults
- Developmental neurobiology underlies a person's reactions to traumatic experiences

12 Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress

- Culture is closely interwoven with traumatic experiences, responses and recovery
- Challenges to the social contract, including legal and ethical issues, affect trauma responses and recovery
- Working with trauma-exposed people can evoke distress in providers, making it more difficult for them to provide good care

Post Traumatic Growth

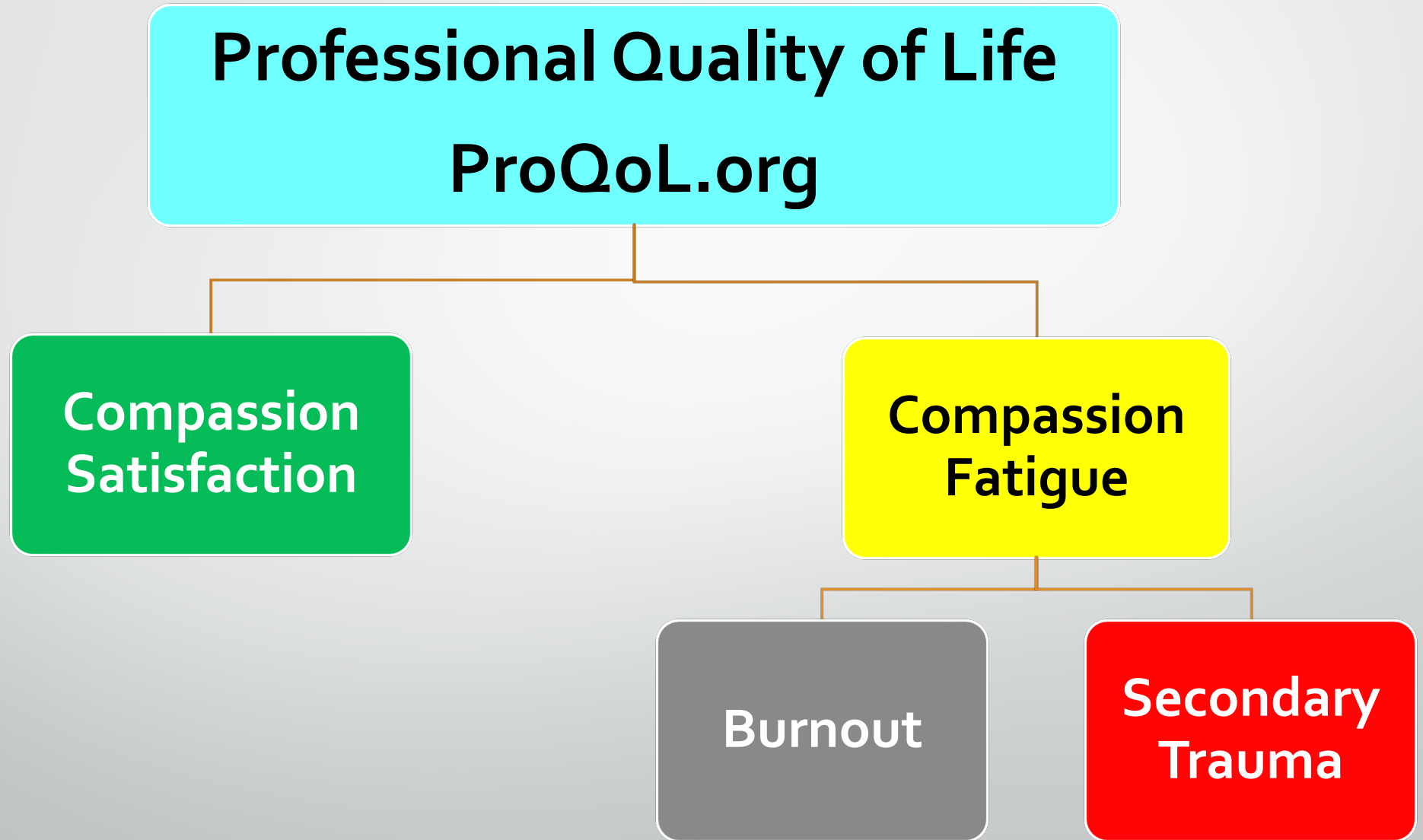
Post Traumatic Growth is positive change experienced as a result of the struggle with a major life crisis or a traumatic event.

- Calhoun and Tedeschi

Characteristics of PTG:

- Develop a sense that new opportunities emerge from the struggle
- Changes in relationships with others – closer relationships and increased sense of connection to others who suffer
- Increased sense of one's own strength
- Greater appreciation for life in general
- Deepening of spiritual life, possible significant change in beliefs

CS-CF Model



Definitions

- Compassion Satisfaction
 - Positive aspects of working as a helper
- Compassion Fatigue
 - Negative aspects of working as a helper
- Burnout
 - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
- Work-related traumatic stress
 - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
 - Secondary traumatic stress – ongoing exposure to traumatized persons and their distress and behaviors

Compassion Fatigue

- Dealing with
 - Ongoing stress
 - Repeated crisis
- Prolonged Duress Stress
 - Similar symptoms to PTSD without direct experience of trauma

The *Professional Quality of Life Scale* (*ProQOL*)

- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
 - Burnout
 - Secondary Trauma

How do you cope?




Coping Techniques

- Pay Attention
- Respond quickly – don't wait for it take over
- Emotional Intelligence – let emotions flow
- Mindfulness
- Hobbies / distractions
- Exercise
- Humor
- Transition time
- Take frequent breaks
- Pets
- Play
- Self-acknowledgment
- Ask for help – support network
 - Family
 - Friends
 - EAP – therapist
 - Self-help groups

*If we treated
everyone as if they
had experienced
trauma,
offering kindness,
compassion,
patience and
understanding,
the world would be
a better place!*






From pain can come wisdom,
from fear can come courage,
from suffering can come
strength—if we have the
virtue of resilience.

Eric Greitens



RESILIENCY

PassItOn.com
THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark, strapless dress, is sitting on a dark rock. She is looking towards a small, glowing blue butterfly that is hovering in the air. The background is a dark, misty landscape with some faint green lights. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

"Loving ourselves through
the process of owning
our own story is the
bravest thing
we`ll ever do."

~ Brene Brown

Any Lengths