

TRAUMA

Trauma can be defined as the “lasting **emotional** response that often results from living through a distressing event. Experiencing a **traumatic** event can harm a person's sense of safety, sense of self, and ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships. Long after the traumatic event occurs, people with trauma can often feel shame, helplessness, powerlessness and intense fear” (CAMH, 2021).

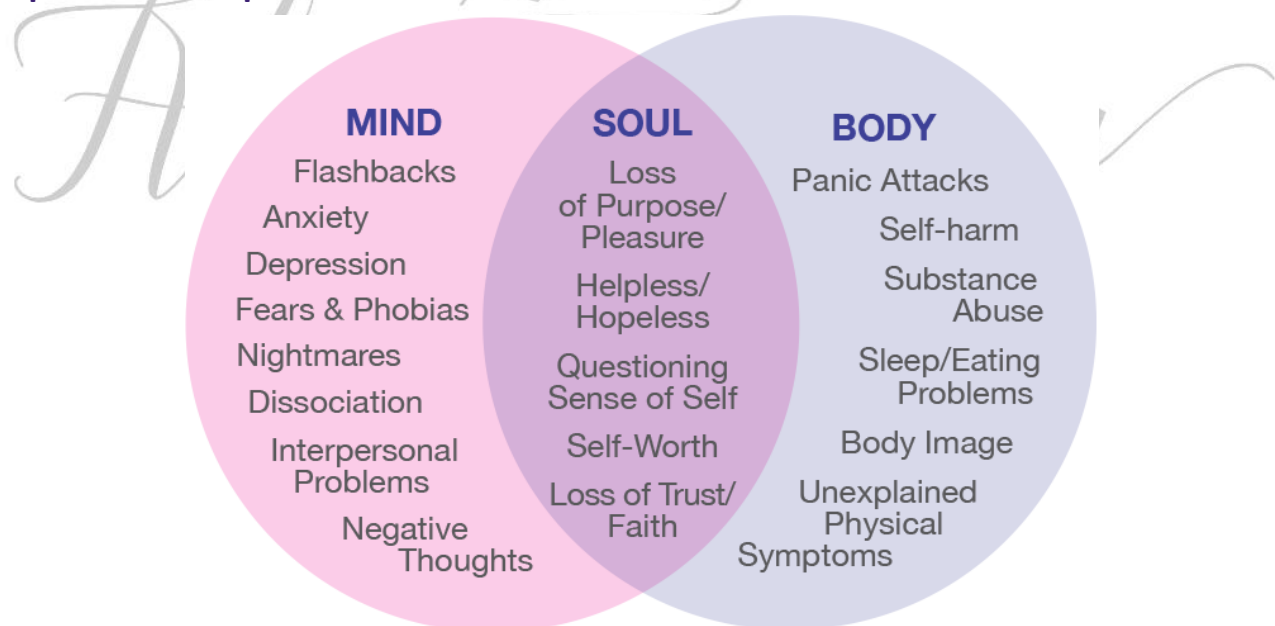
The PTSD Association of Canada states, “**Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** can develop after a person has experienced or witnessed a traumatic or terrifying event. PTSD is a lasting consequence of traumatic ordeals that cause intense fear, helplessness or horror, such as a sexual or physical assault, the unexpected death of a loved one, an accident, war, or natural disaster and more. Families of victims can also develop PTSD” (2019).

- **Simple PTSD** can result after one traumatic event/experience.
- **Complex PTSD** can result after several traumatic events/experiences.

Examples of Trauma (what is traumatic for one person may not be for another person)

- Physical abuse or assault
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Emotional abuse/psychological maltreatment
- Neglect
- Serious accident or illness/medical procedure
- Witness to domestic/community violence
- Natural or manmade disasters
- Forced displacement
- War/terrorism/political violence
- Traumatic grief or separation
- System induced trauma
- Intergenerational trauma

Symptoms and Impact of Trauma



If you or someone you know has experienced trauma, we can help!

After Trauma Empowerment Network

www.atenns.ca

902-758-3967

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Healing & Recovery

Healing after trauma is possible. Healing and recovery can mean different things for different people. A person will probably have ups and downs, and may feel frustrated for not recovering as quickly as others think he/she/they should. Whether the trauma happened recently or years ago, self-care is a proven practice to help reduce many trauma symptoms. Self-care is a necessary part of healing and recovery after trauma.

Six areas of self-care include:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Personal
- Psychological
- Professional/occupational

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) can be defined as **positive personal changes** that result from the survivor's struggle to deal with trauma and its psychological consequences. The process of post-traumatic growth can lead to improved relationships with others, more compassion, openness, appreciation for life, spiritual growth, personal strength, and a renewed sense of possibilities in the world. <http://www.ptsdassociation.com/post-traumatic-growth>

How to Help

- Don't pressure your loved one into talking
- Do "normal" things with your loved one
- Manage your own stress
- Be patient
- Educate yourself about trauma and PTSD
- Accept (and expect) mixed feelings
- Create routines
- Be a good listener (a person may have to talk about it over and over)
- Manage stress at home
- Build trust and safety
- Emphasize your loved one's strengths
- Look for ways to empower your loved one
- Anticipate and manage triggers
- Ask how you can help
- Encourage professional help/support
- Take care of yourself

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/helping-someone-with-ptsd.htm>

Trauma Quick Facts

- Trauma can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or ability.
- Psychological trauma is a major public health issue affecting the overall health of people, families and communities across Canada.
- Trauma is intergenerational unless resolved – trauma can be passed on from one generation to the next.
- Sometimes the impact of the trauma is not felt until weeks, months or even years after the traumatic event.
- People who have experienced trauma as a child are statistically more likely to experience sexual assault in later life.

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