

Trauma  
And  
P.T.S.D. – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Initial PTSD reactions are often the



“Calm before the storm”

The victim may present as calm, mild tearfulness, numb, full of denial and avoidance with increase depression.

**Trauma** is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions ([Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#)) includes unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea.

While these feelings are normal, some people have difficulty moving on with their lives.

Type of Trauma check all that apply: \_\_\_\_\_ physical abuse \_\_\_\_\_ sexual abuse \_\_\_\_\_ exposure to domestic violence  
\_\_\_\_\_ exposer to alcohol or drug use \_\_\_\_\_ verbal abuse \_\_\_\_\_ bullying \_\_\_\_\_ natural disaster

### Re-experience

- intrusive upsetting memories of the event
- flashbacks acting or feeling like the event is happening again
- nightmares of the event
- feelings of intense distress when reminded of the trauma
- intense physical reactions to reminders of the event ( pounding heart, rapid breathing, nausea, muscle tension, sweating)

### Avoidance and numbing

- Avoiding activities, places, thoughts or feelings that remind you of the trauma
- Inability to remember important aspects of the trauma
- Loss of interest in activities and life in general
- Feeling detached from others
- Feeling emotionally numb
- Sense of a limited future; (don't expect to live a normal life span, get married, and have a career.)
- Suffer from isolation (solitude, wanting to be alone, hiding, reclusion)

### Increase anxiety and emotional arousal

- Difficulty falling
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Irritability
- outbursts of anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Hyper vigilance "red alert"
- Feeling jumpy/easily startled

### Other common symptoms

- Guilt
- shame
- self-blame
- Substance abuse
- Feeling of mistrust and betrayal
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts and feelings
- Physical aches and pains



I'm tired of crying.  
I'm tired of yelling.  
I'm tired of being sad.  
I'm tired of pretending.  
I'm tired of being alone.  
I'm tired of being angry.  
I'm tired of feeling crazy.  
I'm tired of feeling stuck.  
I'm tired of needing help.  
I'm tired of remembering.  
I'm tired of missing things.  
I'm tired of being different.  
I'm tired of missing people.  
I'm tired of feeling worthless.  
I'm tired of feeling empty inside.  
I'm tired of not being able to just let go.  
I'm tired of wishing I could start all over.  
I'm tired of dreaming of a life I will never have.  
But most of all, I'm just tired of being tired.

jkousin.tumblr.com



1. Talking to your children: Every child will respond to trauma differently. Some will have no ill effects; others may suffer an immediate and acute effect. Still others may not show signs of stress until sometime after the event.

### Actions

It's said that actions  
Speak louder than words...  
My words often fall on deaf  
Ears.

I speak the truth; the things  
People really don't want to  
Hear.

The hardest thing is  
Facing the truth  
Knowing the truth  
understanding the truth.

When others can't hear you,  
Your only option is to show  
Them through actions...  
but actions fall to blindness

Seeing what you wants to see,  
feelings Interpreted by fear.

It's said that actions speak louder  
Than words,  
your actions have  
Consequences  
that you have to  
Be willing to face.

Your actions may back fire  
Leave you in a place you  
Didn't want to be ....

They say "ask me no questions  
I'll tell you no lie."

They say "it's better to have loved  
and lost then to  
Never have loved at all."

Can you handle the words  
the actions of life....  
As it travels in a path  
once traveled before.



2. Recovering emotionally from disaster understanding the emotions and normal responses that follow a disaster or other traumatic event can help you cope with your feelings, thoughts and behaviors – and can help you on the path to recovery.

## Anxiety

Have you ever felt it before.  
It takes your breath away  
Heightens all your senses  
You can hear every sound  
No communication  
Conversations deafening

Thoughts encompasses in  
fear.  
Familiar fades in  
background  
Chest explodes... Tightness  
thumps  
In place of heart beats.

Nerve endings ache like a  
body  
Shivering cold.  
Skin crawling  
Movement a must  
Sights overflow  
What's wrong  
Who's wronged  
Why am I wrong

Fear  
Dictates movements  
Frozen  
Must overcome  
Trapped thoughts  
A need for escape

Help him  
Help her  
Help them  
Safe place desired

Focus  
Separate  
One thought  
One person  
One movement  
One song  
One sound  
One vision



3. Open Up! Writing About Trauma Reduces Stress, Writing about difficult, even traumatic, experiences is a good release

When you succumb to your fear  
You place yourself in some kind of prison  
Mental, emotional, or physical  
Increasing depression, anxiety and guilt

Self-blame for what happened to you  
Guilt for how your pain in hurting others

How others

- Are okay with you being you
- Are okay with encouraging you
- Are okay with supporting your choices
- Are okay with learning to understand – you

You have to be able to

- Identify your **TRAUMA**
- Identify your **ANGER**
- Identify your **TRIGGERS**
- Identify you **COPING SKILLS**

Your trauma has to fit in a parallel world  
Where lives intersect, cross and combine  
Where communication is essential in healing

Writing to release and organize your thoughts

Reading to visualize a journey

Listening to music to sooth the soul

Singing

Dancing

Sitting still and absorbing

Share your story to heal and empower others to heal

You must not succumb to your fears

You must live to exist and survive



**PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)** is not a sign of weakness, the only way to confront the traumas that have happened to you and learn to accept it as part of your past. It is natural to want to avoid painful memories. It is when you get away from the trauma you need to cope, heal and live.

You have already survived.

It is a time to fix your relationships, your ability to function and enhance your quality of life.

### **Types of treatment (Therapist - [https://therapists.psychologytoday.com/?tr=Hdr\\_Brand](https://therapists.psychologytoday.com/?tr=Hdr_Brand))**

- Trauma focused cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Family therapy
- Medication
- EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)  
<http://www.emdrtherapistnetwork.com/therapy-ma-mental-health.html>

### **In treatment you will:**

- Explore your thoughts and feelings about the trauma
- Work through feelings of guilt, self-blame and mistrust
- Learn how to cope with and control intrusive memories
- Address problems PTSD has caused in your life and relationships.

### **Self-help tips:**

1. Reach out to others for support
  - a. Join a PTSD, Domestic Violence or Sexual abuse support group
  - b. Do not rely on family and friends to have the answers they understand the cycle less than you
2. Avoid drugs and alcohol
3. Change you sense of helplessness
  - a. Use your strength and coping skills
4. Spend time in nature
  - a. Peace and relaxation
5. Use various forms of Art for Healing
  - a. Journaling
  - b. Poetry
  - c. Singing and dancing



**find  
your  
voice!**

## Poetic

Poetry mimics all genres of art  
A tone of lyrical notes  
Flows through the ear  
Captured attention  
Sweet melody

A dance so intense  
drawn in  
partnership using  
one to lead and  
the other

Pulse beats like  
drums echoing  
the dance hall  
mind encompassed  
rhythm and beats  
art knows no limits

Free style in the streets  
mind, heart and soul  
emotions explode  
pure and raw

Poetry mimics  
all genres of art  
spoken, instrumental,  
physical movements  
interpretations  
of feelings  
receiving a message  
not to be judged  
embraced and understood  
the story is truth  
life's experience



**P**utting words  
**O**n paper to  
**E**xpress in part,  
**T**houghts from me  
**R**ight to  
**Y**our heart

Your opinion does  
not change  
reality but it  
just may change  
your bias

Dancers moving to  
the beat... to  
the notes of  
someone else's  
song  
capturing the essence of  
the message  
adding a personal spin  
poetry in motion  
healing and community  
sharing

Partners mover forcefully  
across the stage  
in sync moves  
connect  
music, master lyricist  
mimics all forms of  
art

Listen to the tone  
in the notes  
see the moves  
along the dance floor  
the strokes of a painting  
the shadows behind the  
drawings

Poetry invites you  
to get to know  
a poet

You are not alone

You never realize how alone  
You really are  
Until you open your eyes

Find no one sitting there by your side.

You never realize how alone you are  
until ... You start to cry  
and no one comes  
To wipe your tears.

You never realize how alone you are  
Until you wake from a bad dream  
and all you are Greeted with is darkness  
Night sounds and over whelming fear.

You never realize how alone you are  
until you begin to Reach out  
want to be a burden to others.

You never realized how alone  
You **were** until you've reached out  
asked to be helped... but even then  
You are still lying awake ... alone.

Alone and in pain, not  
Wanting to disturb anyone else's  
Day or night,  
Not wanting to burden them,  
Trouble them, or allow them to see your pain.

You are alone because you choose to be alone.  
All you have to do is pick up the phone.  
I understand **you are used to doing it all alone,**  
You must realize...  
You are not alone.

## Resources:

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### **Trauma Center at Justice Resource Institute** (<http://www.traumacenter.org>)

1269 Beacon Street Brookline, Ma. 02446  
General # 617-232-1303 Intake# 617-232-0687

### Trauma focused Evaluation Services

#### Child Abuse Program:

Screening, information and referral for child victims of sexual and physical abuse, therapy  
Contact Rona Sandberg, LICSW at 617-232-1303x223

#### Trauma Center Residential Evaluation program

19 day placement 12 – 22 year olds eligible to complete programs  
for more information contact Hilary Hodgdon PH.D at 617-232-1303 x234

If you are interested in one of the trauma center residential centers contact

Van Der Kolk Center at Glenhaven Academy  
Walden Streets School  
Pelham Axademy

contact Aaron Luba 508-481-8077 x 233  
contact Michelle Vaughn at 978-369-7611  
contact Shanna Clark at 781-274-6800

### **Judge Baker Children's Center** (<http://jbcc.harvard.edu/basic-page/about-center-effective-child-therapy>)

53 Parker hill Ave Boston, Ma. 02120  
General # 617-232-8390 fax# 617-232-8399 Center for effective therapy - intake coordinator 617-278-4288

Center for Effective therapy – Provides assessments, treatment, individual therapy, anxiety and related disorders, depressive and related disorders and disruptive behavior disorder and related disorders.

Parent-child interaction therapy treatment – children ages 2-7 years with emotional and behavioral problems, treatment usually lasts 12-20 weeks.

Child-Adult relationship enhancement training – utilizing the 3P Skills: Praise, Paraphrase and Point-out Behavior

MATCH – Modular Approach to therapy for children with Anxiety, depression, Trauma or conduct problems designed for children ages 6 – 15 years old.

Change your sense of helplessness

use your:

Strength and coping skills

Spend time in nature

Peace and relaxation

Use various forms of art for healing

Journaling

Poetry

Singing

Dancing