Bearing Witness & Believing in Better:
Why Trauma, Social-Emotional Learning & The Healing Power of Healthy Relationships Begins & Ends With Us

Christopher Moore, Ed.S.
School Psychologist
Salem-Keizer Public Schools
Oregon State University
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maybe you will be different...

I have learned dread and vigilance on the unsafe playground of my homes... 
desperate I smile hoping to keep the shadows from consuming my trembling terrified heart... 
Actions no longer my own, my pain transmitted to all those around me... 
the frayed wires of my spirit spark and maim innocent bystanders... especially those who risk caring about what lies behind these dark circles and haunted eyes... 
I look away from you or through you, in shame... 
trying to hide what has happened to me, what is happening to me... convinced that everyone sees the ugliness I feel... 
the quiet rage building in cauldrons forged in the fires of others’ sickness and suffering... 
Just when the connection I yearn for, cry out for, so desperately need crosses my path, I hide, or lash out... breaking the promise before it gets made... 
to reaffirm what I already believe to be true ...that you will hurt me too...
Josh’s Story
ACTIVITY:

Stand up and be counted
TRAUMA: The Numbers
“At the end of each day thinking of my work as a CONTRIBUTION rather than a SUCCESS or FAILURE, freed me and opened my heart....”

~ Kirk Olsone in Education Week
Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being…

Source: SAMHSA (2014)
In short...

Trauma is the sum of the EVENT, the EXPERIENCE, and the EFFECT.

...the experiencing of PAST emotions & sensations in the PRESENT moment
TRAUMA: The Numbers

CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE TRAUMA OFTEN HAVE BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL

Children with 0 ACEs
- 97% Those who don't display learning or behavioral problems
- 3% Those who display learning or behavioral problems

Children with 4 or more ACEs
- 51% Those who display learning or behavioral problems
- 49% Those who don't display learning or behavioral problems
Neglect and abuse communicate to the developing brains of infants that their environment is unpredictable and chaotic.

Securely attached babies thrive when they get to preschool.

- **Children Who Were Anxiously Attached at 12 Months**
  - 87.5%
  - 12.5%

- **Children Who Were Securely Attached at 12 Months**
  - 68%
  - 32%

- Those who function well in preschool
- Those who function poorly in preschool
HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED
What Works and Why
PAUL TOUGH

"The United States ranks 31st out of 32 developed nations in the proportion of public spending that goes to early childhood."
The Elephant in the Room...

Percentage of children in poverty*
*Ages birth (0 years) – 17 years

2000

2014

Source: https://www.aft.org/growth-child-poverty-mapped-county-50-states
…the experience of multiple and/or chronic and prolonged, developmentally adverse traumatic events, most often of an interpersonal nature (e.g., sexual or physical abuse, war, community violence) and early-life onset.

Source: Bessel A. van der Kolk, MD
3 Primary Areas of Impact
w/Complex Trauma

Attention
(Executive Functioning)

Emotional Regulation

Relationships
(Attachment & Bonding)
WINDOW OF TOLERANCE - TRAUMA/ANXIETY RELATED RESPONSES:
Widening the Comfort Zone for Increased Flexibility

HYPER- AROUSED
Fight/Flight Response

• ANXIETY
• OVERWHELMED
• CHAOTIC RESPONSES
• OUTBURSTS (EMOTIONAL OR AGGRESSIVE)
• ANGER/ AGGRESSION/ RAGE

• RIGIDIDNESS
• OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR OR THOUGHTS
• OVER-EATING/RESTRICTING
• ADDICTIONS
• IMPULSIVITY

CAUSES TO GO OUT OF THE WINDOW OF TOLERANCE:
• Fear of...
• Unconscious Thought/Feeling:
  It is unsafe, I do not exist, Abandonment, Rejection
• Trauma-Related Core Beliefs about self are triggered:
  Emotional Disregulation occurs

COMFORT ZONE
EMOTIONALLY REGULATED
Calm, Cool, Collected, Connected

ABILITY TO SELF-SOOTHE
ABILITY TO REGULATE EMOTIONAL STATE

Staying within the window allows for better relationship interactions

FREEZE RESPONSE

• FANE DEATH RESPONSE
• DISSOCIATION
• NOT PRESENT
• UNAVAILABLE/ SHUT DOWN
• MEMORY LOSS

• DISCONNECTED
• AUTO PILOT
• NO DISPLAY OF EMOTIONS/ FLAT
• SEPARATION FROM SELF, FEELINGS & EMOTIONS
Take a moment to...

Breathe In

4 seconds

Breathe Out

Hold

Hold
hope.
action.
ALTHOUGH THE WORLD IS FULL OF SUFFERING, IT IS FULL ALSO OF THE OVERCOMING OF IT.

- HELEN KELLER
Post-Traumatic Growth
"I liked recess a lot better before the safety helmets."
I can be changed by what happens to me. But I refuse to be reduced by it.

— Maya Angelou
How can I take my contribution to the next level?
REALIZES the prevalence of trauma

RECOGNIZES how trauma affects ALL individuals in the school (district, system and community) INCLUDING its own workforce

RESISTS re-traumatization

RESPOND BY putting this knowledge into practice

Source: SAMHSA (2014)
Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):
When little people are overwhelmed by **BIG EMOTIONS**, it's our job to share **OUR CALM**, not to join their chaos.

- L.R. Knost.
Doing our “P.A.R.T.”

Presence

Attunement

Resonance

Trust

(Social Engagement System Activation)

Source: Dan Siegel, MD
"This really is an innovative approach, but I'm afraid we can't consider it. It's never been done before."
3 Primary Ways to Help Kids w/Developmental Trauma Calm

Healthy Touch

Movement
(Rhythms/Music – Sensory Integration)

Breathing
Promising Practices...
Promising Practices...
Promising Practices...
What about US?

“Imperfections are not inadequacies; they are reminders that we’re all in this together.”

- Brene Brown
COMPASSION FOR YOURSELF IS KEY

WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

Its three components are:

- **Self-kindness**: Being gentle and helpful to yourself.
- **Mindfulness**: Having emotional clarity about yourself.
- **Understanding common humanity**: Remembering that all humans are imperfect.

(Source: Kristin Neff, Ph.D.)
“I had an epiphany.”
IRRATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Rational Numbers on a Number Line

- Numbers to the left of zero are less than zero
- Zero is neither positive or negative
- Numbers to the right of zero are greater than zero
Self-care is not selfish. It's self-respect.
21 Days to a More Impactful YOU

Movement Self-Care Challenge

1. Ditch Habits, Create Practices
2. Stay Hydrated Regularly... With H2O!
3. Practice 20-20-20 Vision
4. Breathe Low and Slow
5. Spaciousness is Essential for Self-Care
6. Go Screen-Free
7. Connecting to Your Whole Self
8. Give Yourself 10-15 Minutes of Spaciousness
9. Go Pee - Join the Self-Care Revolution
10. Building Resilience
11. Connecting to Others
12. Get Outside and Take a Fresh Air Break
13. Invite Poetry into Your Life
14. Connection between Mind, Body, and Spirit
15. 1 Minute of Breathing... With Your Hands!
16. Don't Eat Lunch at Your Desk
17. You are Not Your Performance
18. Make the Time and Space to THINK BIG
19. The Rule of Five
20. Put Your Oxygen Mask On First!
21. You Did It!
CONTRIBUTE
SHOWING GRATITUDE IS ONE OF THE SIMPLEST YET MOST POWERFUL THINGS HUMANS CAN DO FOR EACH OTHER.

RANDY PAUSCH
The Unbroken...

There is a brokenness
out of which comes the unbroken,
a shatteredness
out of which blooms the unshatterable.
There is a sorrow
beyond all grief which leads to joy
and a fragility
out of whose depths emerges strength.
There is a hollow space too vast for
words
through which we pass with each loss,
out of whose darkness we are
sanctioned into being.
There is a cry deeper than all sound
whose serrated edges cut the heart
as we break open
to the place inside which is unbreakable
and whole
while learning to sing.

~ Rashani Rea
For the Road...

SHOW UP....
You ARE already “enough”
Apps for Android & iPhone
Apps for Android & iPhone

How many times a day do you check your phone?

Find out, with Checky

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