

**Making Peace with the Past: The Impact of Emotional Trauma  
on Elder Well-Being and the Importance of Trauma-Informed Care**

**The Eden Alternative International Conference  
May, 2016**

Numerous studies report on the importance of considering and addressing emotional trauma for well-being throughout the lifespan, but attention to Elder mental health issues across the continuum of care has lagged behind in both research and practice. Increased sensitivity to this complex issue and the use of person-directed, trauma-informed interventions can improve quality of life for Elders and their care partners. Resolving earlier trauma supports individuals and families in completing the tasks of Elderhood, including making peace, and facilitates the experience of true well-being in every domain.

Early trauma is associated with increased incidence of chronic illness and depression in Elderhood, a time when Elders seek meaning in their lives and to resolve long-standing issues. This session explores how person-directed, trauma-informed treatments can be used with Elders and care partners to integrate mind, body, and spirit, easing anxiety and depression and supporting The Eden Alternative Domains of Well-Being™. Case studies will emphasize efficacy as well as explore mental health issues as they present in different care settings, and how to harness the unique gifts of this developmental stage.

**About the Presenter:**

Lisa Kendall is a social work psychotherapist and clinical gerontologist who has worked with Elders and care partners for over thirty years in home health care, adult day program, hospital, and nursing home settings. In her private therapy practice, she works with Elders, care partners, and others who live with chronic health and cognitive issues, and supports healing for survivors of trauma and loss.

Lisa is committed to using person-directed, trauma-informed therapies, including EMDR, and strength-based, person-directed approaches to maximize well-being for clients and their families. She also teaches the Fieldwork class for the Ithaca College Gerontology Institute, and serves on the Cornell University President's Advisory Council on Work and Family Affairs.

As an Educator and Mentor for The Eden Alternative, Lisa has a special interest in care of people living with dementia and in supporting well-being for the entire care partner team.



## Contact Information

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Website: [www.LisaKendallCounseling.com](http://www.LisaKendallCounseling.com)

On Twitter: @LisaKCounseling  
On LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/lisakendallcounseling](http://www.linkedin.com/in/lisakendallcounseling)  
On Facebook: Lisa Kendall Counseling  
Facebook Group: Care Partner Connection

**You can hear Lisa talk about trauma resolution in Elderhood  
in this short interview with WRVO Public Radio, at:  
<http://wrvo.org/post/theres-still-time-work-through-trauma-your-elder-years>**

## National Resources

The ACE Study (Adverse Childhood Events)	<a href="http://www.cestudy.org">www.cestudy.org</a>
Clear Path Healing Arts Center	<a href="http://www.clearpathhealingarts.com">www.clearpathhealingarts.com</a>
The Eden Alternative	<a href="http://www.edenalt.org">www.edenalt.org</a>
EMDR Institute	<a href="http://www.emdr.com">www.emdr.com</a>
Family Caregiver Alliance	<a href="http://www.caregiver.org">www.caregiver.org</a>
National Center for Trauma-Informed Care	<a href="mailto:NCTIC@NASMHPD.org">NCTIC@NASMHPD.org</a>
National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine (NICABM)	<a href="http://www.nicabm.com">www.nicabm.com</a>
Post-Traumatic Growth	<a href="http://www.posttraumaticgrowth.com">www.posttraumaticgrowth.com</a>
Trauma Center at Justice Resource Institute	<a href="http://www.traumacenter.org">www.traumacenter.org</a>
Trauma Informed Care Project	<a href="http://www.traumainformedcareproject.org">www.traumainformedcareproject.org</a>



**Making Peace with the Past:  
The Impact of Emotional Trauma  
on Elder Well-Being**

*(and the Importance of  
Trauma-Informed Care!)*

THE EDEN ALTERNATIVE  
2016

LISA A. KENDALL, LCSW-R, CSW-G

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**Jumping Right In!**

- Defining trauma
- Benefits of resolving painful memories during Elderhood
- Person-directed care strategies
- Considering the Domains of Well-Being

*... Please care for yourself and each other  
during our time together!*

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**What is Trauma?**

*“Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically **or emotionally** harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being”*

(SAMHSA, 2014)

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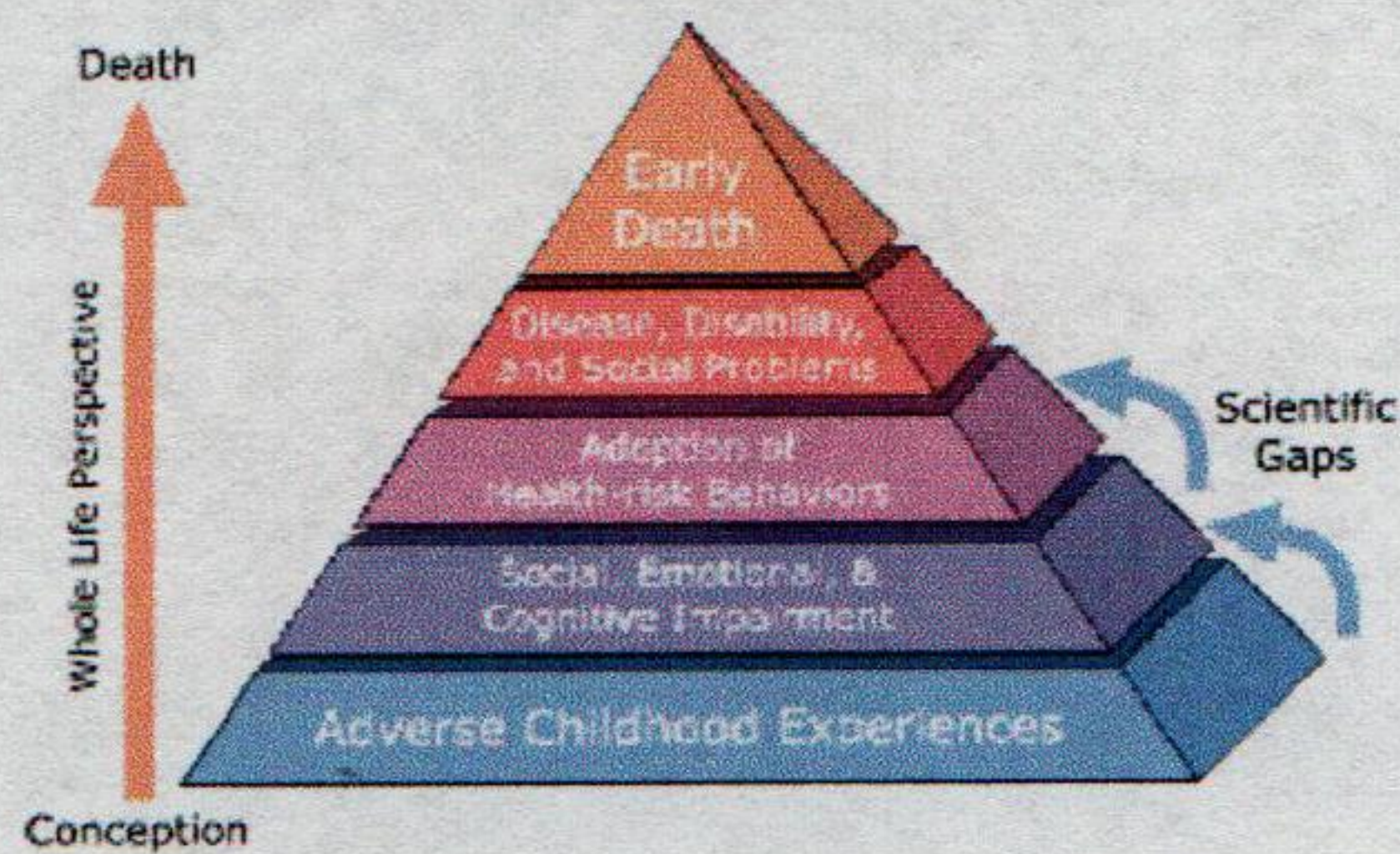
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**The physical and emotional consequences of unresolved trauma across the lifespan**



Adverse Childhood Events Study, Kaiser-Permanente

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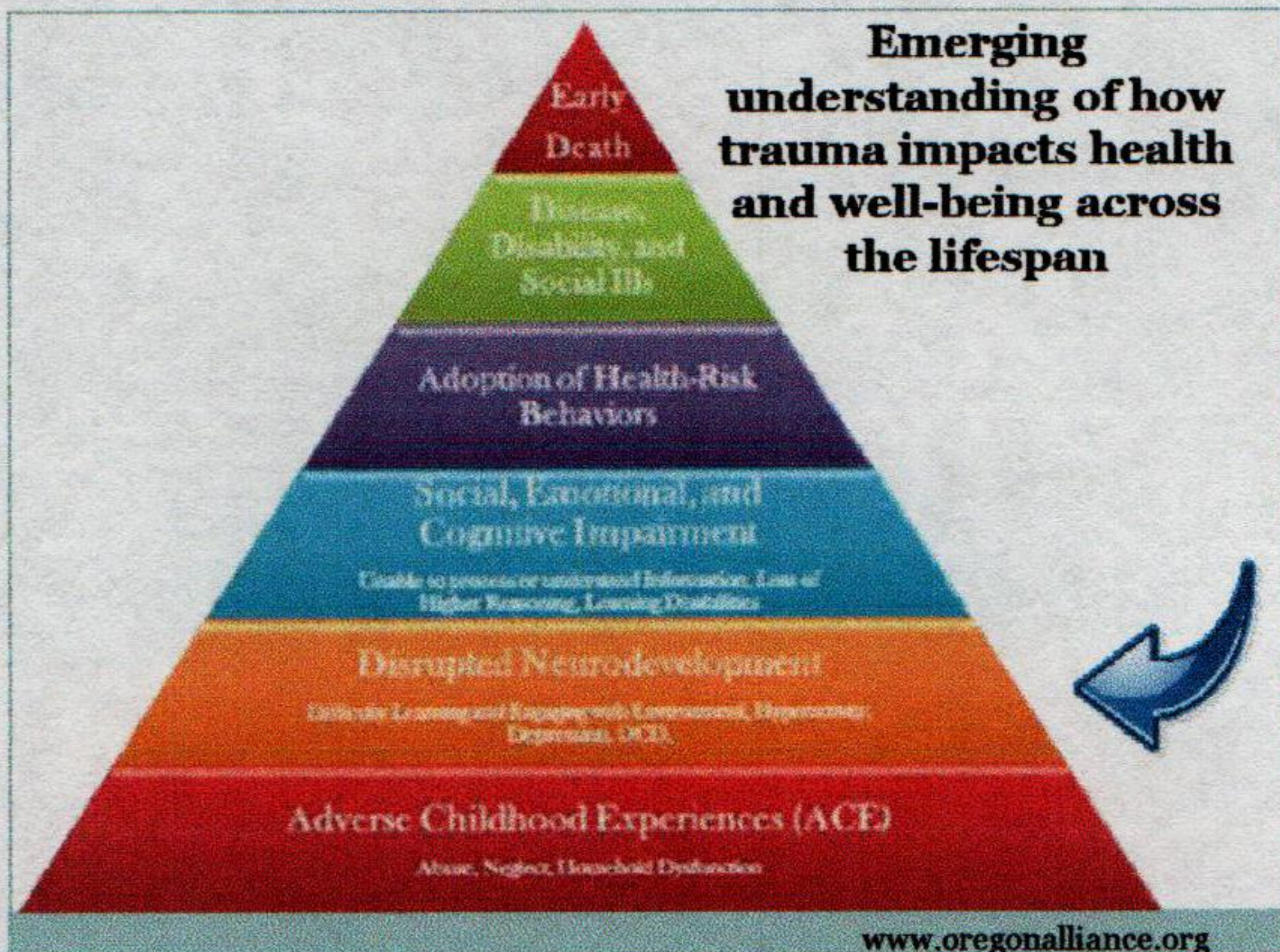
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**Emerging understanding of how trauma impacts health and well-being across the lifespan**



www.oregonalliance.org

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Finding Your ACE Score

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often "swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?"  
or  
"act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often "push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?"  
or  
"ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever "touch or handle you in a sexual way or force you to do a sexual act?"  
or  
"attempt or actually have sexual contact with you?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you often or very often feel that:  
"No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?"  
or  
"Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you often or very often feel that:  
"You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?"  
or  
"Your parents were so drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was your mother or stepmother:  
"often or very often drunk, drugged, slapped, or had something thrown at her?"  
or  
"sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?"  
or  
"ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?"  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did a household member go to prison?  
Yes:  No:  If yes enter 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Now add up your "Yes" answers: \_\_\_\_\_ This is your ACE Score.

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## Finding Your ACE Score

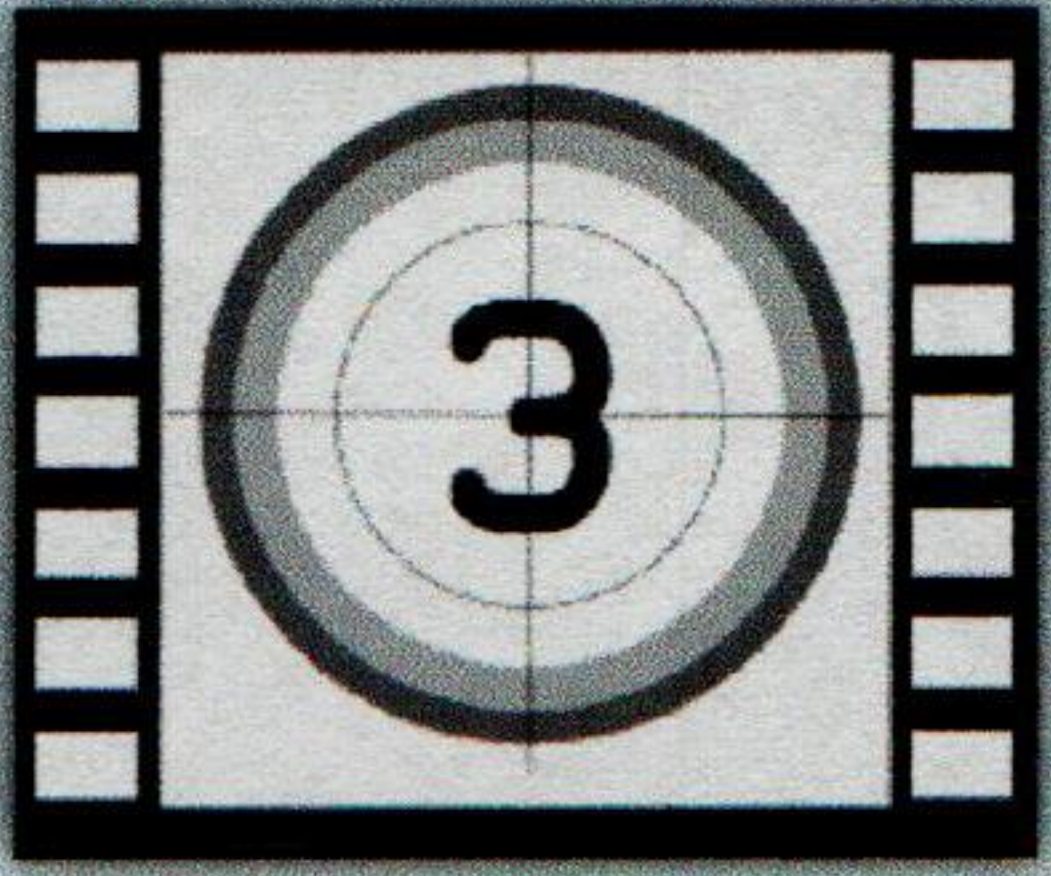
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Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
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Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?  
**or**  
**Ever** hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?  
Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you **ever**...  
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?  
**or**  
Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?  
Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you **often or very often** feel that ...  
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?  
**or**  
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?  
Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you **often or very often** feel that ...  
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?  
**or**  
Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?  
Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Were your parents **ever** separated or divorced?  
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7. Was your mother or stepmother:  
**Often or very often** pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?  
**or**  
**Sometimes, often, or very often** kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?  
**or**  
**Ever** repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?  
Yes No If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
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**Now add up your "Yes" answers: \_\_\_\_\_ This is your ACE Score.**



**Survival Instincts and the Still Face**



Dr. Ed Tronick, U-Mass.

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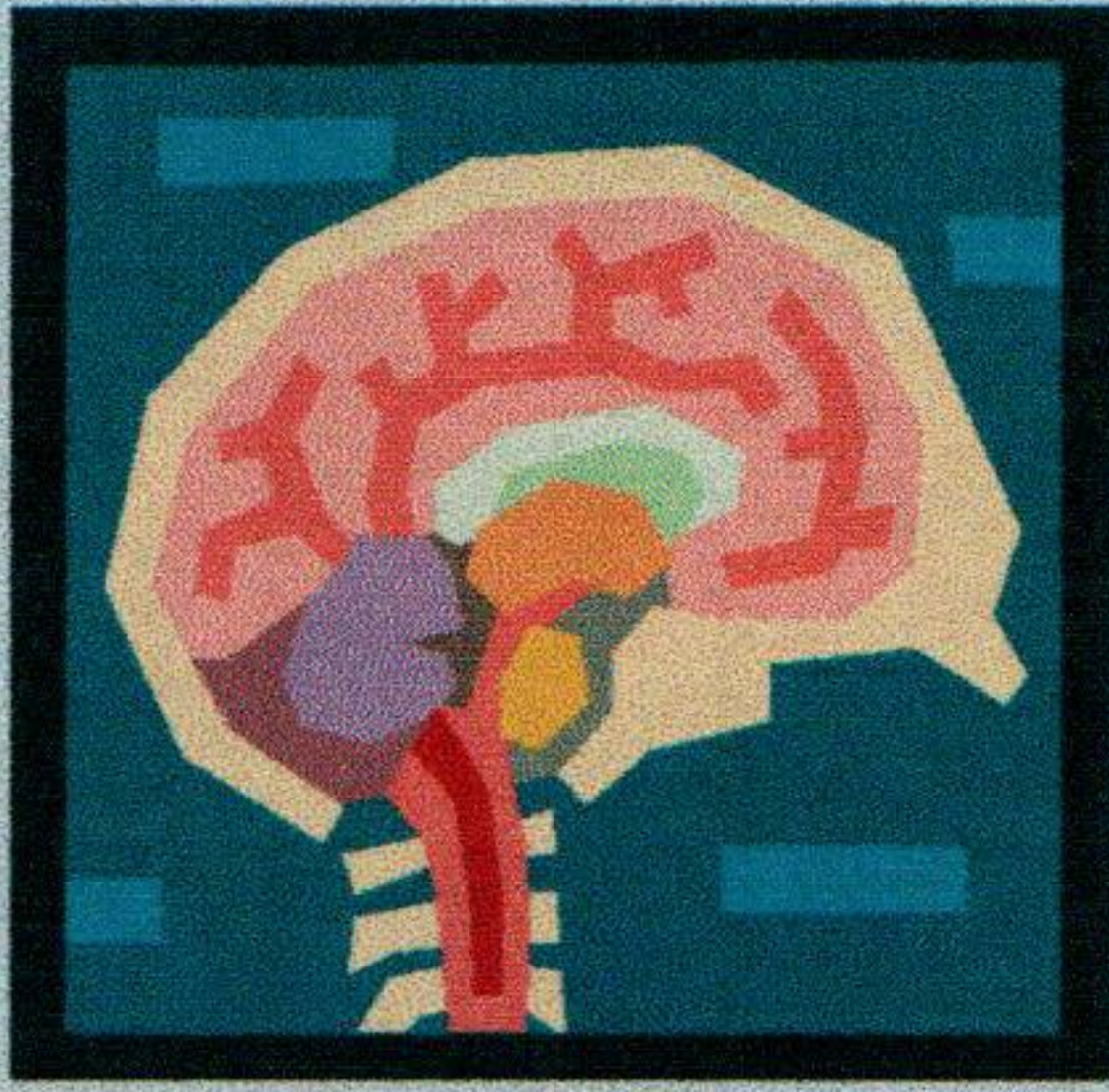
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**The New Brain Science...**




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**We Create Stories...**



Negative Beliefs About Ourselves...

- Responsibility
- Safety
- Value
- Powerlessness

... or the World




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### COMMON SYMPTOMS OF UNRESOLVED TRAUMA

- Anxiety, panic attacks
- Intrusive thoughts, flashbacks
- Shame, exaggerated emotions, irritability, mood fluctuations
- Disorientation
- Hypervigilance, avoidance behaviors
- Attractions to dangerous situations or high-risk behaviors
- Nausea, headaches, dizziness, trembling, fainting
- Heart palpitations, sleep disturbances, nightmares
- Extreme sensitivity to heat or cold

From www.thebody.com

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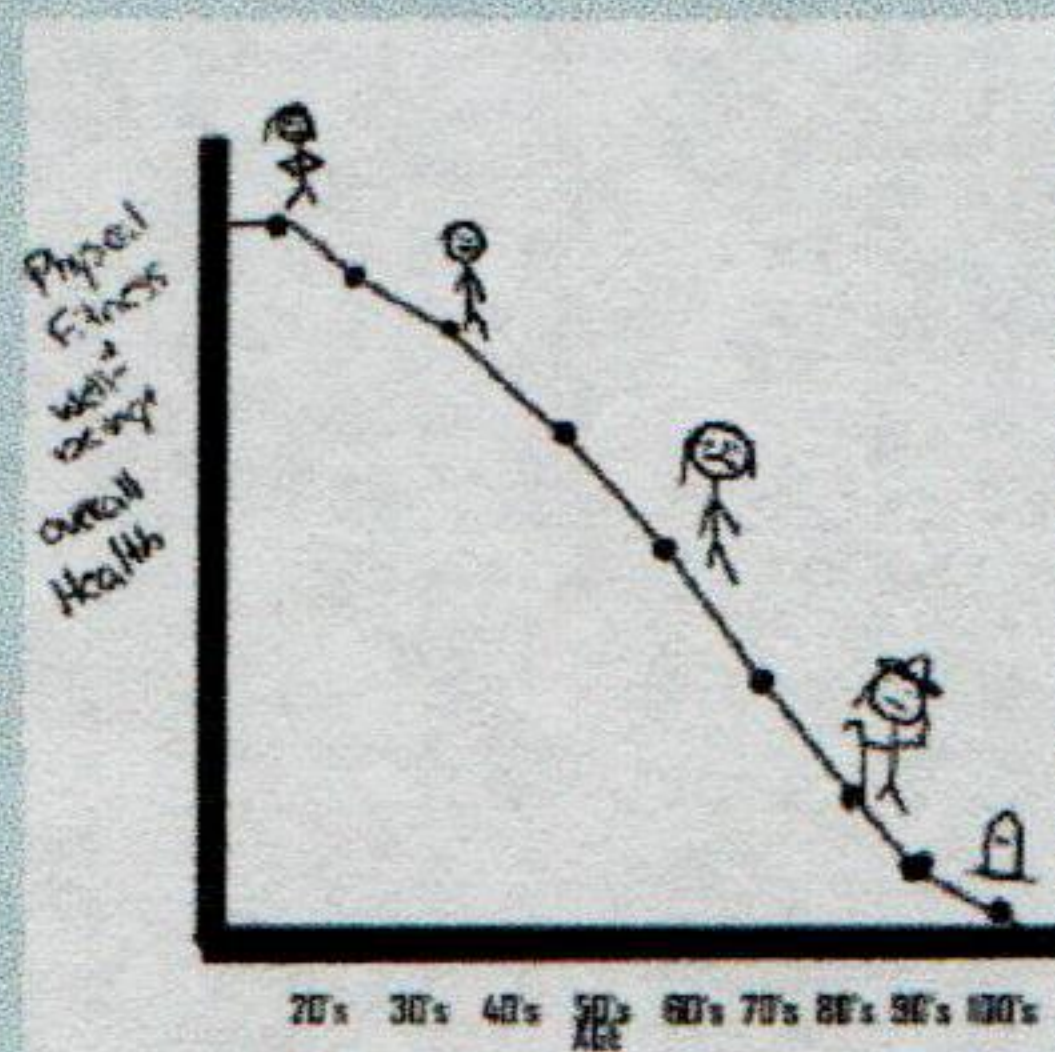
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### Elderhood: Challenges



- Pervasive Cultural Ageism
- Life Role Changes
- Care of Others
- Physical Health Issues
- Losses

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### A New Language for Aging

- an Elder is...
- Elderhood is...
- Care is...
- Care Partnership




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Stage	Psychosocial Crisis	Basic Virtue	Age
1	Trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Infancy ( 0 to1 ½)
2	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Early Childhood ( 1 ½ to3)
3	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Play Age ( 3 to 5)
4	Industry vs. inferiority	Competency	School Age ( 5 to 12)
5	Ego identity vs. Role Confusion	Fidelity	Adolescence (12 to 18)
6	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love	Young Adult ( 18 to 40)
7	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Adult hood( 40 to 65)
8	Ego integrity vs. despair	Wisdom	Maturity ( 65+)

McLeod, S. A. (2013). Erik Erikson. Retrieved from [www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html) 1/30/2016




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### What is Meaningful in Old Age?

**Dr. Bill Thomas: Three Tasks of Elderhood**

- Peace Maker
- Wisdom Giver
- Legacy Creator



What are Old People for?  
How Elders Will Save the World  
(2004)

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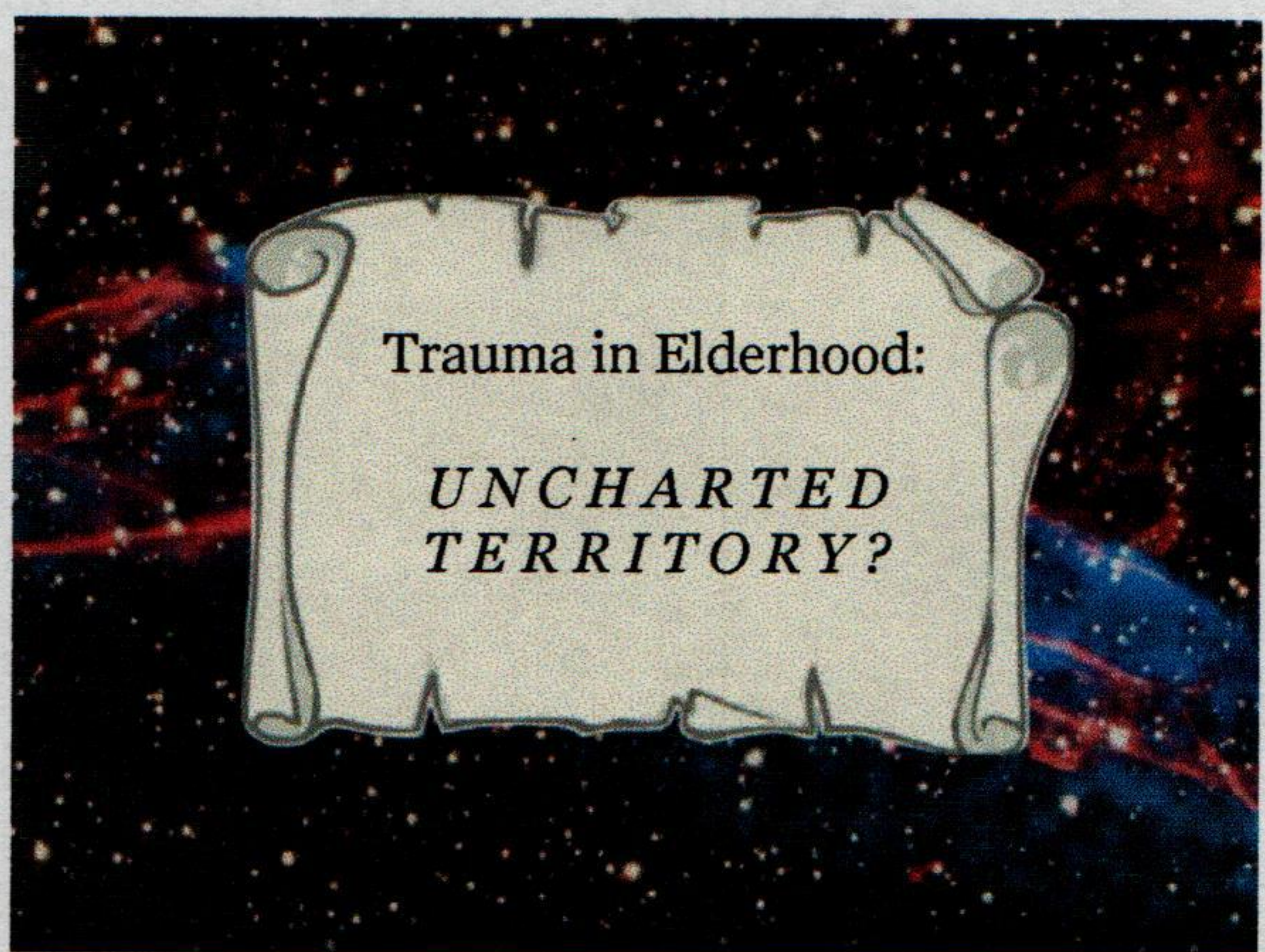
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Trauma in Elderhood:  
*UNCHARTED  
TERRITORY?*

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**What is at the Heart of this Pain?**



*"MRS. JONES HAS ALWAYS BEEN DIFFICULT..."*

*"JUST DO HER CARE AND GET OUT OF THERE AS FAST AS YOU CAN."*

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**What Have You Seen that Could be a Sign of Painful Memories or Unresolved Trauma?**




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**Common Presentations of Unresolved Trauma in Elders & their Care Partners**

- Extreme reactions to seemingly small issues
- Unwillingness to speak up, passivity, low self-esteem
- Physical reactivity to personal care, easily startled
- Depression, pessimism, paranoia, suicidal thoughts
- Anxiety, panic, nightmares
- History of broken relationships
- Exploiting others or allowing exploitation
- Anger, combativeness
- Forgetfulness, confusion, disorientation
- Sexual acting out
- Substance abuse, addiction
- Physical complaints, unexplained pain




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### The Importance of Trauma-Informed Care



*"MRS. JONES REALLY STRUGGLES WITH BATH TIME..."*

*(SHE WAS SEXUALLY ABUSED WHEN SHE WAS A YOUNG GIRL)"*

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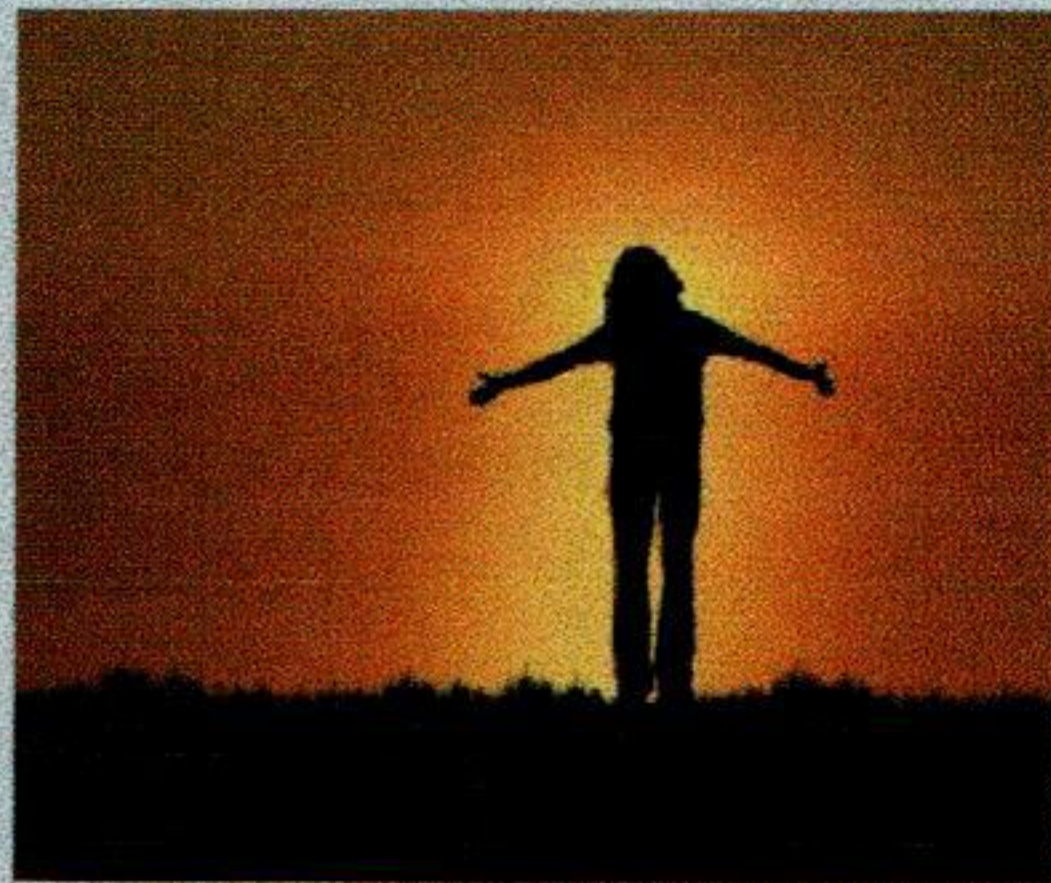
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### Offering Opportunities to Resolve Painful Memories



- Fulfills developmental tasks
- Supports making peace with the past
- Built on idea that healing and growth are possible during Elderhood
- Increases well-being

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### Trauma Informed Care is...

*"an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma.*

*Trauma Informed Care also emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both consumers and providers, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment."*

From: the Trauma Informed Care Project: [www.traumainformedcareproject.org](http://www.traumainformedcareproject.org)

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### PC-PTSD Screen

In your life, have you ever had any experience that was so frightening, horrible, or upsetting that, in the past month, you...

1. **Have had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to?** YES /NO
2. **Tried hard not to think about it or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it?** YES /NO
3. **Were constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?** YES/ NO
4. **Felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?** YES/NO

• **Scoring:** The optimal cutoff score for the PC-PTSD is 3. If sensitivity is of greater concern than efficiency, a cutoff score of 2 is recommended.

SAMHSA TIP 57

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### What Next?

- **Know Resources for Referral**
  - Behavioral Health Providers in Organization and in the Community
- **Create a Safe and Supportive Environment**
  - For Clients/Patients/Service recipients
  - For Employees
    - Care Partners can have trauma, and painful memories, too! See Nancy Kusmaul and Deborah Waldrop's published work.

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### CARE ISSUES THAT COULD CAUSE RETRAUMATIZATION



- Isolating or restraining individuals
- Mislabeled symptoms
- Being overly authoritative or confrontational
- Challenging/discounting reports of abuse/trauma
- Allowing abuse by others
- Labeling behavior/feelings as pathological
- Being unaware that traumatic history significantly affects one's life

SAMHSA Quick Tip 57

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### Trauma-Informed Care

... and how it supports Person-Directed Care

- Honors the tasks of Elderhood
- Supports healthy boundaries for care partners
- Honors personal experience & meaning
- Relies on client's choice of event to process and perception of the event
- Relies on client's creation of inner resources and reinforces strengths
- Client has control over process

*-- we are all capable of healing!*

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## Approaches to Trauma-Informed Care

FOR ELDERS WITH AND WITHOUT COGNITIVE ISSUES

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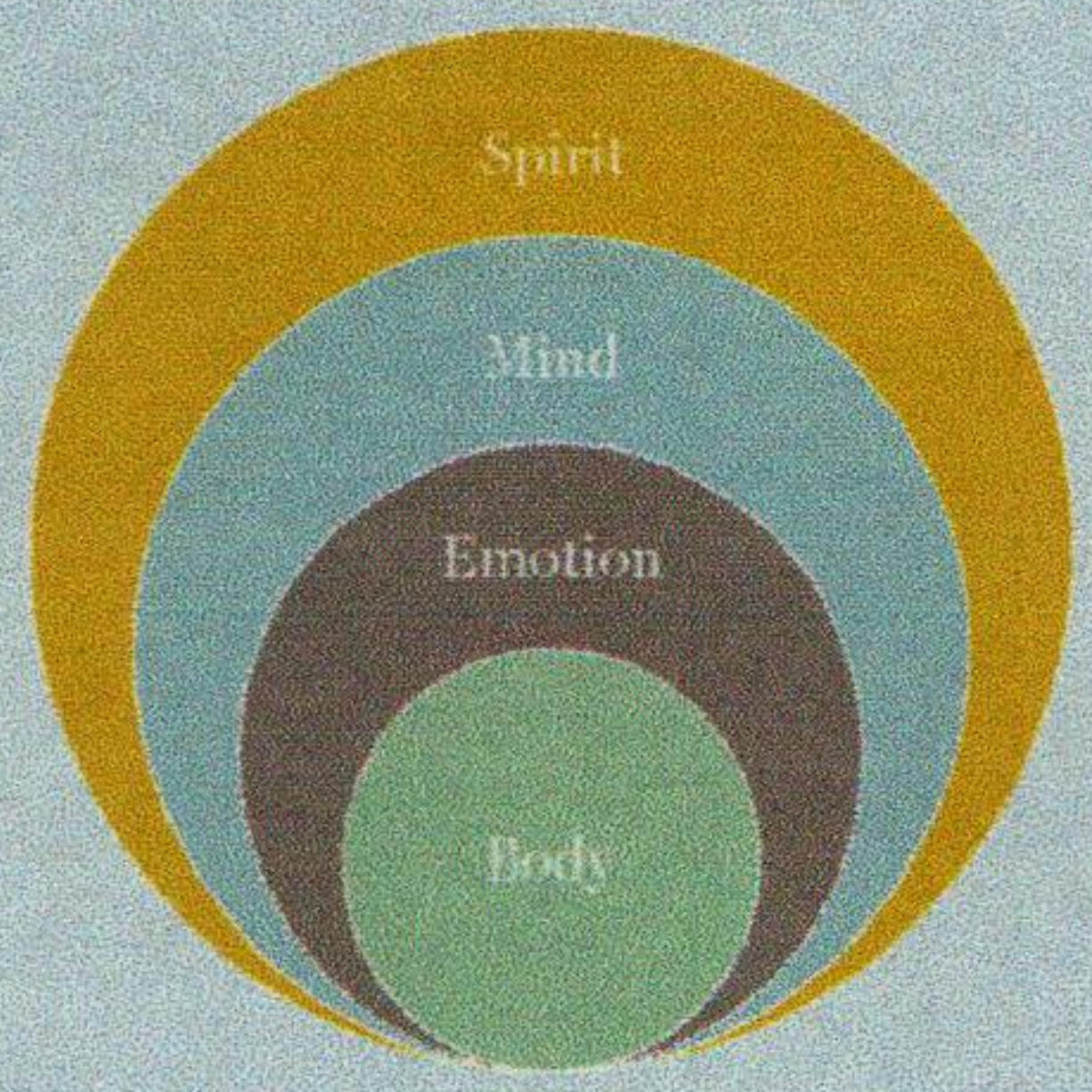
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### The Goal: Integration



The diagram consists of four concentric circles. The outermost circle is yellow and labeled 'Spirit'. Inside it is a light blue circle labeled 'Mind'. Inside that is a brown circle labeled 'Emotion'. The innermost circle is green and labeled 'Body'.

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**SENSORY STIMULATION**

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<b>SPARK OF LIFE</b>	<b>SNOEZELEN ROOM</b>
 <p style="font-size: small;">Dementia Care Australia</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">www.snoezeleninfo.com</p>

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**EXPRESSIVE ARTS**

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<b>DRUMMING</b>	<b>THERAPEUTIC ART</b>
	

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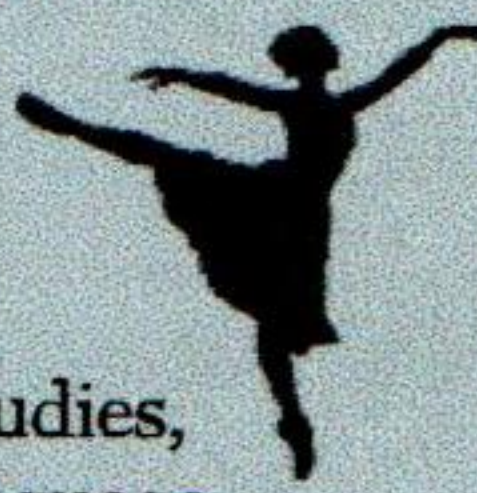

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**EXPRESSIVE ARTS, Continued**

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<b>MOVEMENT/DANCE</b>	<b>THEATER</b>
<p style="font-size: small;">Pennebaker &amp; Krantz found movement + writing effective*</p>  <p style="font-size: small;">*Limits of studies, limits of language</p>	

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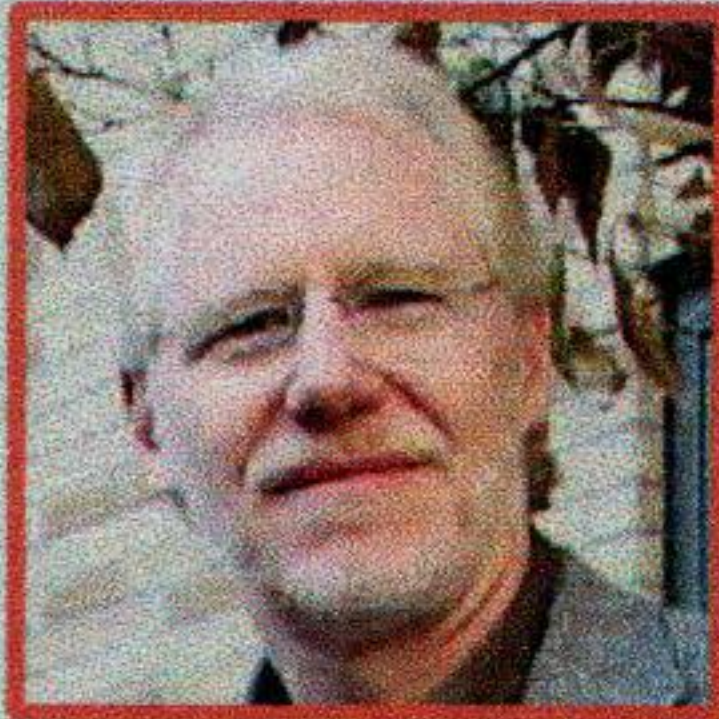

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**VALIDATION**

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EXPERIENTIAL	VALIDATION THERAPY
<p><b>Dr. Al Power</b></p> 	<p><b>Naomi Feil</b></p> 

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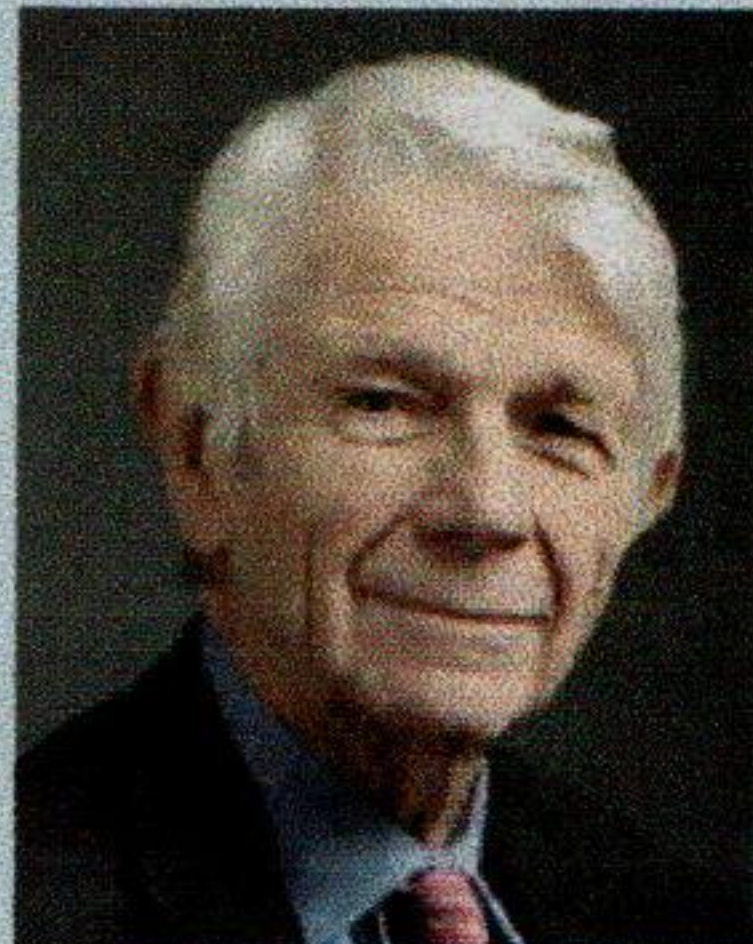

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**THE POWER OF STORY**

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LIFE REVIEW	LIFE WRITING
 <p><b>Dr. Robert Butler</b></p>	 <p><b>Dr. Myra Sabir</b></p>

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**PROCESSING TRAUMA**

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TOP-DOWN	BOTTOM-UP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindfulness Meditation</li> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Qi Gong</li> <li>• Tai Chi</li> <li>• Tapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breath</li> <li>• Movement</li> <li>• Touch</li> <li>• Massage</li> </ul>

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### Therapies for PTSD

#### Individual Psychotherapy

- Behavioral or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

#### Group Therapy

#### Medication

- Anti-anxiety
- Anti-depressants
- Andrenergic agents (lower arousal in adrenal system)

The Trauma Center

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### Growth in Elderhood...



... and after trauma

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### The Eden Alternative Domains of Well-Being™

Considering  
Well-Being  
in  
Elderhood

[www.EdenAlt.org](http://www.EdenAlt.org)




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The Eden Alternative Domains of Well-Being™

Domain of Well-Being	What Might Support this Domain?	What Might Undermine this Domain?
Identity		
Growth		
Autonomy		
Security		
Connectedness		
Meaning		
Joy		

- IDENTITY - about being well-known; having personhood; individuality; having a history
- GROWTH - development; enrichment; expanding; evolving
- AUTONOMY - liberty; self-determination; choice; freedom
- SECURITY - freedom from doubt, anxiety, or fear; safety; privacy; dignity; respect
- CONNECTEDNESS - belonging; engagement; being involved; feeling connected to time, place, and nature
- MEANING – what is significant to us; where we have heart; hope; value; purpose; or sacredness
- JOY – what gives us happiness; pleasure; delight; contentment; enjoyment



The Eden Alternative Domains of Well-Being

www.edenalt.org

Domain	What Might Support?	What Might Undermine?
Identity		
Growth		
Autonomy		
Security		
Connectedness		
Meaning		
Joy		

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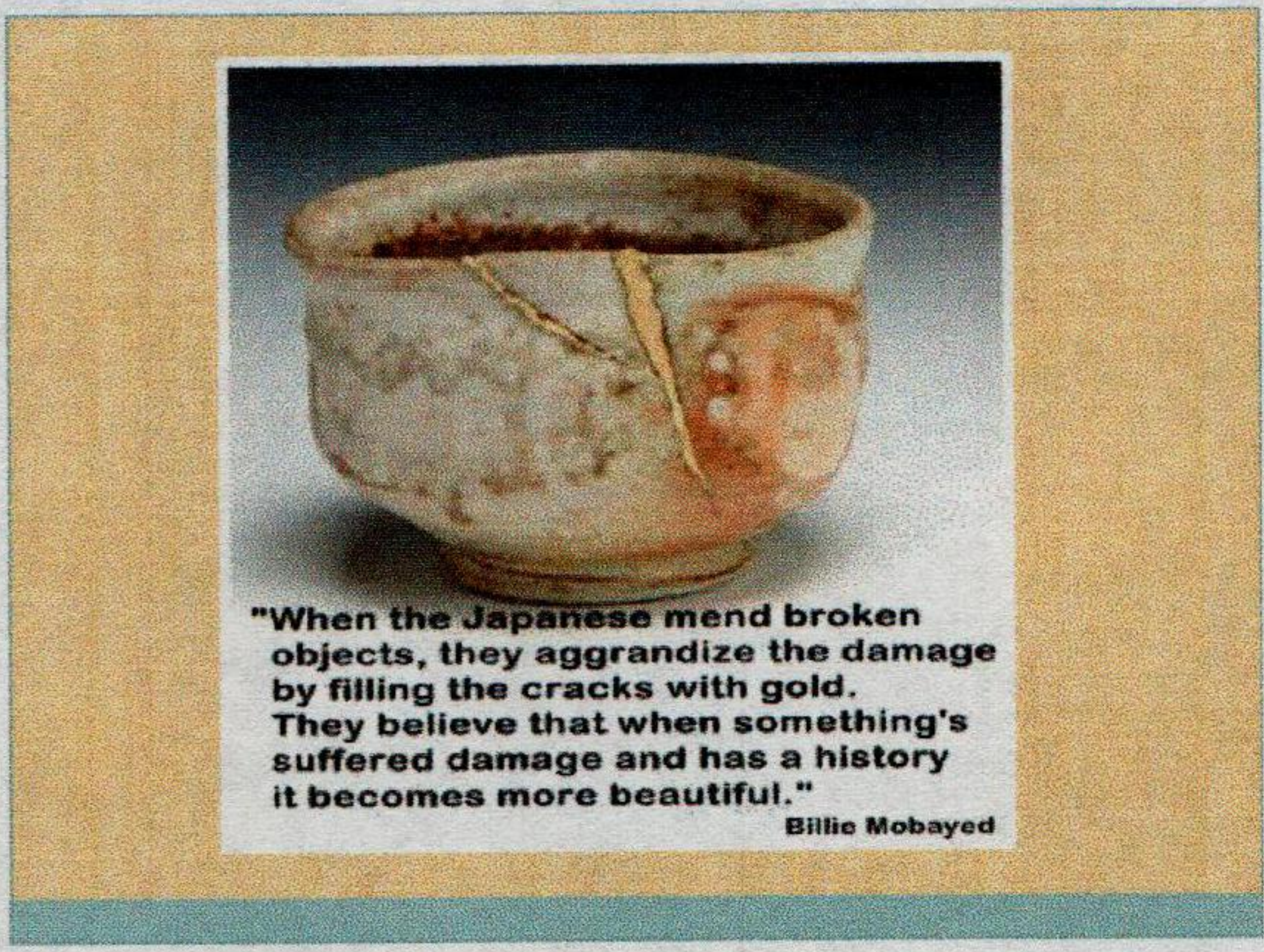
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**Trauma Growth:  
Harnessing Elders' Strengths**

- How has this experience shaped your identity?
- How have you coped with these challenges?
- What did you learn from that experience?
- How have you grown as result of \_\_\_?
- What would you tell someone else who's been through what you have?
- What gives you strength?
- What is meaningful to you now?
- What gives you joy?
- Who was there for you?
- What do you need to feel safe now?

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### Summary

#### Resolving Trauma in Elderhood...

- Fulfills developmental tasks across the lifespan as defined by Thomas and Erikson
- Makes peace with the past through life review
- Acknowledges that Healing and growth are possible during Elderhood
- Increases well-being and the ability to care for self and for others
- May improve interactions with care providers

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### Revisiting our Objectives... Did we:

- List three benefits of resolving painful memories during Elderhood
- Define trauma and list 5 treatment strategies that support person-directed care
- Utilize "The Eden Alternative 7 Domains of Well-Being™" to understand and assess the impact of unresolved trauma

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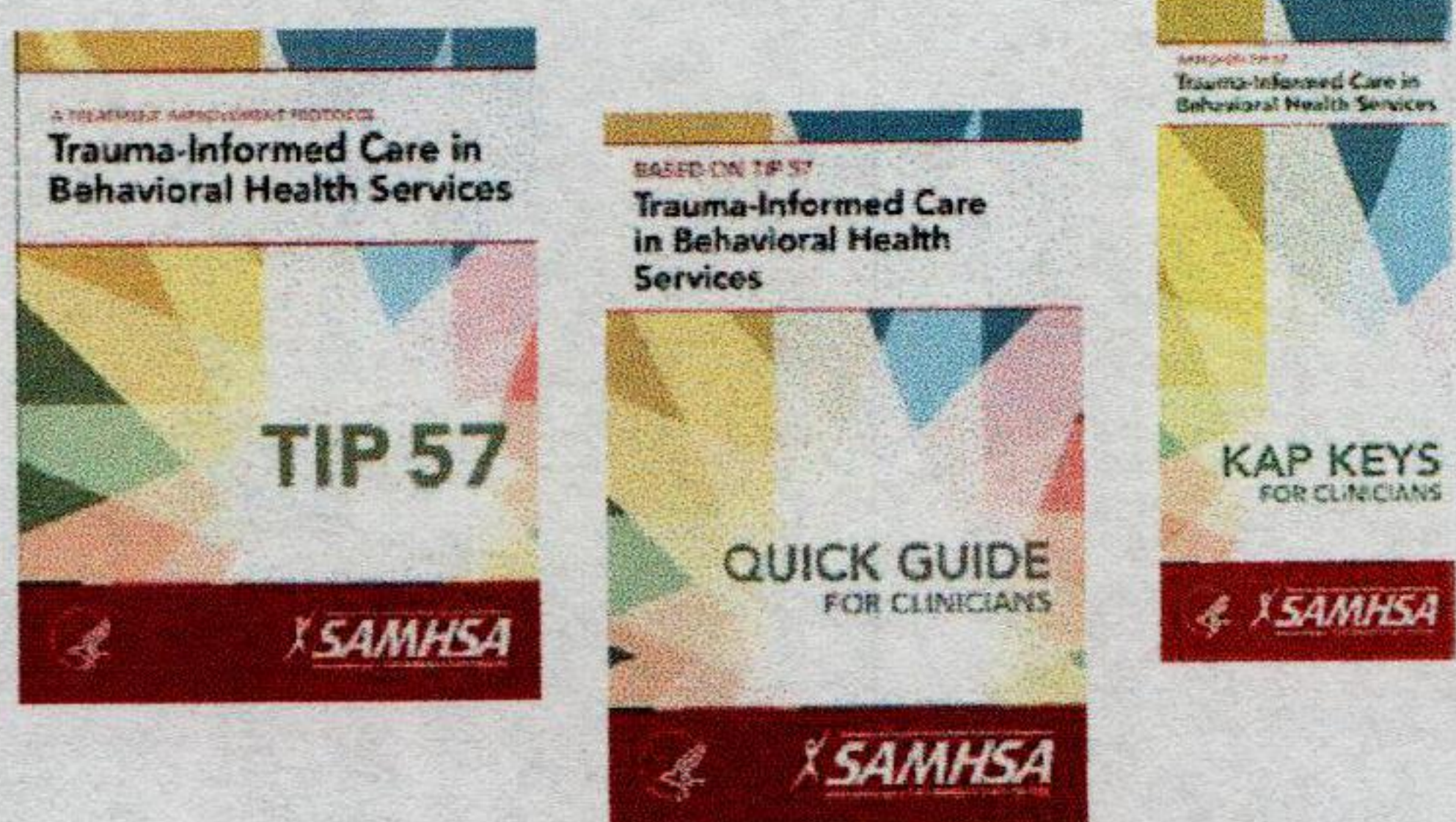
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### Resources: [www.store.samhsa.gov](http://www.store.samhsa.gov)




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**Guided Imagery Resources**



Check out:  
**Dr. Monica A. Frank -**  
**[www.excelatlife.com](http://www.excelatlife.com)**

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[www.LisaKendallCounseling.com](http://www.LisaKendallCounseling.com)

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