

Trauma Reflection Worksheet for Peer Support Specialists

Part 1: Exploring Your Existing Knowledge About Trauma

1. How would you define trauma?

Part 2: Exploring the Types of Trauma

2. What are some examples of traumatic experiences in each of the categories?

"Big T trauma" refers to significant, major, or severe traumatic experiences. These are often events that involve life-threatening situations, extreme violence, or situations that can have a profound and lasting impact on an individual's physical and psychological well-being.

"Little t trauma" refers to less severe traumatic experiences that may not be as immediately life-threatening or physically damaging, but can still have a negative impact on an individual's well-being and functioning. They can accumulate over time and cause emotional distress.

Big T traumas:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Little t traumas:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Type of Trauma	Example:
Acute trauma refers to a single traumatic incident.	
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic or stressful events that occur during childhood and have the potential to negatively impact a person's health and well-being later in life.	
Chronic trauma refers to the ongoing exposure to traumatic events or stressors over an extended period.	

Complex trauma involves exposure to multiple and interrelated traumatic events, often within the context of relationships, especially during childhood.	
Life transition trauma refers to trauma arising from significant life changes.	
Vicarious trauma , or secondary trauma, refers to the emotional, psychological, and physical impact experienced by individuals who are indirectly exposed to the traumatic experiences of others.	
Historical trauma can be seen in the experiences of Indigenous populations whose ancestors were subjected to colonization, dispossession, and cultural suppression.	
Intergenerational trauma refers to the transmission of trauma effects across generations.	
Collective trauma is the aftermath of a traumatic event that affects an entire community.	
Post-incarceration related trauma (PICS) is used to describe the psychological and emotional challenges that individuals may face after being released.	

4. How might people face trauma during incarceration and afterwards?

Part 3: Peer Support and Trauma

5. What do you think we mean by trauma-informed care in peer support?

6. Why would understanding someone's trauma history and impacts be important for your work as a peer support specialist?

TYPES OF TRAUMA

Traumatic events are typically organized into two, three or seven categories. There may also be overlap between the categories. Despite these distinctions, when we talk about trauma, we are referring to what happens within our bodies during and after the event—not the particular event itself.

2 TYPES

"BIG T"

"LITTLE T"

7 TYPES

LIFE TRANSITIONS

VICARIOUS TRAUMA

COMPLEX TRAUMA

HISTORICAL TRAUMA

INTER-GENERATIONAL
TRAUMA

COLLECTIVE TRAUMA

ACUTE TRAUMA

3 TYPES

ACUTE

CHRONIC

COMPLEX

Types of Trauma & Sample Examples			
<p>It's important to note that the impact of trauma can vary widely based on an individual's personal history, resilience, coping mechanisms, and support systems. Both big T and little t traumas can have lasting effects on mental and emotional well-being, and seeking appropriate support is crucial regardless of the severity of the trauma experienced.</p>			
Type of Trauma	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Acute trauma	Witnessing a serious car accident.	Surviving a natural disaster.	Being physically assaulted.
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse	Neglect	Household instability
Chronic trauma.	Living in an area with ongoing gun violence.	Enduring a verbally abusive relationship.	Facing financial instability for years.
Complex trauma	Suffering childhood abuse from a caregiver.	Experiencing multiple violent incidents in a war zone.	Surviving domestic violence over time.
Life transition trauma	Coping with the death of a loved one.	Going through a difficult divorce.	Adjusting to a new place immigration.
Vicarious trauma	A therapist experiencing emotional stress due to hearing clients' traumatic stories.	A journalist covering distressing news stories.	A social worker dealing with child abuse cases.
Historical trauma	Indigenous communities affected by generational trauma from colonization.	Descendants of slaves facing the ongoing effects of historical racism.	Cultural suppression impacting generations after war.
Intergenerational trauma	A child experiencing emotional struggles due to a parent's unresolved trauma.	Trauma-related behaviors being passed from one generation to the next.	Effects of a grandparent's wartime experiences influencing family dynamics.
Collective trauma	A community recovering from a terrorist attack.	Rebuilding a town after a devastating earthquake.	Recovering from the impact of a massive wildfire in a region.
Post-incarceration related trauma (PICS)	An individual struggling with anxiety and reintegration.	Coping with stigma and isolation after incarceration.	Difficulties finding employment and housing post-release.