

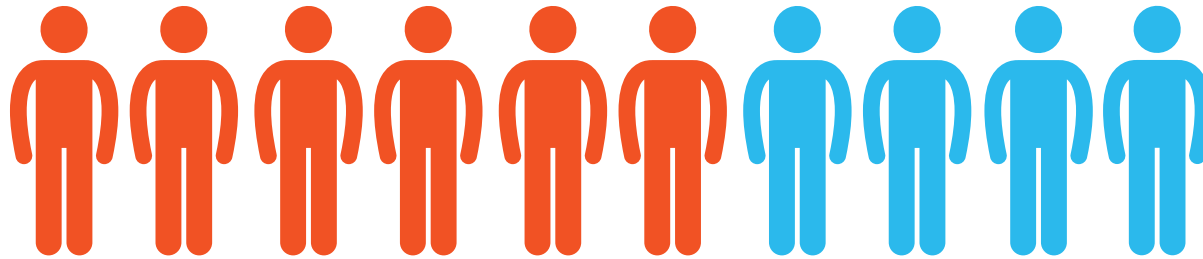
# Brief Education On Trauma



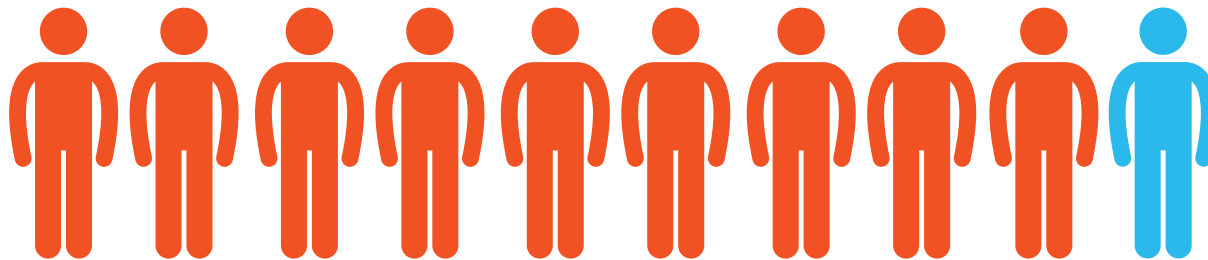
# WELCOME!

**Thanks for taking the time to talk  
with me about trauma.**

# Trauma is very common.



**Overall Population**



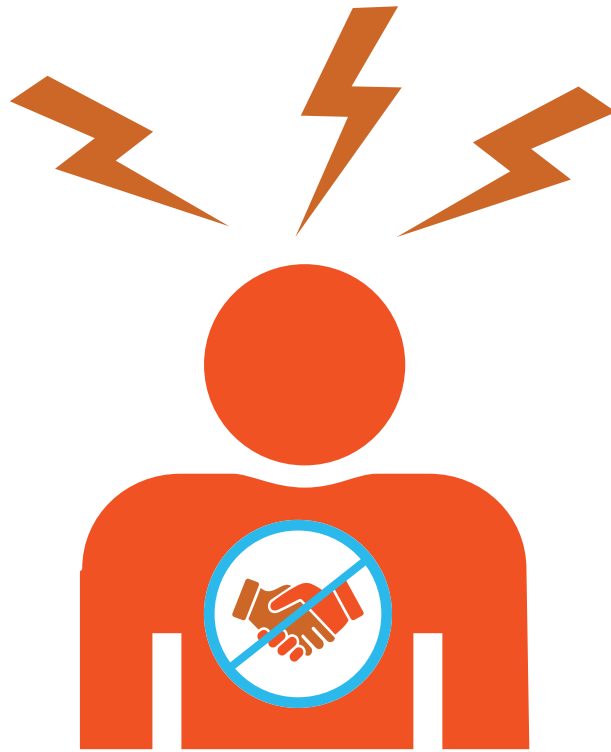
**In people with HIV or who have certain other chronic conditions, including SUD**

# Why are we talking with everyone about trauma?

## Trauma is very common:

- 6 out of 10 people have experienced a traumatic event during their lives.
- For people with HIV or who have certain other chronic conditions, including Substance Use Disorder, that number is even higher: 9 out of 10.

**Trauma can affect someone's life - even if it happened a long time ago.**



# Trauma can create challenges in someone's life - even if it happened a long time ago.

- Trauma can alter how a person sees themselves, their behaviors, and their emotions.
- For example, it can affect a person's ability to:
  - Control their reactions in stressful situations
  - Trust others and develop relationships
  - Hold a job
  - Take care of their health
  - And may even make them feel like they are “weird” or “crazy”

# What is trauma?



# What is trauma?

- Trauma is when something happens that a person experiences as harmful or life threatening, that then has a long-lasting impact on their thoughts, feelings, reactions, behaviors, and ultimately their well-being.
- What is traumatic to one person may not be traumatic to another person.
- For kids, trauma can be especially frightening.
- Sometimes a person even experiences trauma and doesn't remember it, especially if it happened when they were very young or it was a very severe kind of trauma.

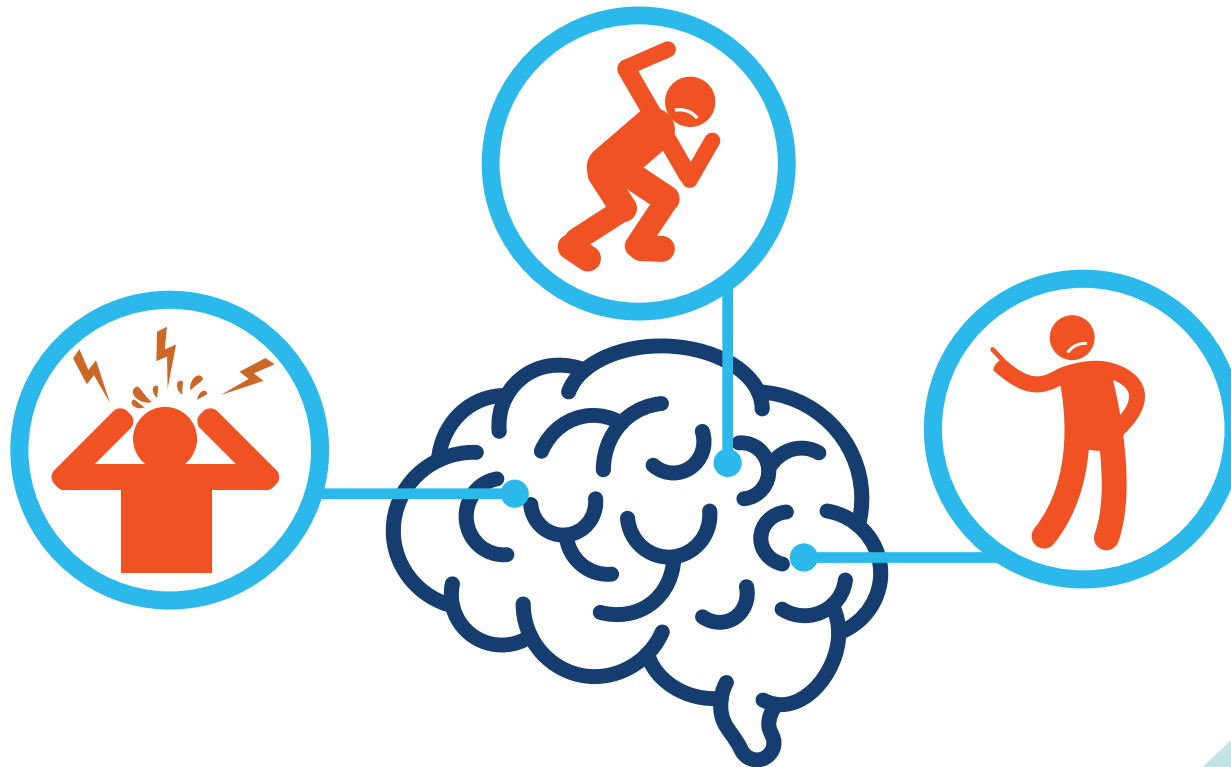
# Learning about trauma can help a person.



# Learning about trauma can help a person:

- Connect the dots between what happened to them in the past and the way they think, feel, react, and behave in the present
- Gain more control over their thoughts, feelings, reactions, and behaviors to give them more options for how they respond to different situations
- Better understand their reactions to stress and stressful situations
- Develop a more positive self-perception
- Handle relationships better

**Trauma has a lasting impact on the brain,  
making it very sensitive to feelings of  
stress, threat, and disrespect.**



# Trauma has a big impact on people.

- When a person experiences trauma, it has a lasting impact on their brain.
- Conscious or unconscious reminders of past traumatic events can cause them to have physical and emotional reactions that are very severe.
- Their brain also becomes extremely sensitive to feelings of **stress** and perceptions of **threat** and **disrespect**.

# Feelings of stress, threat, and disrespect can make someone very reactive.



**Those feelings can cause people who have experienced trauma to become very reactive, and they can get so upset to the point where they “explode” or go completely the other way and shut down.**

- When we say that people are sensitive to stress, it means that they may experience situations that others find mildly inconvenient or frustrating as completely overwhelming. Under many of these circumstances they may also feel disrespected, criticized, or ignored.

**Stressors:** Situations that make someone feel stressed, disrespected, frustrated, angry, scared, or upset and cause them to react in extreme ways.



# We refer to these situations that make someone feel stressed, disrespected, frustrated, angry, scared, or upset and can cause extreme reactions as **stressors**.

- For someone who has experienced trauma, a stressor may include a range of things, like:
  - Having to wait in a long, slow line at the grocery store
  - Their doctor is running 15 minutes behind schedule for their appointment
  - The internet goes down in the middle of a show they've been watching
  - A partner doesn't text to say they're going to be 20 minutes late
- These types of situations can cause someone who has experienced trauma to react in ways that may seem overly aggressive, explosive or withdrawn to others.

**Even if someone knows something is  
a stressor for them, it can make  
them feel bad.**



# Even if someone knows something is a stressor that might cause them to react in an explosive or shutdown manner:

- They may feel like they can't do anything about it because the whole thing seems so out of their control.
- They may think this is just “who I am,” or “what I do,” when in reality, that is not the case.
- This can cause a person to then have negative thoughts and feelings about themselves, other people and things that happen.

**This may lead to physical, emotional,  
& behavioral symptoms.**



# **A person who suffered a traumatic event may have physical, emotional, and/or behavioral symptoms, when they are exposed to stressors or reminders of trauma, such as:**

- Feeling intense anger or rage and reacting in a way that they later regret
- Feeling agitated, emotional, scared, or confused, and not being able to fully understand what's going on
- Withdrawing from others or “spacing out” a lot
- Avoiding certain people, places, or activities
- Feeling intense sadness or a sense of dread, to the point that the person can't leave their home or communicate with the outside world
- And having flashbacks and nightmares

These can all be symptoms of trauma.

**This can impact many areas that are important to one's life.**



# Trauma symptoms can impact many areas that are important to one's life, including:

- Getting or holding a job
- Having healthy relationships
- Taking care of one's health
- Going to the doctor
- Believing in the ability to make changes in one's life

**There are things a person can do  
to change the effects that trauma  
has on their life.**



# There are things a person can do to change the effect that trauma has on their life.

- For example, people can:
  - Understand how trauma can impact a person and how stressors work
  - Start noticing their own patterns and identifying their stressors
  - Learn techniques and skills to manage their reactions, especially in stressful situations
  - Learn to better understand and manage their emotions so that they and those close to them can have a more consistently calm and healthy environment

**We have some classes that help you  
learn these types of skills and how  
to apply them.**

# We have some classes that help you learn these types of skills and how to apply them.

- It's important to remember that people who have experienced trauma have a lot of strengths and skills
- And these classes will help you identify and build on those skills

**THANK YOU!**

- **What are your thoughts?**
- **Would you like to try classes to learn more about skills that can help you during stressful situations?**



