

Healing Trauma through Somatic Awareness and Movement

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As you're getting settled, please do the following:

- Change your zoom name to include your pronouns
- Gather together what you might need to feel supported, including:
 - Journal or notebook or other way to take notes
 - Water, tea, coffee, treats
 - Post it notes and art supplies (paper and pens, pencils, markers; scissors)
 - Sensory supports:
 - Tactile supports: Fidget tools, stress balls, kooshes, worry stones
 - Essential oils
 - Plants

Welcome

Arriving | Orienting | Tracking | Centering | Grounding

Optional: Supportive Self-Touch

Resourcing Practice

Temperature Check

Go to menti.com

Type in code: 35 02 77 2

Participate in the poll

Land Acknowledgement

Here are the names of the Indigenous Nations that were here (in present day Durham/Chapel Hill, NC) on Turtle Island prior to the colonizers arrival.

HISTORICALLY

Adushasher (pronounced Ah doe shaah sher), Eno, Skakori

HISTORICALLY AND CURRENTLY

Occaneechi (We are now the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation)

With gratitude and appreciation to Vivette Jeffries-Logan of Biwa Consulting
biwaconsulting@gmail.com

Land Acknowledgement

Why is it important to acknowledge the land?

“Acknowledgment by itself is a small gesture. It becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and informed action. But this beginning can be an opening to greater public consciousness of Native sovereignty and cultural rights, a step toward equitable relationship and reconciliation. Join us in adopting, calling for, and spreading this practice.

Naming is an exercise in power. Who gets the right to name or be named? Whose stories are honored in a name? Whose are erased? Acknowledgment of traditional land is a public statement of the name of the traditional Native inhabitants of a place. It honors their historic relationship with the land.

A Land Acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.”

Honor Native Land Guide
US Dept of Arts and Culture

Land Acknowledgement

White supremacy culture disconnects us from our roots, contexts, relationships.

Naming and honoring the historical and present stewards of land is an antidote to disembodiment - a way of reclaiming our right to reclaim our bodies, to be in right relationship with our own individual bodies and with the Great Body, the Earth

Those of you who are joining us from other places, if you know the names of the original inhabitants or your lands, please share those in the chat.

Take a moment to notice what you notice.

Temperature Check (again)

Go back to menti.com

Type in code: 35 02 77 2

Participate in the poll

Welcome + Setting the Space

- Thank you for being here
 - Your time, energy, focus, and attention are valuable
- Get out your post-it notes
 - If you don't have post-its, grab some index cards and tape, or cut some paper into squares
- Reflect on the following:
 - What do I do to support my learning and engagement? How do I support myself in “showing up” in spaces like these?
 - What do I do to “get in my own way”? How do I hinder my learning?
 - Paste these somewhere visible and obvious, and consider referring to them from time to time to help you check-in with yourself and stay engaged



Welcome + Setting the Space

- Invitation to the space - Agreements and Norms
 - Respect of human dignity - presence, listening, care for yourself
 - Confidentiality - said here stays here / learned here leaves here
 - “ I “ statements - speak for yourself
 - Take up the space that is yours / Acknowledge intersectionality
 - Ask: questions / for help
 - Non-closure, dynamic tension
 - Anything to add?
- Access Needs?
 - Share them now
 - Or add in chat - you can chat privately to one of the hosts if you prefer
- Shared Resource doc - please add your recommendations
 - bit.ly/somaticresources

Welcome + Setting the Space

Agenda - Morning

Welcome and Arriving
Land Acknowledgement
Co-creating the space:
 Who am I / Who are We
Break
What is Trauma?

12:00 Lunch

Agenda - Afternoon

Trauma, continued
Anti-oppressive therapy practices
Break
Practicing Skills
Doing our work
Closing

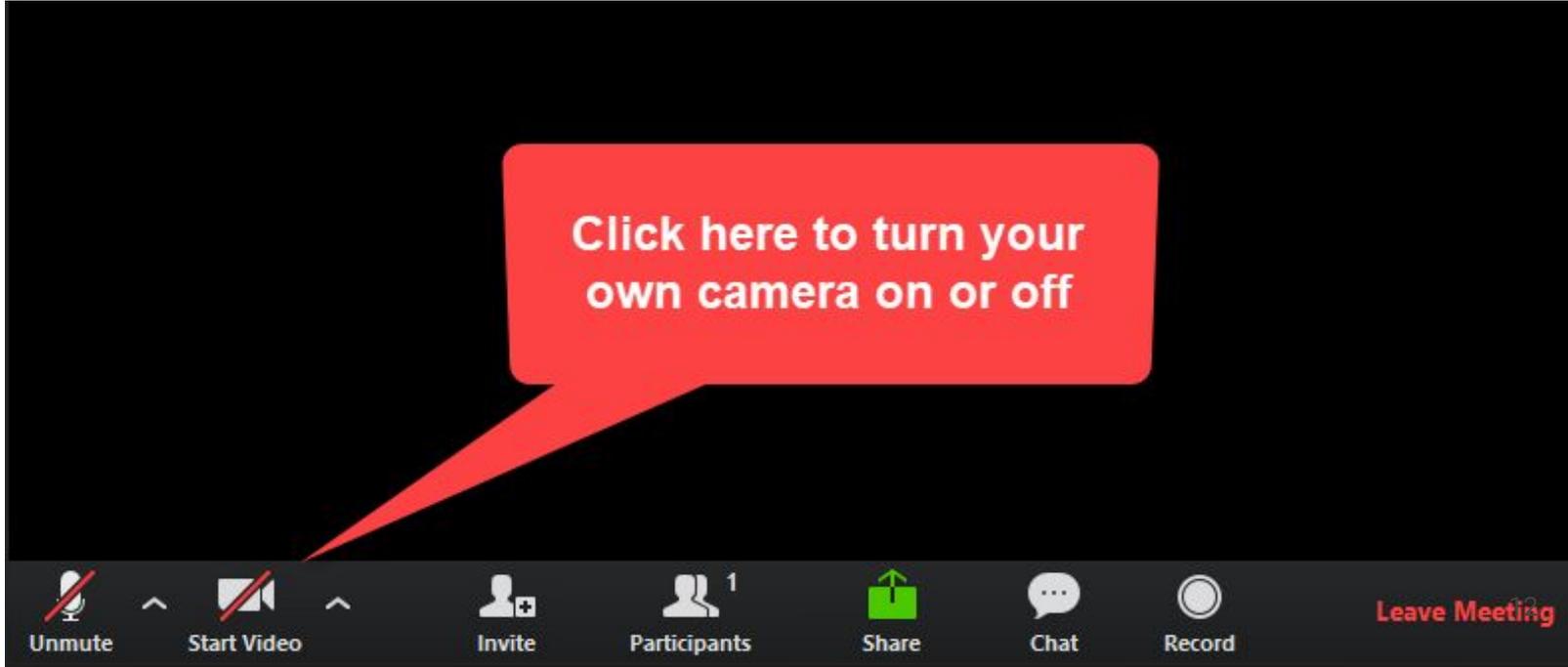
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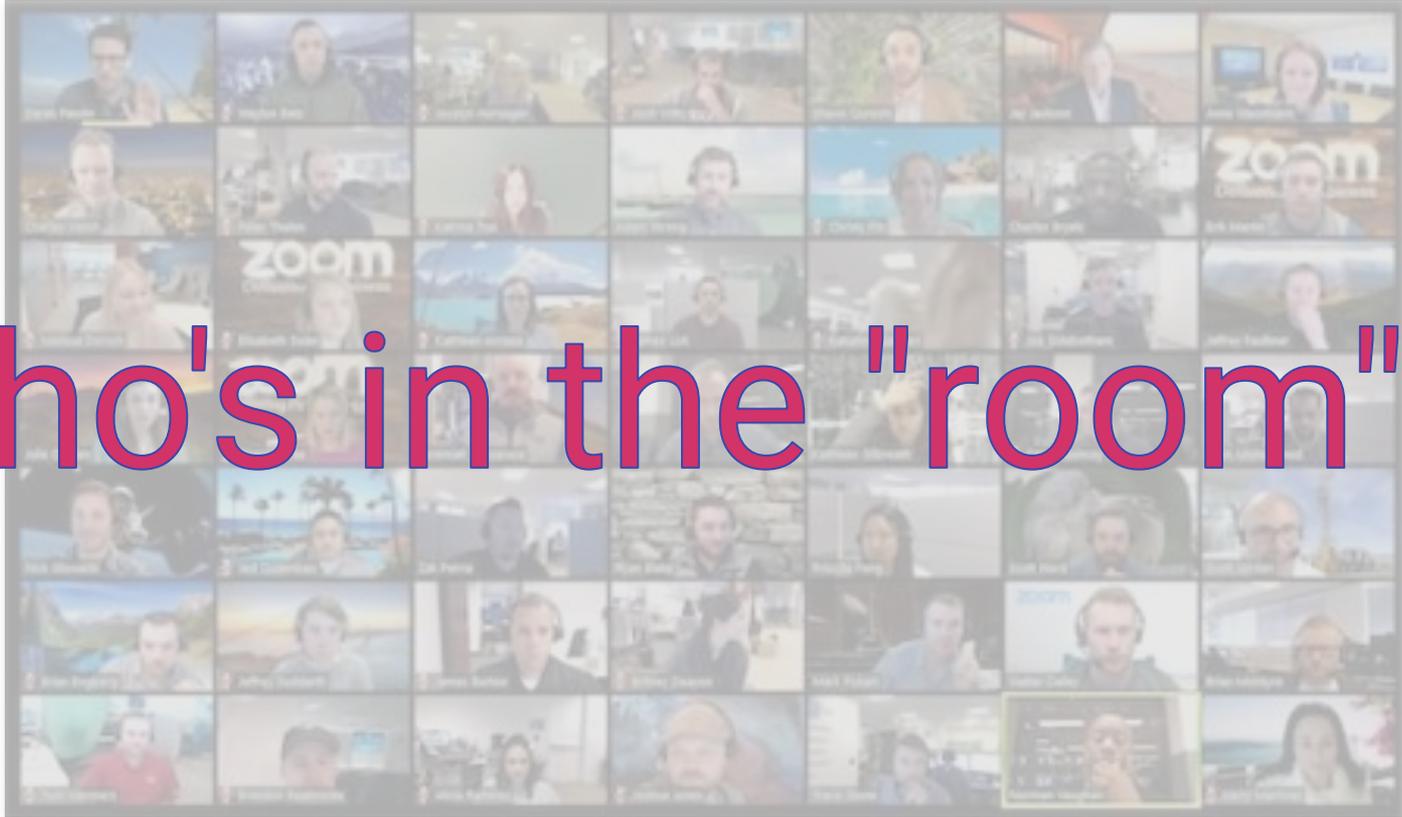
Who are we?

Participatory Exercise

Please get ready to use your cameras!



Who's in the "room"?



My Lineages and Wisdom Streams



My Identities and Ancestries

I am a cisgender, white, queer, fat, able-bodied woman, born in the US with English as a first language. I am neurotypical, come from a family with addiction and abuse, and I'm bilingual.

I was raised with middle class privilege, and have had access to a number of educational / training spaces as a result of my identities.

I am channeling lineages that include: generative somatics, global justice and collective liberation struggles, Somatic Experiencing, yoga and Ayurveda, Community Resiliency Model, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Al-Anon / 12 Steps, and more.

These - among others of my identities - shape the way this information lives in me and how it moves through me to you.

Just as your own identities will shape how you hear what I offer.

Your Lineages and Wisdom Streams

What's on your
lineage quilt?



Image: Cobble Hill

Create your own

Choose from a Lineage Quilt or
a drawing of your Wisdom
Streams

In about 10 minutes, you'll be
encouraged to share your image via
your camera so others can see.

Calling in Resource: Ancestors

Calling in Resource: Ancestors

Why is it important to call in Ancestors, Elders, Mentors, Kin, Family, Guides?

Why is it important to honor our Lineages and Wisdom streams?

White supremacy culture strips us of roots and relationships

- Teach us that we are originators, founders, creators, “discoverers”
- Encourage individualism, discourages cooperation and collectivity
- We can resist that disembodied, colonized experience of knowledge by claiming our wisdom traditions

Notice what you feel in your body as we call in the presence of these beloved beings.

Two or three things I know for sure...

A practice modeled for us by beloved working class, Southern queer elder Dorothy Alison



Image credit: GuernicaMag

Reflection

Take some time to
think and write

Two or Three Things I know for
sure about Trauma, Healing, and
the Body

Share in Groups of 3

Introductions + Sharing

Share to the level of your
comfort.

You'll have ~15 mins total, so
please self-organize to divide
your time.

Two or Three Things I know
for sure about Trauma,
Healing, and the Body



Break!

Come back in 10 mins please!

Welcome Back

Come back to your yes, your commitment to be here.

Orient to your surroundings. Call in your resource.

Reflect on what you can do to help yourself
get the most out of this experience and recommit to it.

Sharing out from small groups.

What are some things that came up when you were reflecting on what you know about trauma, healing, and the body?

Trauma

We're going to pivot to the “meat and tofu” of our exploration of trauma.

Some reminders

- There is trauma and resilience in this room
 - The most common response to trauma is resilience
- This content may be activating
 - Practice self-determination / self-awareness / self-accountability
- Embrace your boundaries around what you're offering out and taking in - share to the level of your comfort
- Try to utilize some of the skills you know / we've explored to help you stay present

Overview

- > Framing
- > What is Trauma
- > Physiology and Somatics
- > Trauma of Oppression

Notice

What happens in your system as we prepare to address these topics.

Framing: Our Bodies hold Wisdom

Our bodies hold cumulative and collective wisdom.

- Our bodies are sites of liberation, wisdom, freedom, joy and pleasure
- Why then do we sometimes struggle to be in touch with our bodies? To access their wisdom?

TRAUMA and OPPRESSION

Framing: A few thoughts about this moment

We are witnessing unparalleled consolidation of systems of power, including white supremacy and particularly anti-Blackness, capitalism, cisheteropatriarchy, and all the interconnected supremacy systems

- Which represent the “**systemic organization of trauma**” (Prentis Hemphill),
- Which are by definition and by design TOXIC TO HUMAN LIFE and all LIFE,
- Which force us to exist in various states of SURVIVAL, and thereby ENCOURAGE and RELY ON disembodiment, or the disconnection from our individual bodies as well as the great body - the Earth.
- Which are CUMULATIVE and FATAL to all living systems but not equally so - the harm of these systems are disproportionately focused on all those who are ‘othered’ within these systems, particularly
 - Black people, Indigenous People, and non-Black People of Color
 - Transgender, nonbinary and gender nonconforming people and queer people
 - Disabled people
 - Poor and working class people
 - Non-white people not born in this country
 - ****This is not an exhaustive list.****

Embodiment in Healing Work

We have said that, in order to survive, we have to disconnect to some extent from our bodies, shut down or drown out our embodied experiences...

But in order to have full access to all of the wisdom available to us as individuals - *our body's wisdom, the information we get from our emotions, the support available to us through connection with Nature, with others, with ancestors and guides* -

We need to be able to root into the present - **to feel grounded, centered, in present time.**

Embodiment in Healing Work

We need to be able to root into the present - **to feel grounded, centered, in present time.**

- In the present is the only place we can really access our power, and make choices.
- In the present we can respond to what's actually happening (and not react to shadows of the past or projections of the future)
 - In order to root in the present, we have to be able to access a basic sense of feeling safe enough to stay.
 - This form of safety is rooted in our felt sense (somatic experience, physical sensation), and is largely governed by our nervous systems.
- Thus, as we become more and more literate in the language of our bodies, we can have more and more access to the choices that help us stay in the present and take more effective action.

Pause and notice:

What happens in your body when you hear this?

Resourcing

Grounded, Centered, Present Time

What is trauma?

- Too much too fast
- Anything that overwhelms our capacity to cope, leaving us feeling helpless, hopeless, and out of control
- An attempt to self-regulate that didn't work
- Persistent inability to access genuine safety, or a felt sense of safety

What is trauma?

Trauma affects the whole person

- Physical / somatic
- Emotional / Affect / “mood”
- Mental / Cognitive / Psyche
- Behavioral - choices and actions
- Social - relationships
- Spiritual
- Energetic

What is trauma?

Three main types

- Single incident / “Shock” trauma
- Developmental trauma - presence or absence of something that leaves a mark
- Trauma of oppression - just by virtue of being alive - existing inside of a body that is targeted, or having identities that are targeted, by systems of power
 - Not “minorities” - this is inaccurate and minimizing; POC are majority; non cis men are majority; poor people are majority
 - Instead I say “people targeted by oppression,” “impacted communities,”
 - Feel free to drop in the chat and offer up the language that you use which is appropriate for talking about folks most directly impacted by systems of oppression

Somatics, Nervous System + Physiology of Trauma

What is Somatics?

“Somatics is a practice of the body as a whole, as more than the sum of its parts, as vessel of memory, story, image, gesture, movement, pattern, sensation, breath, and meaning.” Hannah Harris-Sutro (<https://www.instagram.com/bodywitchery/>)

- The body is the home of the psyche - the physical container in which consciousness and awareness take root
- No matter its other impacts, trauma always impacts the body
- Somatic trauma recovery is a way of accessing the body's natural desire to heal, find balance, and recover a felt sense of safety

The Nervous System

The Nervous System is a primary component of our somatic (embodied) experience

- Everyone has a Nervous System (NS)
- NS is a sensitive, and a sensing, instrument
 - Processes all sensory information
- Assesses for safety - responds to change
 - Generates energy for possible action
- Has a “memory” - calibrates itself to what is “normal” or typical for us
 - This can be why it’s not so easy to just “relax” or unwind or take a break
- Like a metronome - is influenced by what’s around it, especially other NSs (i.e. other people, other mammals)
 - “Vibes checking” aka “reading the room” is a NS function

Quick practice

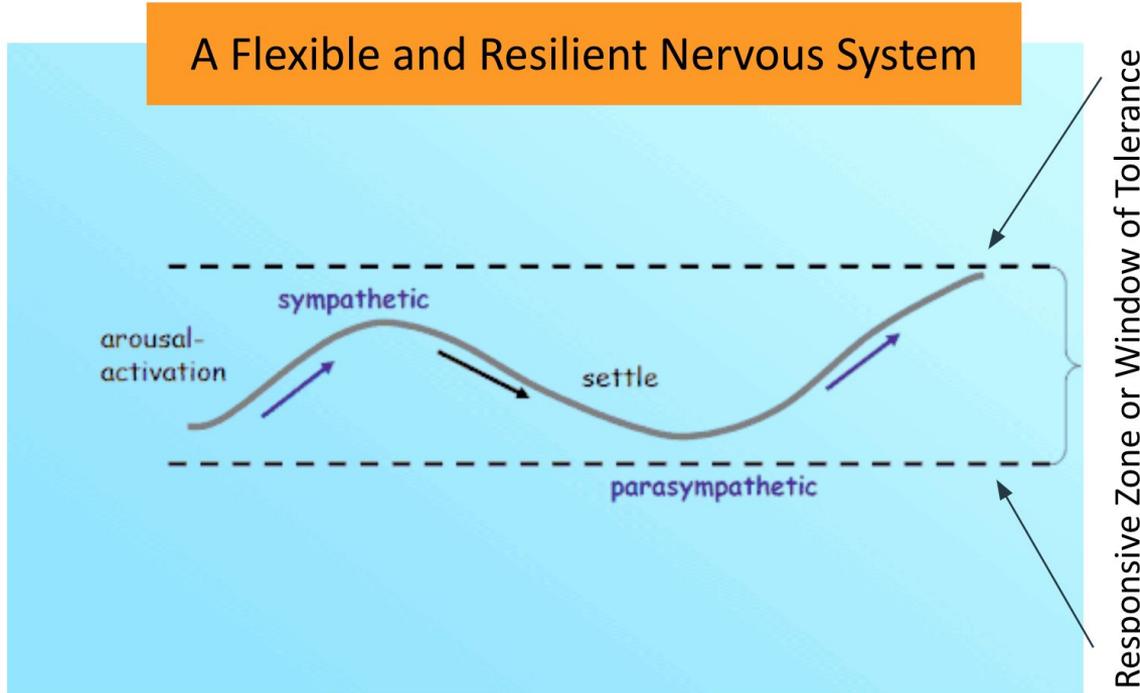


We will each take turns singing the chorus of our favorite songs.

(That was just to get a little reaction from your NS.)

Nervous System Primer: Cycles of Activation and Settling

Physical /
Somatic
part



Affects every
other part of us:

- Emotional
- Mental
- Spiritual
- Energetic

Some Terminology

- **Grounding** - rooting into our relationship to our physical bodies and gravity
- **Centering** - locating our axis of awareness inside ourselves
- **Orienting** - taking in information from our surroundings
- **Tracking** - awareness of internal states (interoception)
- **Language of Sensation** - vocabulary to describe our felt sense
- **Titration** - working with manageable chunks or “bites” that our system can healthfully process

Some More Terminology

- Resilience - bouncing back; adapting from experience; aka recovery, stamina
- Zone of Responsiveness - being inside our “window of tolerance”
- Sympathetic Nervous System - “Fight flight freeze appease” system
- Activation - energy in the nervous system, aka elevation, arousal
- Cycles of Activation and Settling - the way the NS works to regulate us and our energy; aka resolution, discharge, metabolizing
- Management Strategies - survival skills that help us stay alive; aka coping skills, survival strategies

Language of Sensation

Vibration	Size/Position	Temperature	Pain	Muscles
Shaking	Small	Cold	Intense	Tight
Twitching	Medium	Hot	Medium	Loose
Trembling	Large	Warm	Mild	Calm
Quick/Slow	Up/Down/Center	Neutral	No Pain	

Language of Sensation

Breathing	Heart	Density	Weight	Texture
Rapid	Fast	Rough	Heavy	Prickly
Deep	Slow	Smooth	Light	Bumpy
Slow	Rhythmic	Thick	Firm	Rough
Light	Flutters	Thin	Gentle	

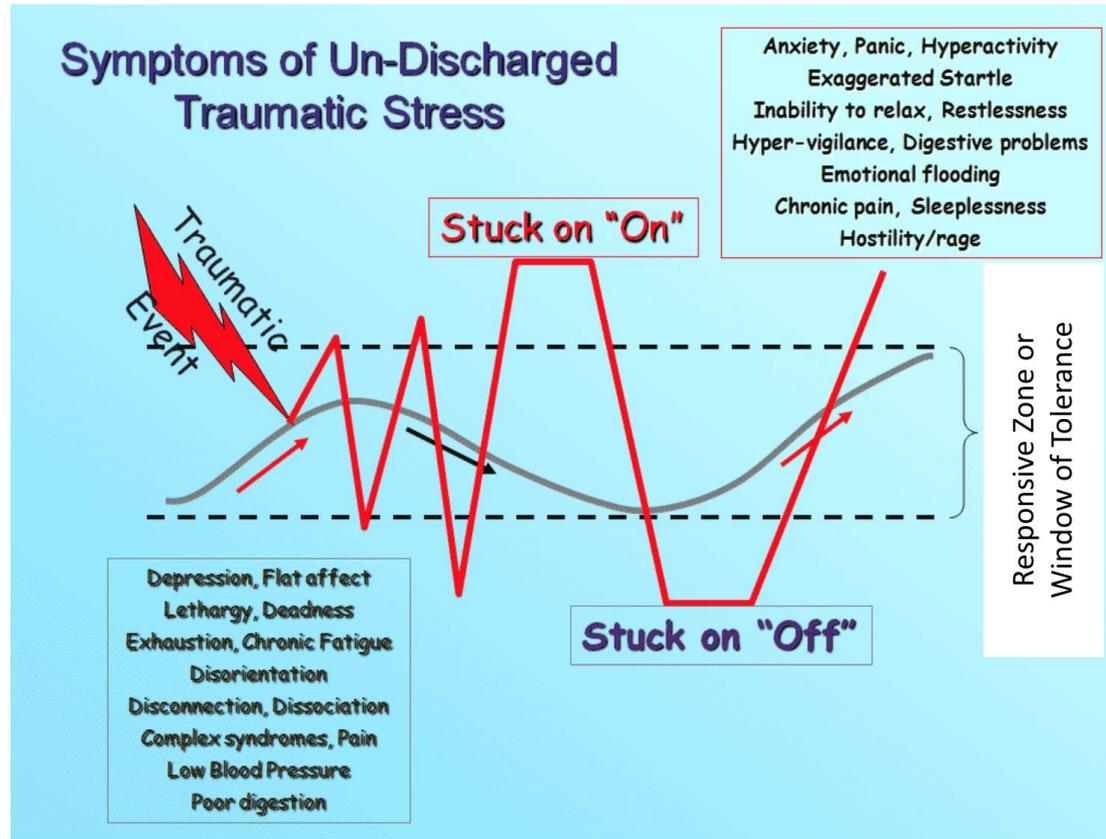
Quick practice

Wiggle wiggle, shake shake for 1-2 mins

Come back to center: notice your sensations.

Try to use the Language of Sensation to describe your embodied experience.

Cycles of Activation and Settling: Dysregulation

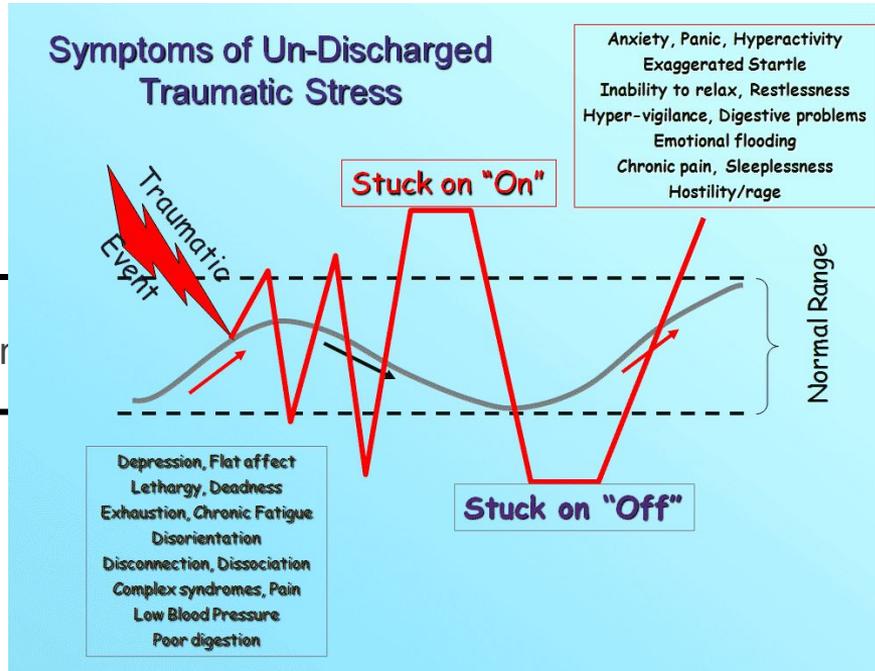


Reflection: Dysregulation

What are
YOUR signs
of activation?

Responsive Zone Respon

What are
YOUR signs
of shutdown?



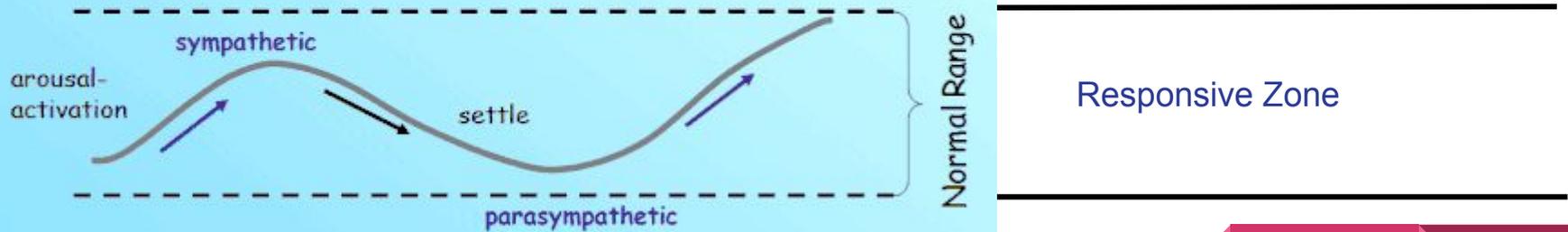
Responsive Zone Responsive

How do you
know if you're
"Stuck on
'on'"?

How do you
know if you're
"Stuck on
'off'"?

Reflection: Regulation

How do you know when you are in your “zone of responsiveness”?



Nervous System

- Everyone gets dysregulated - outside their “responsive zone”
 - This creates “survival” or “coping” strategies - which are designed to help us deal with too much energy in the system
- If trauma is “too much too fast” - anything that overwhelms our ability to cope (saturating NS) - pacing is a key issue here. It is conceivable that the same experience with different pacing would not be (as) traumatic
- Oppression creates conditions in which some folks never get to return to or live inside a “responsive zone,” and/or don’t have access to the settling or discharge required to “complete a cycle” and move back inside a window of tolerance
- FOCUS of regulation practices: how to get back into the responsive zone (window of tolerance), how to stay in it more often, and (maybe) how to expand it

Graphic Warning



GRAPHIC WARNING



THE
Sun

What do you notice?

Quick Strategies for Grounding, Discharging, Resourcing

“Help Now” skills from Community Resiliency Model

- Open and close eyes
- Drink water
- Look around the room, notice colors, textures- move head/neck too
- Name six colors you can see
- Count backwards from 20
- Notice textures - feel furniture, clothes - describe
- Notice temperature
- Three Part Breath, other breathing
- Notice sounds
- Push your back against a wall
- Push your hands against the wall
- Walk around and pay attention to physical movement sensations
 - How do legs and feet feel?
 - What are arms and hands doing?
 - How is breath moving?
- Yoga pose like Warrior II, Chair pose, Mountain pose

Physiology of Fight / Flight Response

Thoughts racing

Quicker thinking helps us to evaluate danger and make rapid decisions. It can be very difficult to concentrate on anything apart from the danger (or escape routes) when the fight or flight response is active

Changes to vision

Vision can become acute so that more attention can be paid to danger. You might notice 'tunnel vision', or vision becoming 'sharper'

Dry mouth

The mouth is part of the digestive system. Digestion shuts down during dangerous situations as energy is diverted towards the muscles

Heart beats faster

A faster heart beat feeds more blood to the muscles and enhances your ability to run away or fight

Nausea and 'butterflies' in the stomach

Blood is diverted away from the digestive system which can lead to feelings of nausea or 'butterflies'

Hands get cold

Blood vessels in the skin contract to force blood towards major muscle groups

Muscles tense

Muscles all over the body tense in order to get you ready to run away or fight. Muscles may also shake or tremble, particularly if you stay still, as a way of staying 'ready for action'

If we don't exercise (e.g. run away or fight) to use up the extra oxygen then we can quickly start to feel dizzy or lightheaded

Dizzy or lightheaded

Breathing becomes quicker and shallower

Quicker breathing takes in more oxygen to power the muscles. This makes the body more able to fight or run away

Adrenal glands release adrenaline

The adrenaline quickly signals other parts of the body to get ready to respond to danger

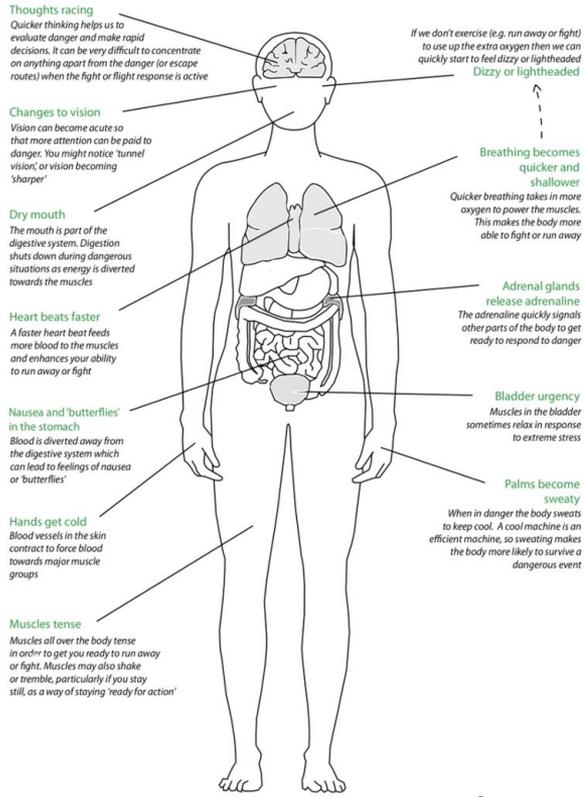
Bladder urgency

Muscles in the bladder sometimes relax in response to extreme stress

Palms become sweaty

When in danger the body sweats to keep cool. A cool machine is an efficient machine, so sweating makes the body more likely to survive a dangerous event

Fight / Flight Response



Body System

Heart

Physiological effect

Increased heart rate
Dilation of coronary blood vessels

Consequence

Increase in blood flow
Increased availability of oxygen and energy to the heart

Circulation

Dilation of blood vessels serving muscles
Constriction of blood vessels serving digestion

Increased availability of oxygen to skeletal muscles
Blood shunted to skeletal muscles and brain

Lungs

Dilation of bronchi
Increased respiration rate

Increased availability of oxygen in blood

Liver

Increased conversion of glycogen to glucose

Increased availability of glucose in skeletal muscle and brain cells

Skin

Skin becomes pale or flushed as blood flow is reduced

Increased blood flow to muscles and away from non-essential parts of the body such as the periphery

Eyes

Dilation of the pupils

Allows in more light so that visual acuity is improved so scan nearby surroundings

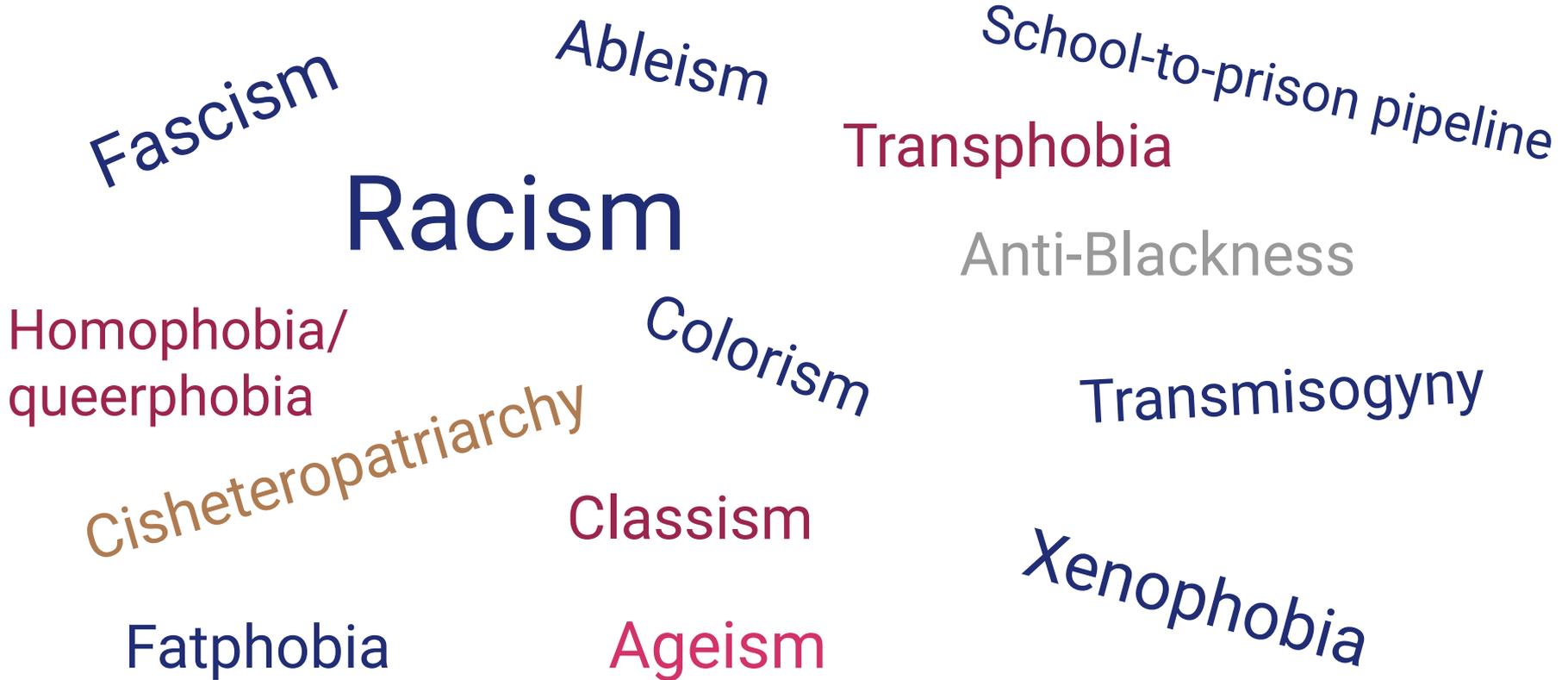
The Trauma of Oppression

Systems of Oppression

Let's take some time to explore systems of oppression - anything that represents an **organized system of privilege + power-over** - and their impacts

Let's start by naming some of those systems

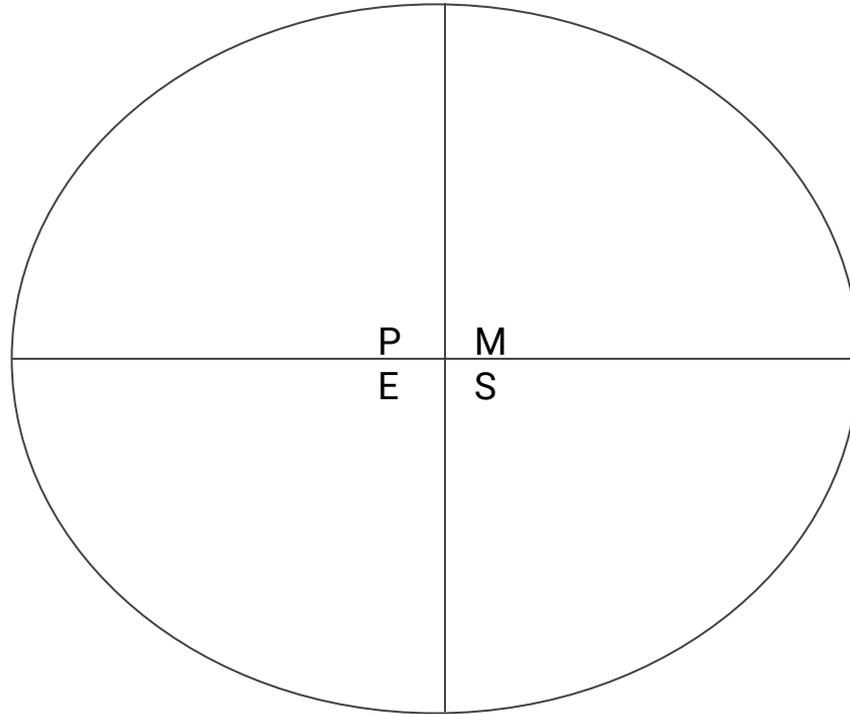
Systems of Oppression



Let's explore impacts on Individuals

Physical

Mental



Emotional

Spiritual

Some Physical Impacts of Oppression

Responses provided by participants

- Violence
- Chronic Pain
- Illness
- Inflammation
- Exhaustion
- Mortality (death)
- Diabetes
- Infant/child mortality
- High Blood Pressure
- Asthma
- Heart Disease
- Digestive Problems
- Hypertension
- Autoimmune disorders
- Housing Instability
- Lack of secure access to transportation
- Injury
- Cancer
- Birth trauma
- GI/digestive/gut issues
- Adrenal Fatigue
- PTSD, CPTSD
- Complications from addiction
- This is not an exhaustive list
- Some of these will cross-over to other categories - nothing is just physical

Some Mental Impacts of Oppression

Responses provided by participants

- ADHD
- Hyperarousal
- Cognitive impacts in general, including problems with focus, executive function, memory
- Rumination
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Negative view of self and world
- Addiction
- CPTSD
- Hypervigilance
- Ultra- or hyper-independence
- Isolation
- Panic
- Social Anxiety
- Worry
- Codependence
- This is not an exhaustive list
- Some of these will cross-over to other categories - nothing is just mental

Some Emotional Impacts of Oppression

Responses provided by participants

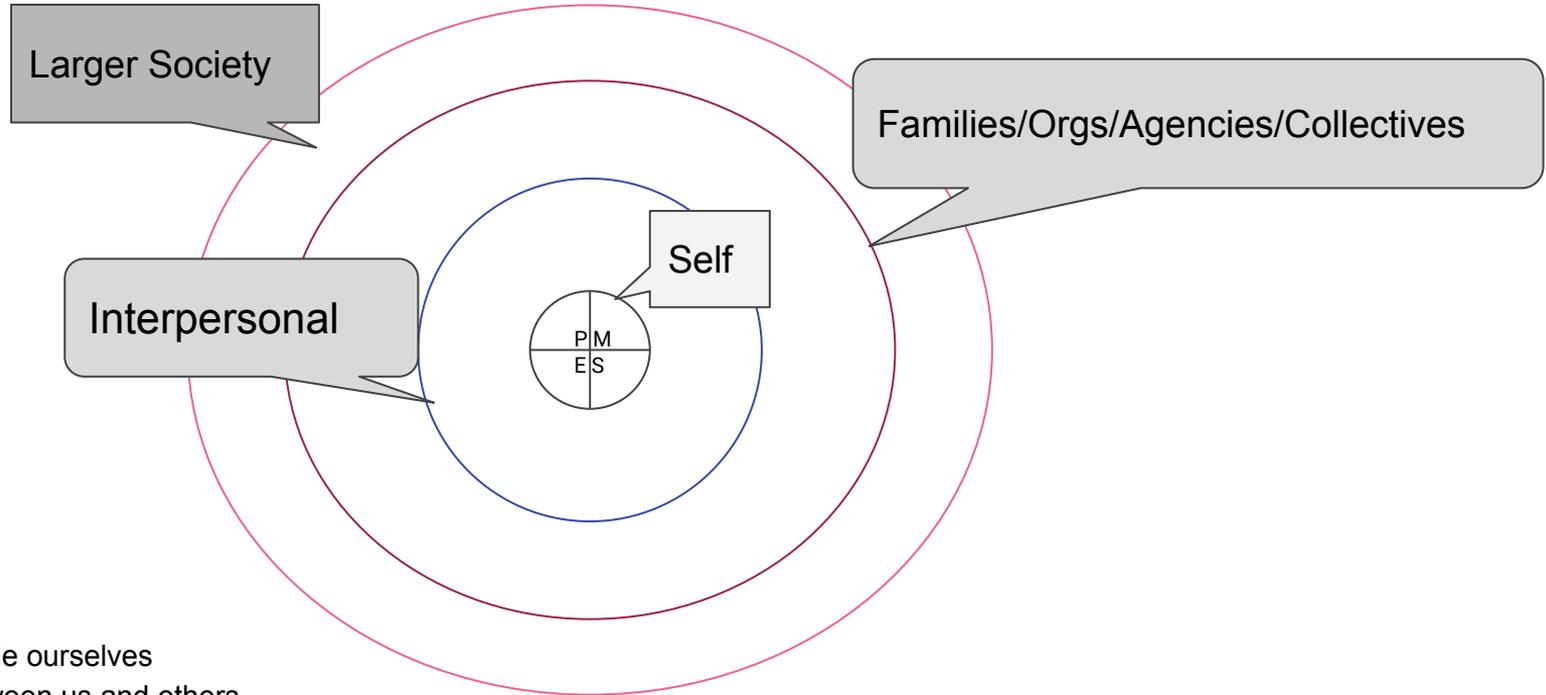
- Shame
- Guilt
- Worry
- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Disconnection / isolation / feelings of separation
- Numbness
- Relational distress
- Challenges with self-regulation
- Emotionally erratic
- Pain
- Anger
- Distress
- Lack of trust in systems
- Guarded / blocked
- Hard to trust others / guarded interpersonally / emotionally disconnected
- Feeling unsafe
- Lack of a sense of self
- This is not an exhaustive list
- Some of these will cross-over to other categories - nothing is just emotional

Some Spiritual Impacts of Oppression

Responses provided by participants

- Loss of faith
- Despair
- Desolation
- Addiction
- Hopelessness
- Disconnected from Spirit
- Broken connection to purpose
- Loss of ancestral tradition
- Soul wounds
- Disconnection from Earth
- Adoption / appropriation of non-ancestral healing lineages
- This is not an exhaustive list
- Some of these will cross-over to other categories - nothing is just spiritual

Rippling Out



Intrapersonal - inside ourselves

Interpersonal - between us and others

Groups - inside families, organizations, collectives, agencies

Society - playing out on every level of society

Responding to the trauma of oppression

What are we to do in the face of these overwhelming realities?

How do we respond to these systems of oppression?

Enter: Survival Strategies (aka Coping Strategies or Management Strategies)

Responding to the trauma of oppression

Remember trauma is too much too fast, overwhelming our capacity to cope, inability to access safety or a felt sense of safety...

Bodies store trauma - there are very good, survival-oriented reasons why we might not feel connected to or “in touch with” our bodies - we want to name and normalize this reality AND figure out what we do with it.

Some common responses / survival strategies that arise to try and cope with these realities (manifestations of Fight/Flight/Freeze/Appease/Disassociate):

- a. Cycles of abuse, trauma, violence, oppression
- b. Addiction, isolation, self-harm
- c. Crisis-seeking or chaos-seeking behaviors / “drama”
- d. “Managing, manipulating, mothering, martyring” (12 steps)
- e. What other things do you see coming up?

Flipping the Script

Some common responses / survival strategies that arise to try and cope with these realities (manifestations of Fight/Flight/Freeze/Appease/Disassociate):

- a. Cycles of abuse, trauma, violence, oppression
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- d. “Managing, manipulating, mothering, martyring” (12 steps)
- e. What other things do you see coming up?



Those of you familiar with diagnostic criteria might notice:

Some of these look a lot like “symptoms,” amirite?

Flipping the Script

- We come by these honestly. These are coping strategies. **Natural responses to unnatural conditions.** When you know your personal survival strategies, you can transform and create new responses & choices.
- Name these as coping strategies - recognize that as an organism, we are not meant to sustain in survival strategies.
- Trauma forces process of “de-selfing” - alienates us from our individual bodies, collective experiences, larger body (earth) - the main resources that are inherently available to us in this life.
 - Trigger without resource = Trauma
 - Trigger + Resource = Resilience

BOTTOM LINE: Knowing oneself and the body is part of healing and liberation work - a radical act. Reclaim bodies as sites of liberation. Resource all of us with basic understanding of nervous system so that we can be pro-active and responsive rather than reactive.

Questions

Resources

Don't forget to contribute to the shared resources doc!

Take a moment to track your sensations

- Notice your breath first.
- Next, notice what sensations are present
- Challenge yourself to observe what feels pleasant / neutral, not just what feels intense or painful.
- Try to use sensation words to describe your experience.
- Notice your breath again.

Lunch!

Be back in 60 minutes please!~

Enjoy.

Welcome back!

- Arriving / orienting
- 1 thing that is sitting with you from the morning
- Revisit resources and your personal list of how you keep yourself engaged

Questions

Overview

- > NS continued
- > Self- and Co-regulation
- > Somatic Therapy: How does it work?
- > Anti-Oppression in Practice
- > Skills, Tools, Practice!

Nervous System

We understand that the NS is responsible for processing sensory information towards the end of keeping us safe.

- If we're overwhelmed, overstimulated, or in overdrive, we might be taking in too much information - more than we can process.
 - Might lead to immobilization - shut down!
- **Titration** is an important aspect of helping our NS process information.
 - Slow it down.
 - Take “manageable bites” that your system can “digest.”
 - *Feel free to add into the chat your ideas about what titration is*

In the practice...

Without titration, this can look like:

- “Flooding” - People who get caught up in the narrative content (cognition) of what is traumatic or overwhelming for them in a disembodied way - leading to a continual state of overwhelm or dysregulation because nothing is changing - including how that reality is living in their bodies
- Clients who experience therapy (or other theoretically helpful or therapeutic interventions) as retraumatizing
- Think back to list of Survival Strategies / “symptoms”
- Think of examples from your own life, caseload

Nervous System

Everyone has the right to pacing that works for them.

Everyone has the right to pacing that works for them.

Everyone has the right to pacing that works for them.

Not all pacing works for all people.

Not all pacing works for the same person all of the time.

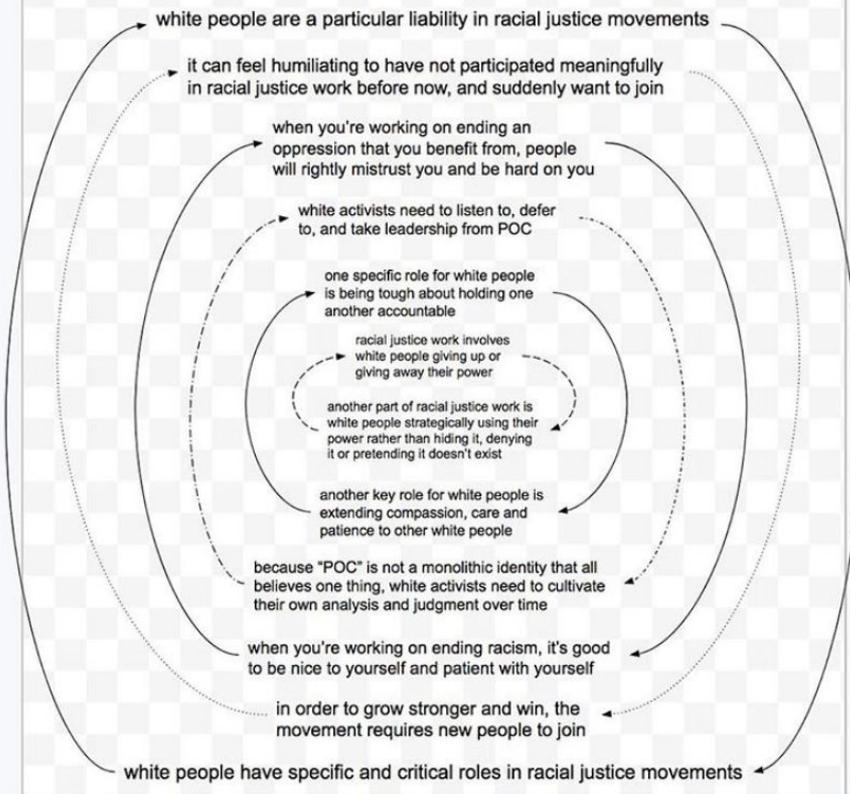
The reality is that not everyone has ACCESS to that pacing - because of structural oppression and systemic injustice - but each of us still has the right to it.

Nervous System

- Interlocking systems of oppression create DOUBLE BINDS for us.
 - It's impossible to live into all our values under capitalism, white supremacy, cisheteropatriarchy, ableism, etc.
 - But still we try - and in the trying, we can confront double-binds.
 - Places where our urges or impulses are in conflict.
 - Related to dialectics - two or more things that seem in opposition but are simultaneously true.
- Double-binds are “baked in” to work in non-profits, community mental health
 - More work than we can possibly do + the imperative NOT to burn out
 - We are aware of structural issues creating inequality but we still expect individual interventions and responses to create the change we need
 - Limits of diagnosis + imperative to utilize inside Medical Industrial Comp.



contradictions for white people in racial justice work



Here is one possible example of “double binds,” for white folks or folks who are read as white inside of our racialized reality. I want to recognize that not everyone in this space is white or reads as white.

Nervous System

What are some DOUBLE BINDS you can think of?

Feel free to jot down notes for yourself, and/or include them in the chat.

Notice what you're feeling in your body.

Reflection

Given all this, here are some potentially useful reflection questions

- How do I know when I'm INSIDE my "responsive zone" or "window of tolerance"? (Reflect on physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, energetic <PEMSE> aspects)
- How do I know when I'm OUTSIDE my "responsive zone" or WoT? <PEMSE>
- What circumstances contribute to me being OUTSIDE? (aka getting dysregulated)
 - a. For example: setting or holding a boundary; being misgendered; unexpected contact w/ ex;
 - b. What do I do that contributes to me being OUTSIDE?
 - c. What are the impacts of being OUTSIDE?
- What do I do that contributes to me staying INSIDE or returning INSIDE?
 - a. What does this make possible?
- How do I know where my boundaries are?
 - a. How do I know when I'm overriding them?
 - b. Is it every okay for me to override my boundaries?
 - c. What happens if/when I do?
- What are my non-negotiables?

Practice Pause

- Hand on heart
- Wiggle wiggle, shake shake
- Quick yoga interlude
- Shift your shape

Self-regulation and Co-Regulation

Self-Regulation

- It is our ability to anchor in the present, to **feel grounded, centered, and in present time**.
 - To come back into the Responsive Zone or the Window of Tolerance.
- This is where true presence is, where full (or fuller) participation is possible.
 - Where **embodied learning** and shift can happen because we're fully aware - "online" - while it's happening.
- Without this capacity, no amount of real or perceived co-regulation is possible, because we'll be trying not only to fill an empty cup, but a cup with holes in it.

If we're not at least somewhat in our bodies and in our experience, then no amount of attention, care, affirmation, validation, etc will assuage us because we're not really taking it in.

Self-regulation and Co-Regulation

Co-Regulation

- Orienting to / attending to another person (or another NS or living being)
 - Connecting through facial expression, verbal and nonverbal communication (“Social engagement system” in Polyvagal terms.)
- It is entraining or attuning with someone
 - Exchanging subtle information between nervous systems that allow one or both parties to come into more centeredness and presence or an increased “felt sense” of safety.
- This is fundamental nourishment and fuel for the development of our nervous system.

This necessarily includes touch - healthy, consensual, loving, appropriate touch - but this also includes attention and attunement more broadly.

Self-regulation and Co-Regulation

These two systems work together - but we must have capacity to harness them both for us to be in right relationship with ourselves and with others.

- Over-reliance on co-regulation can lead to enmeshment
 - Deprives us of the ability to trust that we can take care of ourselves, can be fundamentally okay on our own
- Over-reliance on self-regulation can lead to isolation, withdrawal, and a reinforcement of “rugged individualism,”
 - Deprives us of the ability to learn that others are safe and can be trusted



5 step Self Compassion Hold



1



2



3



4



5

Somatic Therapy

With an Anti-Oppression Lens

Somatic Therapy

How does it work? Why is it different?

“NS-informed”

- Pacing - Slow it down
 - Interrupt well-worn pathway of the NS
- Utilize titration, resourcing, commercial breaks
 - “SE is so not precious”
- Convey the sense of abundance - opposite of scarcity, urgency
 - Moving from scarcity / urgency can reinforce experience of “too much too fast”
 - Abundance orientation and pacing is an antidote to urgency created by capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy

Somatic Therapy

How does it work? Why is it different?

Complete Cycles

- Accesses “felt sense” of how something is living in the body
- Offers an avenue for Completing a Cycle: Activation and Settling
 - Tapping into natural flow of the Sympathetic NS (SNS)
 - Shifting how something lives in the body
 - Antidote to disembodied “rehearsing” of trauma
- Shifts one’s ability to cope and thrive more effectively in the present
 - Meeting life’s challenges with a “felt sense” that things will be okay
 - Recognizing that things will be hard sometimes, but that we have what we need to respond, recover, and heal - we don’t have to be afraid of life

Somatic Therapy

How does it work? Why is it different?

Embodied

- Reclaim or re-inhabit the body
 - We can't "CBT" our way out of trauma
- Moving towards finding home and safety in the body regardless of external conditions
 - Which allows us access to the resources needed to advocate for shifts in external conditions
- Antidote to "mind over matter"
 - Mind over matter forces disconnection, separation, productivity at any cost

Somatic Therapy

How does it work? Why is it different?

Relational framework

- Cultivating regulation in your own nervous system in order to entrain with your clients, offer them access to a regulated system even for a short time
- Modeling self- and co-regulation
- Showing it can be safe to trust someone, can be safe to be in the body
 - Healing doesn't happen in isolation
 - It's okay to need help, to get help
- Be a compassionate witness

“Trauma is not about what happens to us,
it’s how it affects us in the absence of a
compassionate witness.”

-Peter Levine, SE founder

Anti-Oppression Application

- My practice is rooted in an intersectional understanding of the traumatic impacts of oppression
 - I don't pathologize survival strategies
- Relational framework - I am a real person, this is a real relationship.
 - I permit myself to show emotion when appropriate
 - I stay informed (to the best of my ability) about “real world” issues and how they affect me, my community, and the communities of the people I work with
 - I name differences for and with client, check in with them about it
- Robust resource list for sharing with clients and referral system
- Limited caseload
 - Not creating scarcity and urgency for my clients
 - Increases my ability to stay regulated and prevent burnout

Anti-Oppression Application

- Offer free zoom / phone chat to frame this is a mutual “interview” process
 - clients get a chance to “meet” me and feel out the dynamic before investing time and money in an intake;
 - I get to screen for folks for whom I don’t think I am the best fit clinically and save them time and money by moving directly to referral;
- Remind them at the beginning and end of intake that they can choose
 - encourage folks to take time after intake to see how the session lands with them and to decide if they want to move forward - inviting intuition and embodied choice
- Discuss diagnosis with client - give them choices and access to the process
- Sliding scale
 - Including my own grassroots fundraising efforts to subsidize this

Anti-Oppression Application

- I do my own work
 - Individual therapy
 - Self-regulation praxis
 - White, anti-racist somatic practitioners peer supervision group (2)
 - Continuing education in somatics, especially from BIPOC teachers
 - Political engagement
- Advocacy
 - In the Code of Ethics for SW
 - No such thing as being “apolitical”

Anti-Oppression Application

What else?

What are other ways to apply Anti-Oppression values in clinical practice?

The top right corner of the slide features a decorative arrangement of overlapping geometric shapes. These include a dark pink square, a medium pink square, and a light pink square, all partially cut off by the edge of the slide.

Break!

Come back in 10



Quick
yoga break

Skills and Tools

Skills and Tools

- Arriving, orienting, tracking, resourcing, grounding
- Wiggle wiggle shake shake
- Self-compassion holds
- Language of Sensation
- Mindful transitions
- Short yoga interlude / simple stretching
- “Help Now” - CRM

Practice

Groups of 3

Practitioner, “client,” observer

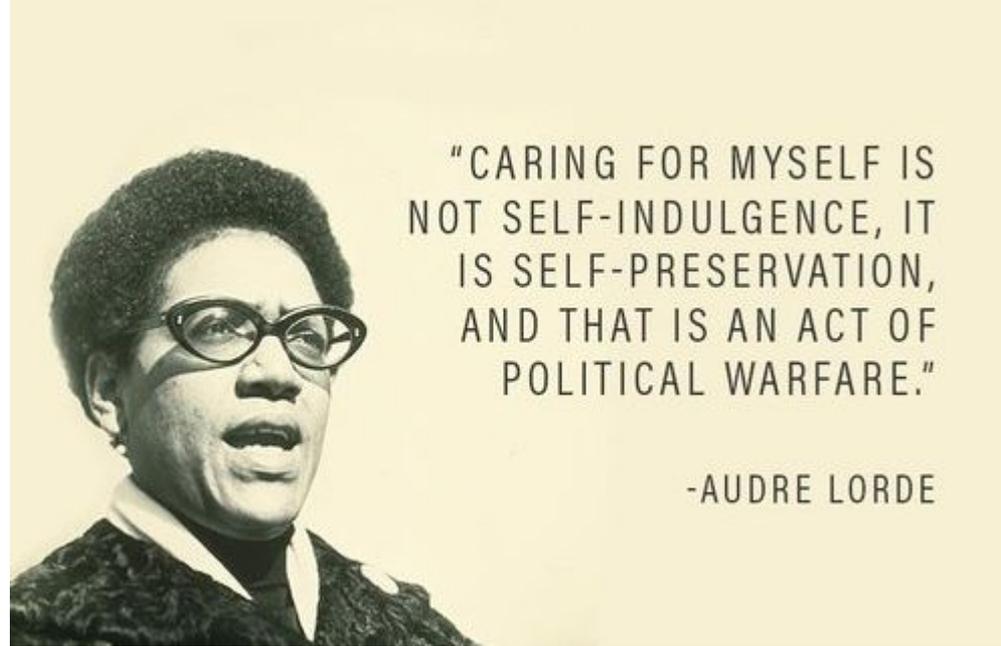
Take turns with each role

We'll have ~ 30 time for three rounds.

Doing Our Work

Personal Work

- Commitment to healing
 - Therapy
 - Self-regulation practices
 - Decolonizing mind, body, heart, imagination
- Support System
 - “Second layer” support
 - Peer supervision, accountability
- Cultivate pleasure, joy, rest
 - Caring for your vessel



“CARING FOR MYSELF IS
NOT SELF-INDULGENCE, IT
IS SELF-PRESERVATION,
AND THAT IS AN ACT OF
POLITICAL WARFARE.”

-AUDRE LORDE

Doing Our Work

Clinical Preparation Work

Assess your own work areas - explore your own activation around themes that commonly arise in working with people, diverse populations, and trauma, including:

- Anxiety / depression
- Addiction
- Intergenerational suffering
- Sexual abuse
- Attachment wounds and injuries, early childhood stuff
- Dissociation, dissociative identity disorder; Borderline Personality Disorder; Narcissism, OCD;
- Internalized racial superiority / implicit bias
- Impacts of oppression: racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, religious oppression, anti-normativity / monogamy
- Polyamory, kink, BDSM, sex positivity, open relationships

Doing Our Work

Political Work

- Commitment to Action
 - Stay engaged
 - *Praxis*
- Political home
 - Connection
 - Accountability
 - Community
- Advocacy and Organizing

Doing Our Work

Electoral Work

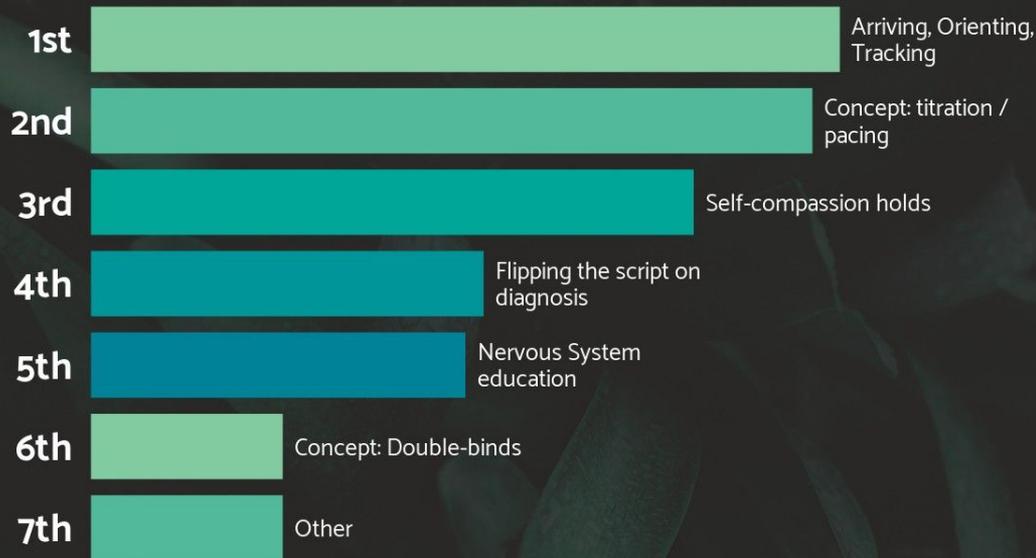
- Critical election
 - Referendum on Fascism
- Obligation to use our voice, our vote, our bandwidth
- Link to election resources
 - bit.ly/2020electoralwork



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwBjF_VVFvE&ab_channel=TheChicks

Questions

What have been the most helpful skills and tools that we have explored?



What is one thing you're taking with you?

that the nervous system is energy

Validating survival skills

Self-compassion touch

More awareness of how to use these tools with clients and myself.

Some helpful hands on regulation strategies

stretches and self compassion holds

Compassion for my clients and myself

slow down

There are many simple body-based practices that can be used with clients in session and in everyday life.

Making self-regulation a regular thing for me, not just as a reactionary tool

embodiment matters

knowledge working with oppression

Co-regulation/self-regulation

validating critical lens and modeling to work with my privilege

Allowing clients to regulate through my nervous system

thinking about where clients center their gravity/co-regulate

Good music

hand on heart from inside



What is one thing you're taking with you?

Being aware of and committing to titration and pacing in my own life and when I am holding space with others.

Slow down, create space for all of the experience

the idea of doing grassroots organizing to support clients who need sliding scale and sustain a practice

Stay spicy

That the work we are doing can be anti-racist and anti-oppression focused

stay explicit about politics

To remember and also focus on the external structures of oppression that create trauma. Also remembering to have conversations with my clients about difference, etc.

not policing what ns regulation looks like

menti as a tool

Spicy!

tuning in with myself

Real relationship in therapeutic relationship

This class confirmed that the current Administration is blasting us quicker than we can an titrate!

Good job with making zoom a personal experience

Closing

Some Resources

- Shared resource document: <http://bit.ly/somaticresources>
- Queer and Trans Yoga at ThirdRootNYC - led by People of Color teachers
 - <https://thirdroot.org/yoga-class-schedule/>
- Meditation for Queer and Trans People of Color
 - First Sunday at Third Root NYC
- [TRACC for Movements](#) - BIPOC-led trauma competency courses for social movements
- BEAM - [Black Emotional and Mental Health](#)
- BOLD - [Black Organizing for Leadership and Dignity \(somatics\)](#)
- Therapy for Black Girls
- The Okra Project

Thank you!

Let's connect!

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Website: liberationhealingarts.com (*updated site coming very soon!*)



Ways to work with me:

- Somatic small-group supervision cohorts
- Consultation, mentorship
- Drop-in somatics practice spaces
- Drop-in and private yoga, yoga for trauma classes and series
- Therapy (if openings are available)