Coaching in Crisis:
Developing Resilience for Trauma Informed Practice

2018 Assets Matter Symposium: Aligning Movements for Economic Equity

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“The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places.”

Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms
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ACEs Science is the Foundation

EPIDEMIOLOGY
the ACE Study and expanded ACE surveys

IMPACT ON THE BRAIN
the neurobiology of toxic stress caused by ACEs on children’s developing brains

IMPACT ON THE BODY
the short- and long-term health consequences of toxic stress

EPIGENETICS
how the effects of ACEs are passed on from generation to generation

RESILIENCE
the brain is plastic and the body wants to heal
<table>
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<th>I worry when I think about work or my clients</th>
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<td>ALWAYS</td>
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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente in San Diego, 17,300 Adults

Tracked health outcomes based on childhood ACEs

75% Caucasian, 39% college graduates, 36% some college, living wage jobs with insurance; median age 57 yr. old
What are the **Adverse Childhood Experiences**?

1. Child physical abuse
2. Child sexual abuse
3. Child emotional abuse
4. Physical Neglect
5. Emotional Neglect
6. Mentally ill, depressed or suicidal person in the home
7. Drug addicted or alcoholic family member
8. Witnessing domestic violence against the mother
9. Loss of a parent to death or abandonment, including abandonment by divorce
10. Incarceration of any family member
SAMHSA Definition of Trauma

“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 life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.”
Our Brain on Stress:

- Anxiety, fear, and anger “live” in the amygdala
- Both the Amygdala and Hippocampus are associated with our emotions.
- They work together when a threat is sensed or experienced
- They send signals through our emotions, intended to protect us from that threat
- AKA: Fight, flight, or freeze response
<table>
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<th>I feel like I can never do enough.</th>
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<td>The work is challenging and I'm making an impact</td>
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<td>I do my best but I can always do more</td>
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<td>I often feel stuck because it is overwhelming</td>
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When our amygdala stays activated:

When we are experiencing stress, or haven’t recovered from trauma, our amygdala stays activated.

Our memory and ability to learn in the moment is compromised

We don’t feel safe

Our bodies suffer from an activation of the disease process, due to chronic activation of the amygdala
Our unstressed brain: the pre-frontal cortex

- Concentration and Creative problem solving skills
- Body regulation (feeling calm)
- Empathy
- Communications skills
When there is no immediate threat, the goal is to be able to reconnect with your prefrontal cortex...to be able to calm your central nervous system.

- Reducing sense of threat
- Increasing sense of support
- Increase emotional safety
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<th>I have lost my sense of creativity for creative problem solving.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nah, I still got &quot;it&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't feel quite as confident as I used to</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yup</td>
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Resilience Definition

SAMHSA: Resilience refers to the ability of an individual, family, or community to cope with adversity and trauma, and adapt to challenges or change.

Ability to cope and adapt to change involves individual skill building in the context of supportive environments.
Trauma Informed Practice & Resilience Building

“Resilience strategies counter loss of meaning and hope, loss of connection, and loss of self awareness” – Joyful Heart Foundation

To be trauma informed is to understand the impacts of trauma on those you work with: whether a client, patient, student, or program participant...

...Your co-workers...

...And yourself
Financial Shock ~> Financial Trauma

• 60% of households experienced a financial shock in the past 12 months.

• Median household spent half a month of income on its most expensive one ($2,000)

• >50% struggled to “make ends meet” after their most expensive financial shocks.
Financial Coaching Can Support Resilience

- Financial crises increase risk of trauma when individual and family needs can’t be met.

- Financial coaches are not therapists, but they can help provide “concrete support in times of need.”

- Support from trauma informed financial coaches can help people feel less threat, increased safety, and increased sense of control over their immediate environment.
How can financial coaches build client resilience?

**Client empowerment:** Using individuals’ strengths to draw on their power to develop their intervention plan

**Choice:** Present options so that clients can choose the options they prefer. For victims of traumatic stress, choice reduces anxiety

**Collaboration:** Maximize a sense of collaboration that includes client and other service providers connected with the coaching plan
Safety: Present activities in a way that enhances emotional safety. Begin interactions by building rapport, a brief mindfulness practice, such as five minutes of deep breathing.

Trustworthiness: Creating clear expectations with clients about plan activities and timeline, with reminders. Victims of traumatic stress have a hard time remembering, and this is not under their control.

Patient, structured repetition helps
Coaches need resilience too!

Knowing is half the battle. Recognize that when working with people who may be experiencing active crises, or who have a trauma history (known or unknown), you are a person in need of a self-care plan, as disciplined as your work plan.

We all need support. Recognize that many of us have our own triggers from our own trauma histories, and that this impacts our ability to stay calm when working with those whose behavior or conditions are triggering for us.
Resilience strategies for Coaches

- Develop understanding of self and others related to trauma and toxic stress - this will reduce unnecessary frustration.

- Prioritize healthy “Stress relief” activities: schedule on your calendar if necessary!

- Cultivate a support system, both in general and among others who are doing similar work.
I practice self-care and have a support system

I have a #squad and I take good care of myself

I have a "pretty good" balance ;-)

There isn't enough time to do it all, so...
Questions?
Share your one word take-away from this session
ACEs Connection

What is ACEs Connection?

Join ACES Connection!
...the most active, influential ACEs community in the world. Connect with people using trauma-informed/resilience-building practices. Stay current with news, research, events.

ACN RESOURCES CENTER
Check out our new Resources Center! ACEs presentations, surveys, videos, webinars, training...and more.

ACES Too High!
NEWS
ACEs = Adverse Childhood Experiences