

Trauma & Victims of Elder Abuse:

Tools to Help Older adults and Care Partners Navigate the System

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Objectives

- Understand why the aging population is important to follow
- Understand trauma and trauma informed care at a high level
- Have a better understanding of how a lifespan of trauma can put older adults at greater health risk
- Learn what elder abuse means to our field
- Learn how the healthcare systems can be challenging for older adults
- Learn how to use the ACE with the Life Event Screening tool to obtain better care and partnerships in care

Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc.

- An organization that offers programs to older adults wishing to age in place:
 - Eldersource
 - Health Care Coordination
 - Elder Abuse Prevention
 - Financial Management
 - Ombudsman
 - Geriatric Addiction Program
 - Caregiver Resource Center
 - Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute
 - Community Care Connections
 - NY Connects
- Which program do I work for??

Age Wave

- By 2050 Americans ages 65 and older are projected to double from 48 million to over 88 million.
- By 2050, global life expectancy at birth is projected to increase from 68.6 years in 2015 to 76.2 years in 2050.

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/worlds-older-population-grows-dramatically>

- Population aging quicker:
 - France's aging population increased from 10% to 20% over 150 years.
 - Brazil, China, and India will have 20 years to make the same adaptation as France.

<http://www.who.int/news-room/facts-in-pictures/detail/ageing>

- Asia has 60% of the world population:
 - People 65 and older will increase from 207 million in 2000, to 857 million by 2050.
 - People under 15 years of age will shrink from 30% to 19% by 2050.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16096163>

Elder Abuse Statistics

- Currently there are 141 million people in the world.
- Nearly 1 out of every 6 older adults experience elder abuse world wide.
- The World Health Organization supported a study published in Lancet Global Health identified 16% of older adults age 60 and older experience some form of elder abuse.
- The research was taken from 52 studies, in 28 countries, from differing regions. This included 12 low income and middle income countries:
 - 11.6% Psychological
 - 6.8% Financial Abuse
 - 4.2% Neglect
 - 2.6% physical abuse
 - 0.9% sexual abuse

Trauma: Elements and Definition

- Individual trauma results from:
 - An event
 - Series of events
 - Set of circumstances that:
 - Are overwhelming or life changing.
 - have profound effects on the individuals psychological development or well-being.
 - often involve a physiological, social, and/or spiritual impact.

Defined by SAMHSA Experts in 2012, with 3 Key Elements

- The word trauma describes:
 - An emotionally and distressing experiences(s) or event(s).
 - An experience or event that overwhelms a persons ability to cope.
 - The person is left feeling powerless, within the circumstance and their lives.
 - The experience or event is considered outside the realm of normal human experience.

Trauma Informed Terminology

Secondary Trauma

- Vicarious Trauma
- Compassion Fatigue

Re-traumatization

- Re-victimization
- Traumatic distress reactivation
- Sanctuary harm
- System-oriented trauma
- Immoral Trauma
- Historical Trauma



Big 'T' Trauma

Natural Disasters
War Zone Experience
Man-Made Disasters
Sexual Assaults
Acts of Terrorism
Acts of Violence
Child Abuse
Death of Loved Ones
Car Accidents
Physical Trauma
Witnessing

Little 't' Trauma

Dog Bites
Dental Procedures
Routine Surgeries
Falls
Minor Car Accidents
Dismissal

'C' Trauma

Multiple Deployments
Forms of Oppression
Racism
Poverty
Homophobia
Domestic Violence
Witnessing
Multiple Medical Procedures

Traumatic Life Events Specific to Older Adults

- Retirement
- Loss of spouse
- Health and medical challenges
- Loss of lifestyle
- Death of other loved ones/friends
- Concerns for adult children and grandchildren
- Worsening of long standing mental health/addiction issues
- Addiction from long term maladaptive coping skills for depression, anxiety and insomnia
- Elder Abuse

Understanding Trauma in Later Life

- Grief and loss in older adults:
 - What constitutes loss in later life?
- May present with comorbid diagnosis:
 - mental health with drug addiction.
- Under reported symptoms:
 - Attribute physical ailments or memory challenges to “growing old”.

Symptoms of Trauma in Later Life

- Trauma masked by other symptoms:
 - Major Depressive Disorder
 - Substance Related Disorder
 - Panic Disorder
 - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
 - Generalized Anxiety Disorder
 - Social Phobia
 - Hoarding



Why Are Symptoms Important?

- Effects of Stress on Brain Development:
 - Prolonged stress in young children can slow — or even stop — both brain development and physical growth.
 - Prolonged exposure to cortisol released during the stress response can cause long-term damage to the developing brain, and can negatively affect the immune system.
 - How long does cortisol linger in the body after it's released?



Toxic Stress

- A person experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity:
 - physical or emotional abuse
 - chronic neglect
 - caregiver substance abuse
 - mental illness
 - exposure to violence
 - accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate supports.



How Does Trauma Affect Thoughts?

Changes in the Brain

- Alpha waves located in the back of the brain monitor emotions and reactions.
 - After trauma the alpha waves can increase in speed, moving quickly indicating danger and agitation (animal instinct).
- Beta waves are located in the front of the brain monitoring focus and attention.
 - After trauma the beta waves slow down making it harder for a person to pay attention and retain information.

*The brain becomes primal, focusing on survival and instinct instead of understanding and intellect.



How Does Trauma Affect The Body?

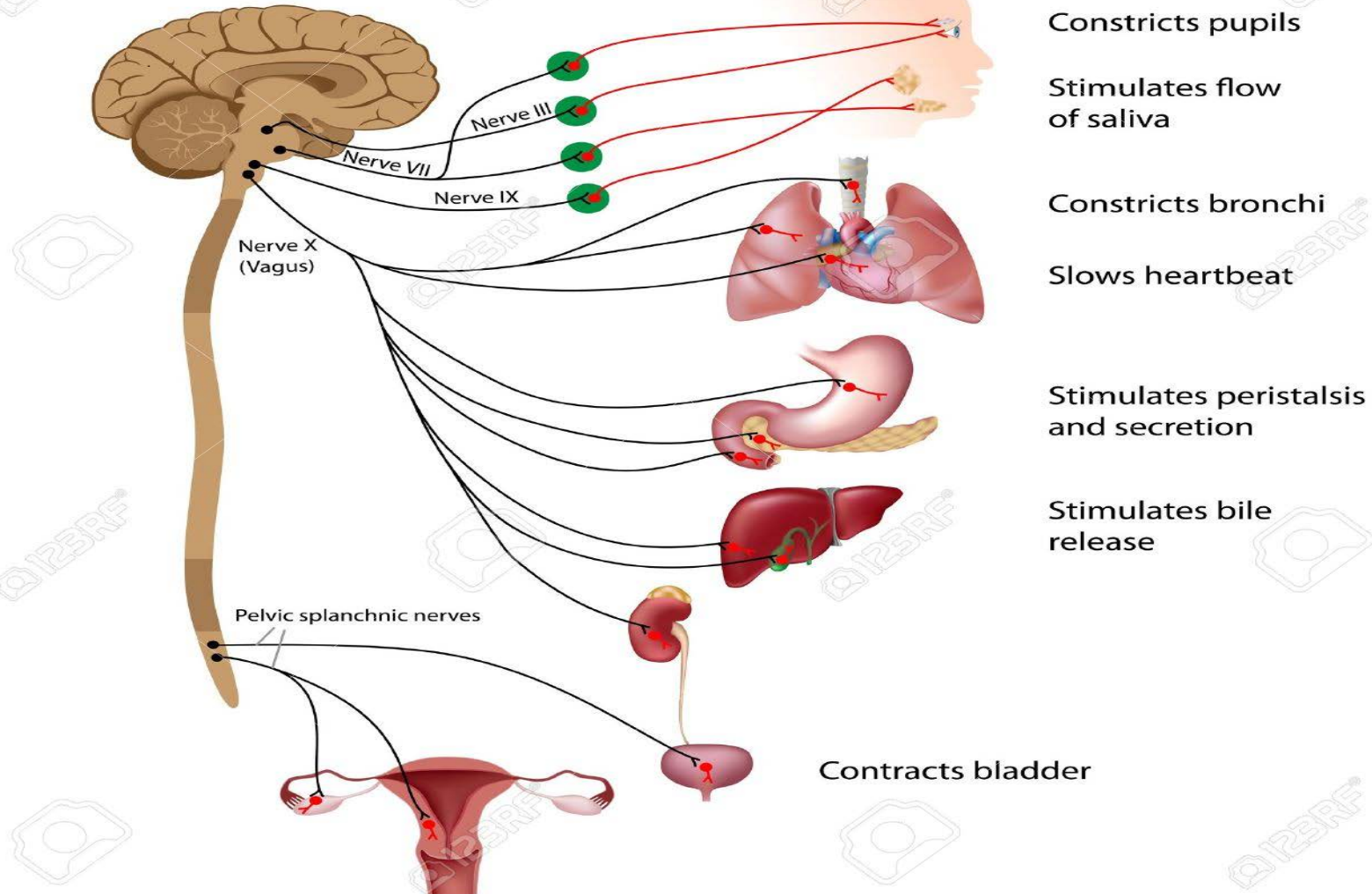
- Chronic Diseases and Disorders: Bodies under constant stress
 - High blood pressure.
 - Autoimmune diseases.
 - Cardiovascular disease.
 - Pulmonary conditions.
 - Inflammatory diseases caused by stress induced increases of Cortisol.
 - Sleep deprivation.



Symptoms Associated with Traumatic Life Events

- Somatization/Undiagnosed Physical Pain
- Migraines/Cluster Headaches
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Insomnia (sleep deprivation)
- Enabling responses to stressful personal and family relationships
- Compromised immune system
- Autoimmune Diseases

Parasympathetic System





Bessel A. van der Kolk, MD

- Danger where none exists
- Impaired filtering system
- Disconnect between emotion and cognition
- Feelings and emotions no longer fit the situation:
 - Anger is expressed when others are happy.
 - Feelings of joy are dulled by feelings of pain and heartache.
- When feelings of pain and heartache increase, independent coping skills decrease:
 - Expansion of maladaptive coping skills



Lifespan of Trauma

- Un-addressed trauma, occurring in the early years of a childhood could potentially lead to:
 - Maladaptive coping skills
 - Poor mental and physical health throughout a child's lifespan
 - Continual state of fight or flight
 - Constant Hypervigilance
 - A feeling of having to choose between needs
 - No sense of safety

Elder Abuse and Health

- Elder Abuse is an action or lack of action which can cause harm or distress to an older person, occurring in any relationship where there is an expectation of trust.
- "Elder abuse is rarely discussed in policy circles, less prioritized for research and addressed by only a handful of organizations," (Dr. Etienne Krug, Director of the WHO Department for the Management of Noncommunicable Diseases, Disability, Violence and Injury Prevention).
- People age 60 and over expected to reach 2 billion globally by 2050, doubling in population.
- Majority residing in low and middle income countries.
- Due to the population growth, older adults affected by abuse expected to hit 320 million victims by 2050.

What Does This Mean for Healthcare

- High rates of recidivism
- Increased appointments to primary care providers
- Heightened level of Emergency Room or Urgent Care visits
- More prescriptions for aches and pains that are not caused by a diagnosable disease or illness
- Changes in Insurance coverage



Implementing Trauma Informed Care

- Be aware
- Taking time to talk & to listen
 - Is information being processed?
 - Can the older adult hear you?
 - Can the older adult see you?
 - Does the older adult have language abilities?
- Give the adult time to process information
- Be transparent
- Respect boundaries (yours and the adults)
- Share control
- Foster mutual learning
- Understand non-linear processing
- Demonstrate awareness and healing of trauma (be a witness to the older adult's story)

Screening Tools

Screening Older Adults for Life Long Trauma:

- Research conducted by Kathleen Kendall-Tacket (2013) identified:
 - Correlation between childhood trauma and adverse health outcomes for older adults.
 - Data from an ACE (Adverse Childhood Event) study conducted in 1995 showed:
 - Increased likelihood of autoimmune disease
 - Increased hospitalization for older adults coping with highly stressful life situations stemming from unresolved traumatic life events (Dube et al., 2009)

Trauma Screen for Older Adult

- The Life Event Screening Tool (LEST) was created to:
 - Compare ACES score and LEST score for correlation of poor health and medical recidivism in later life.
 - Identify older adults in need of additional trauma informed care supports
 - Evaluate if additional supports were effective in reducing health risks

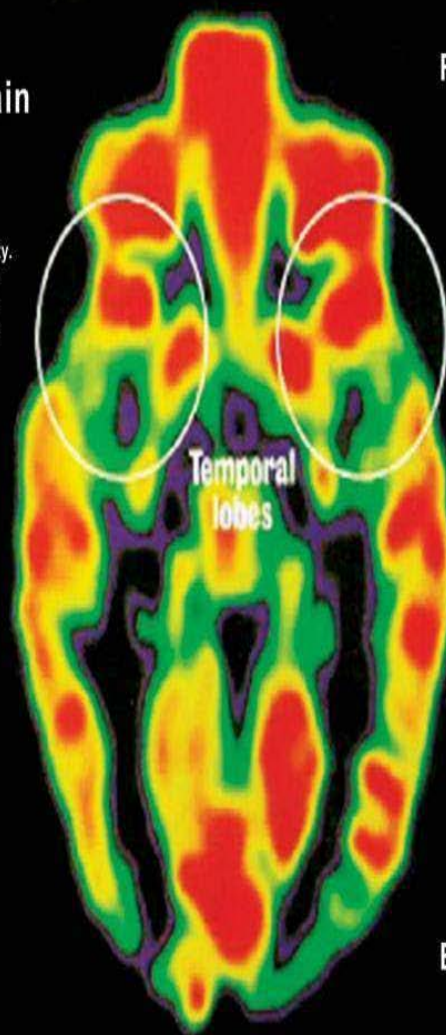


Childhood Trauma

- The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE Study)
 - Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being:
 - These experiences range from:
 - Physical Abuse
 - Emotional Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Divorce
 - Incarceration

Healthy Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.

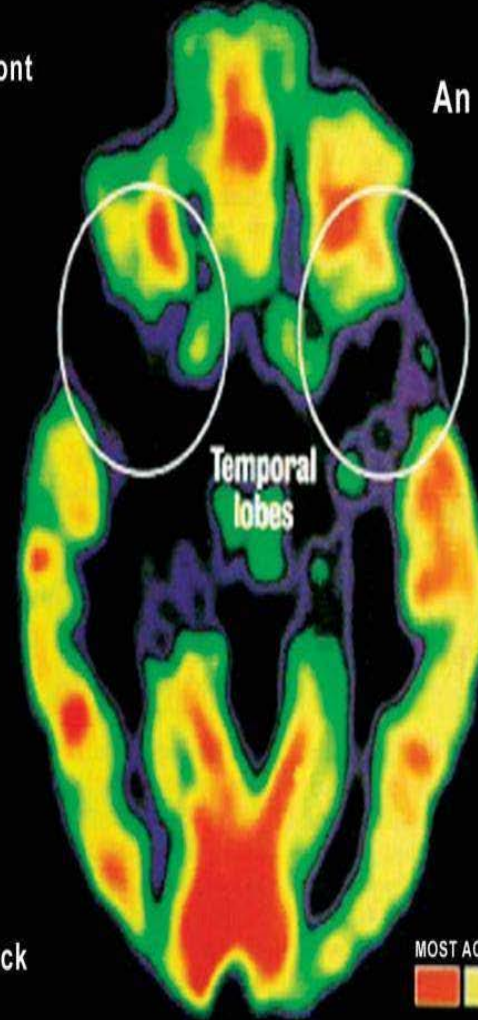


Front

Back

An Abused Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian Orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.



MOST ACTIVE LEAST ACTIVE

A color scale legend for PET scan activity levels. It consists of five colored squares: red, yellow, green, blue, and black. The red square is labeled "MOST ACTIVE" and the black square is labeled "LEAST ACTIVE".

If it affects us when we are young,
will it affect us when we are old?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmDaSv1mkGk>

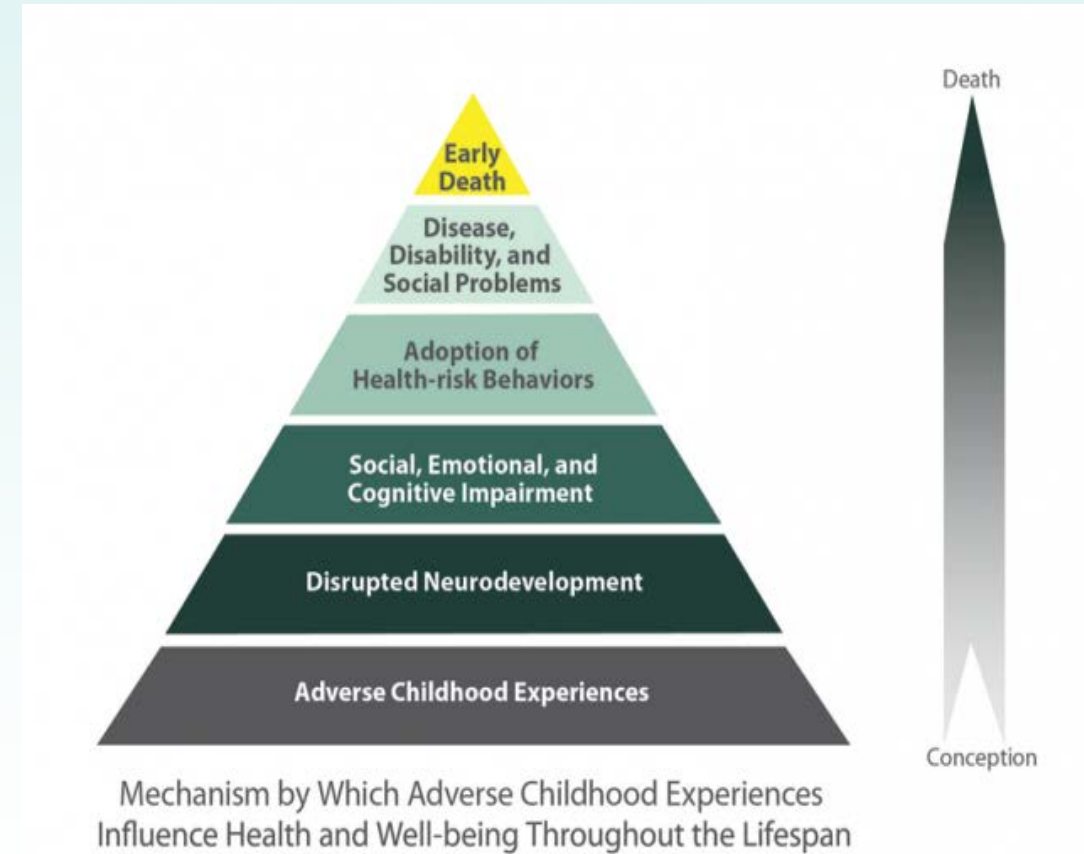
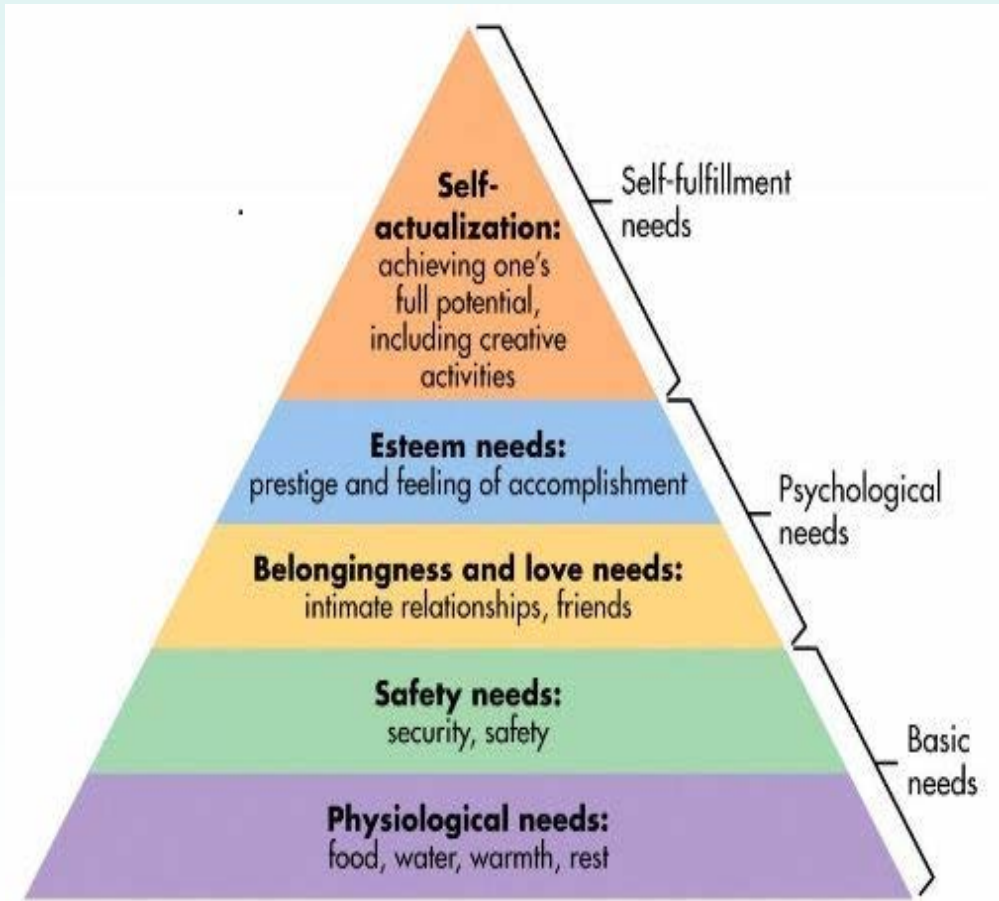
Examples of Trauma in Later Life

- Life Event Screening Tool (LEST)
 - Life history of trauma that has long lasting effects of trauma on older adults:
 - These experiences range from:
 - Divorce
 - Retirement
 - Loss of a child
 - Incarceration
 - Elder Abuse

Life Event Screening Tool & Assessment

- See Hand Outs

Hierarchy Comparison



Nature Vs. Nurture



Healing Through Sleep

- The Thalamus collects naturally occurring stimuli experienced throughout waking periods.
- While we sleep the information moves from the thalamus moves to the frontal lobe
- The frontal lobe processes the information and resets the brain to have a larger perspective on life associations.
- People with PTSD tend to wake themselves from their dreams, disrupting their REM sleep.
- People experiencing trauma do not process their traumatic information in their dreams because they don't reach REM sleep.

Self-Care Tips

- Use mindful thought processing when working with others.
 - What you say matters, as well as how you say it.
- Use mindful problem solving with client's, as well as in your own life.
 - Allow time to process information you receive before responding.
 - Let others around you take your queue.
- Try to remember what you have control over.
 - Only yourself and your own reactions.
- Try to make self-care part of your life, not something you're "fitting in" including getting enough sleep.