

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY

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MY JOURNEY: MENTAL HEALTH IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY

- ❖ President and psychotherapist at Reflections Counseling Center of Columbus, Inc.
 - ❖ Individual, family, & group therapy
 - ❖ Hardship evaluations for immigrants facing deportation
- ❖ Clinician at Riverside Community Care in Boston, MA
- ❖ Clinical Case Manager & Intervention, Prevention, and Education Counselor at the Center for Multicultural Human Services in Washington, DC
- ❖ Neighborhood Liaison at The Children's Bureau in Indianapolis, IN
- ❖ Certificate in Trauma Studies from the Trauma Center at JRI in Boston, MA

THROUGH THE YEARS, I KEPT
RUNNING INTO DIFFERENT FORMS
OF THE SAME UNDERLYING ISSUE...



untreated trauma

CASE EXAMPLES...



- Carla separated from her parents at a young age when they went to the U.S. for work, leaving her with her grandparents in El Salvador...
- Ana is a teenage immigrant who came to the U.S. with her parents by crossing the border when she was 6 years old...
- Juan is an adult who works two jobs 6 days a week to provide for his wife and baby...

SO, WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TRAUMA?

“Overwhelming demands placed upon the physiological system that result in a profound felt sense of vulnerability and/or loss of control.”

-R.D. Macy

“...BUT IF I’M TRAUMATIZED,
DOESN’T THAT MEAN I’M *WEAK?*”



EXAMPLES OF TRAUMA

❖ Chronic trauma examples:

- ❖ Physical abuse/assault
- ❖ Sexual abuse/assault
- ❖ Emotional/verbal abuse
- ❖ Witnessing domestic violence
- ❖ Neighborhood/school violence
- ❖ Physical/emotional neglect
- ❖ Homelessness and/or poverty
- ❖ Separation due to immigration issues

❖ Acute trauma examples:

- ❖ Accidents
- ❖ Natural disasters
- ❖ Traumatic loss/mourning
- ❖ Homicide/suicide
- ❖ Public shooting (single incident)

❖ Examples of trauma from continuous stressors

- ❖ Multiple foster placements
- ❖ Loss of attachment figures
- ❖ Trauma response of parents
- ❖ Numerous disclosures

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF TRAUMA?

- Possible consequences include:
 - Dissociation
 - Hypervigilance
 - Suicidality
 - General health problems
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Substance use/abuse
 - Emotional numbing or overwhelming emotions (difficulty self-regulating)
 - Changes in brain structures and function
 - Alterations in eating patterns
 - Relational or behavioral reenactment (disconnection, over-dependence, impaired trust, etc.)
 - Constricted or excessive sexual behaviors
 - Self-injury
 - Sensation-seeking behaviors

COMMON MISDIAGNOSES

- Conduct disorders
- ADD/ADHD
- Bipolar

WHAT IS “TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE”?

Rather than a “one treatment fits all” perspective, trauma-informed care refers to a nuanced approach that caters to the specific strengths and needs of a client and their family and culture, while also holding knowledge and sensitivity regarding the multiple potential physiological, neuropsychological, and relational impacts of trauma.

¿PREGUNTAS? QUESTIONS?

