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Break the Chains of Generational Trauma

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Break the chains of generational trauma

Jessica Calalay | Summer 2022
T SOC 165A | Natalie Jolly



How Trauma Is Perpetuated

Any sort of trauma can start at anytime

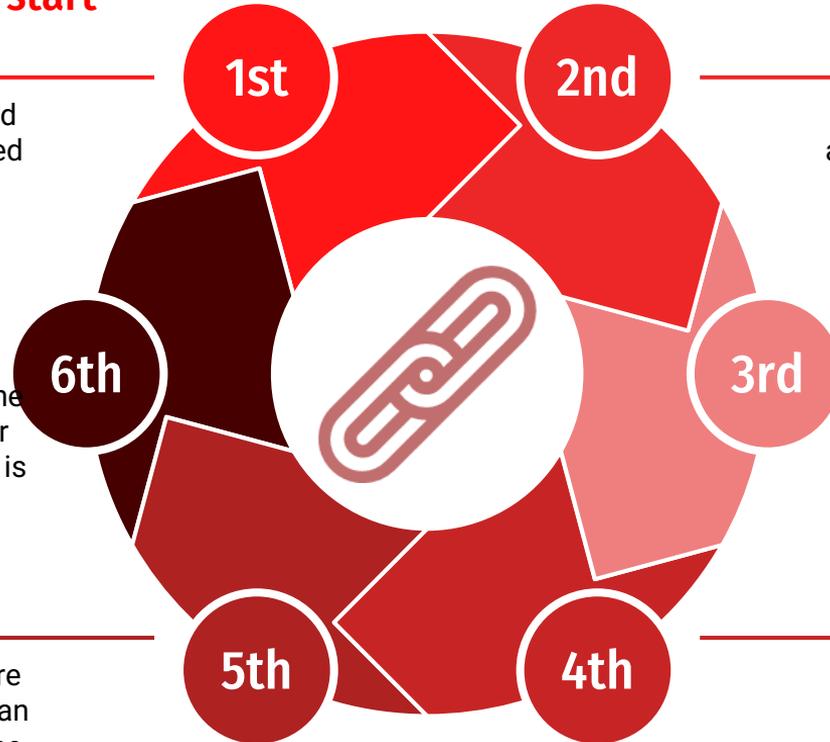
A person can be born into a world where there are already socialized mechanics in place (i.e. biases, stereotypes, prejudice, etc.)

When we don't take action

When nothing is done to break the cycle, it is likely to repeat itself or can become worse. Intervention is most important during the 2nd stage.

Results

When the core of these values are to create fear and insecurity, it can result in dehumanization, violence, or internalization of patterns of power.



Transmission of trauma

Those values, mores, or folkways are then taught on a personal level from our environment

How it gets translated

Those messages are reinforced through institutional and cultural socialization (i.e. church, TV, music)

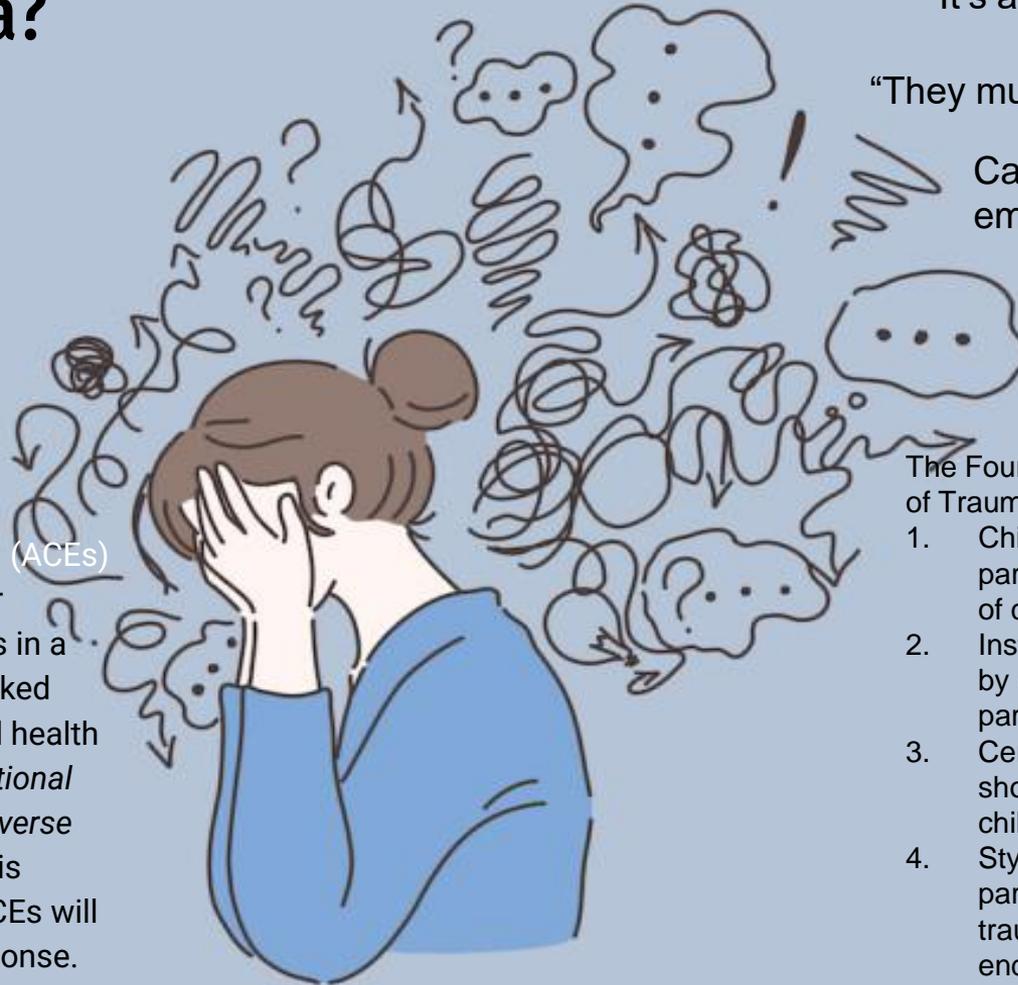
Enforcements

These patterns of thought are enforced, sancationed, stigmatized, etc.

What is trauma?

Generational trauma is defined as a “phenomenon in which the descendant's of a person who has experienced a terrifying event shows adverse emotions and behavioral reactions to the event that are similar to those of the person” themselves (Njaka & Peacock, 2021).

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) “describes the abuse, trauma or neglect that creates toxic stress in a child’s brain, which has been linked with physical illness and mental health conditions as an adult” (*Generational trauma: Breaking the cycle of adverse childhood experiences* 2021). It is important to note that not all ACEs will result in a negative trauma response.



“It’s all my fault”

“They must be mad at me”

Causing physical and emotional harm to others

Depression

The Four Basic Psychological Pathways of Trauma Transmission:

1. Children’s identification with their parents suffering at similar stages of chronological development
2. Instinctual responsibility assumed by children to make up for their parents suffering
3. Certain patterns of parenting shown by survivors toward their children
4. Styles of communication between parents and children concerning traumatic experiences parents had endured.

(Doucet & Rovers, 2010)

Healing methods

- Normalize therapy and seek help from a trauma-informed provider
- Build a personal support system that practice spiritual transformation
- Find a support group that share your trauma and allows you a safe space to talk
- Pick up a small hobby like knitting, doodling, or journaling
- Get active



NOTE: This is not medical advice. Please consult your medical provider first.

References

Ryder, G. (2022, April 15). *Intergenerational trauma: How it affects families*. Psych Central. Retrieved August 11, 2022, from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/how-intergenerational-trauma-impacts-families>

This article defines and discusses the ways intergenerational trauma occurs within a family and how it affects the family for generations.

Pukatch, C., Chokshi, B., Smiley, Y., Ramsey, N., & Dzienny, A. (2022, March 11). 114. *Generational Trauma: Teen Parent Reactions to a Brief Intervention in the Primary Care Clinic*. ScienceDirect. Retrieved August 11, 2022, from <https://www.sciencedirect-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/science/article/pii/S1054139X22002683>

This article is about a study that was conducted on teen parents to find out if this intervention called “Generational Trauma Conversation Card” was effective.

Rettig, M. (2019, August 24). *Notes on intergenerational trauma*. Medium. Retrieved August 15, 2022, from <https://medium.com/rettigs-notes/https-medium-com-mrettig-notes-on-intergenerational-trauma-586328d12e54>

This compilation of notes shed light on the complex definition of intergenerational trauma, how they are perpetuated, and what we can do as a society to ensure we break the cycle.

This compiling of notes made it easier for me to create the life cycle of trauma.

Latuff, C. (2014, November 20). *3 charges sobre o dia da consciência negra pic.twitter.com/eprjdzczqy*. Twitter. Retrieved August 11, 2022, from <https://twitter.com/latuffcartoons/status/535389300813463552>

This photo sparked my ideas of how a person may be able to break the cycle of trauma. Generational trauma didn’t start with us but it can end with us.

IU Health. (2021, March 23). *Generational trauma: Breaking the cycle of adverse childhood experiences*. IU Health. Retrieved August 15, 2022, from <https://iuhealth.org/thrive/generational-trauma-breaking-the-cycle-of-adverse-childhood-experiences>

Understanding ACEs is an integral part of discontinuing the reinforcement of negative habits that can result in conditions such as depression, heart disease, and cancer.

Njaka, I., & Peacock, D. (2021, January 21). *Addressing trauma as a pathway to social change*. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved August 15, 2022, from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/addressing_trauma_as_a_pathway_to_social_change#bio-footer

This article thoroughly defines what trauma is and how it can make a social impact, just by knowing what trauma really is. For generations, we have come to accept our traumas as a rite of passage or is the foundation of life and is deemed normal.

Doucet, M., & Rovers, M. (2010). *Generational trauma, attachment, and spiritual/religious interventions*. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 15(2), 93–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15325020903373078>

Healing comes in many different ways and research shows that using a spiritual or religious medium to do so is most effective.

Castelloe, M. S. (2012). *How trauma is carried across generations*. Psychology Today. Retrieved August 15, 2022, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-me-in-we/201205/how-trauma-is-carried-across-generations>

This article talks about the idea that when human beings can’t make sense of the trauma being put on us, we influence the next generation to do the same.

Lagoy, J. (2021, August 26). *How Gen Zers are breaking toxic cycles of trauma in their families*. Mindpath Health. Retrieved August 15, 2022, from <https://www.mindpath.com/resource/how-gen-zers-are-breaking-toxic-cycles-of-trauma-in-their-families/>

This blog discusses the ways the newer generations (Gen Z) are combating generational trauma that resulted from the Great Depression, Recession, and pandemics.

Gobodo-Madikizela, P. (2016). *Interrupting Cycles of Repetition: Creating Spaces for Dialogue, Facing and Mourning the Past*. In P. Gobodo-Madikizela (Ed.), *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory* (1st ed., pp. 113–134). Verlag Barbara Budrich. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvdf03jc.12>

Using apartheid in South Africa as a reference, this journal talks about the ways society can regain their autonomy and strength. This particular chapter talks about acknowledgement and mourning as a way to overcome the trauma the community has faced.

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