

THE TRAUMA HANDOUT

At Optim8 Health and Wellness (formerly Kopec Functional Wellness), we believe addressing your physical health is of utmost importance in your health journey. The entire body and even the brain benefits by addressing nutritional deficiencies and other imbalances.

There comes a time to address a different part of our health and wellness journey by considering our *mental and emotional spheres*. If trauma has occurred, it is important to consider how the trauma response is affecting our wellbeing.

In doing this, first, we need to reframe our perception of trauma. Trauma is not just an isolated traumatic event, but it may also affect the way you navigate the world based on childhood messaging and upbringing.

Here at Optim8, we want you to consider the journey of achieving HEALTH as not only the work in the integrative and functional part of your physical health, but is also the connection between mind, body, spirit and the microbiome (gut/digestive system).

This handout is not a replacement for medical advice provided by a mental health professional. Instead, this is to broaden your understanding of how you might need to address the nervous system and/or chronic trauma responses in order to achieve your health and wellness goals.

Currently, we do not have a trauma therapist on staff, and the information contained in this handout is for education purposes only. It is not a substitute for medical advice or a replacement for deeper work on trauma with a qualified trauma specialist/therapist. If you would like a referral to a therapist or psychologist, we can provide you with several options.

Additional work on the autonomic nervous system can be done separately and in addition to the work you are doing on your physical health and trauma response. We can provide a referral to a neuro-tonal chiropractor and/or acupuncturist.

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In the book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, Dr. Van Der Kolk brings to light the concept that the body stores trauma memories in several places: not only in the mind, but in the immune system. Trauma can also manifest in one's pain and inflammation responses. There is even a theory that if an individual is part of a dysfunctional family and in the middle of a developmental phase such as puberty, trauma can lay the ground for autoimmune disorders to be hardwired to the body.

In several of his books such as *The Mind Body Prescription*, Dr. John Sarno addresses repressed emotions as a true consideration in certain physical ailments. Dr. Sarno states that the body may even also create "defense mechanisms" to keep the body preoccupied with physical ailments rather than addressing the trauma itself.

"Trapped trauma" can show up in the immune system, in inflammatory responses or in the way we respond to stress. This may directly impact our digestive system, contributing to nutritional deficiencies and/or digestive symptoms. And the cycle can start again. A trauma response may also contribute to your body resisting physical transformation, keeping you at a plateau or setting you back in your health journey with regressive symptoms or new ailments. This reaction may even affect your metabolic health goals such as weight loss.

In the book *Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving*, Pete Walker examines how our trauma behavior can both serve and not serve our overall health. As we move through life with a trauma-based response system, we may have integrated an inner critic which does not allow us to be whole and healthy. The next page is an excerpt of new thought processes to address inner critic attacks, taken directly from Pete Walker's *Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving*. For the complete section refer to Chapter 9: Shrinking the Inner Critic.

In the chart at the end of this handout we have laid out Walker's Trauma Types to understand a broad stroke of how we might be reacting as a trauma response which may have a place in our understanding of our health journey.

For the entire chapter on Trauma Types, please request it in your portal, or read Chapter 6: What is my Trauma Type? And remember.....your cells are listening to your thoughts.

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NEW IDEAS & AFFIRMATIONS

- [Defeat] Perfectionism: I do not need to be perfect to be safe or loved in the present. I have a right to make mistakes. Mistakes do not make me a mistake. Every mistake or mishap is an opportunity to practice loving myself in the places I have never been loved.
- [Defeat] All-or-Nothing and Black & White Thinking: I reject extreme or over generalized descriptions, judgments or criticisms. One negative happenstance does not mean I am stuck in an never-ending pattern of defeat.
- [Defeat] Self-hate, Self-disgust and Toxic Shame: I commit to myself. I am on my side. I am a good person. I refuse to trash myself. As long as I am not hurting anyone, I refuse to be shamed for normal emotional responses like anger, sadness, fear and depression. I especially refuse to attack myself for how hard it is to completely eliminate the self-hate habit.
- [Defeat] Micromanagement/Worrying/Obsessing/Looping/Overfuturizing: I will not repetitively examine details over and over. I will not jump to negative conclusions. I will not endlessly second guess myself. I cannot change the past. I forgive all my past mistakes. I cannot make the future perfectly safe. I will in a way that is good enough and I accept the fact that my efforts sometimes bring desired results and sometimes they do not.
- [Defeat] Unfair devaluing comparisons to others: I will not compare my insides to their outsides. I will not judge myself for not being at peak performance at all times.
- [Defeat] Guilt: Feeling guilty does not mean I am guilty. I will apologize, make amends and let go of my guilt.
- [Defeat] Shoulding: Know the appropriate word choice of must and want in place of should.

NEW IDEAS & AFFIRMATIONS, PT 2

- [Defeat] Overproductive/Busyholism/Workaholism: I am a human being not a human doing. I will not choose to be perpetually productive. I am more productive in the long run, when I balance work with play and relaxation.
- [Defeat] Harsh judgments of self & others: I will not displace the criticism and blame that rightfully belongs to my dysfunctional caretakers onto myself or current people in my life.
- [Defeat] Drasticizing/Catastrophizing/Hypochondriasizing: I feel afraid but I am not in danger. I am not “in trouble” with my parents. I refuse to scare myself with thoughts and pictures of my life deteriorating.
- [Defeat] Negative Focus: I renounce ever noticing and dwelling on what might be wrong with me or my life around me. I will not minimize or discount my attributes.
- [Defeat] Time Urgency: I am not in danger. I do not need to rush. I will not hurry unless it is a true emergency. I am learning to enjoy doing my daily activities at a relaxed pace.
- [Defeat] Disabling Performance Anxiety: I reduce procrastination by reminding myself that I will not accept unfair criticism or perfectionist expectations from anyone. Even when afraid, I will defend myself from unfair criticism. I won't let fear make my decisions.
- [Defeat] Perserverating about being attacked: Unless there are clear signs of danger, I will thought-stop my projection of past bullies/critics onto others.*
- *If you are in a dangerous relationship or under the threat of real danger please seek professional help. The above statement does not include situations of domestic violence and other perceived threats.
- If any of the above statements apply to you, we recommend working with a trained therapist to do the work involved.

DETRIMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE	FAWN
Narcissistic	Obsessive	Right-Brain	Codependent
Explosive	Compulsive	Dissociation	Obsequious
Controlling	OCD	Contracting	Servitude
[Enslaving]	Dissociative	Hiding	[Groveling]
Entitlement	Panicky	[Camouflaging]	Loss of self
Type-A	Rushing or worrying	Isolation	People-pleaser
Bully	[Outrunning pain]	Couch Potato	Doormat
Autocrat	Driven-ness	Space case	Slave
	Adrenaline junkie	Hermit	
Demands	Busyholic	Achievement-	Social
perfection	Micromanager	phobic	perfectionism
Sociopath	Compelled by	Schizoid	Domestic
Conduct	perfectionism	ADD	Violence victim
Disorder	Mood disorder		Parentified child
	[Bipolar]		
	Schizophrenic		
	ADHD		

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DISTORTED CHARACTERISTICS

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE	FAWN
Control to connect	Perfect to connect	No way I'll connect	Merge to connect
Rage to be safe	Perfect to be safe	Hide to be safe	Grovel to be safe

POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FREEZE	FAWN
Assertiveness	Disengagement	Acute awareness	Love & Service
Boundaries	Healthy Retreat	Mindfulness	Compromise
Courage	Industriousness	Poised	Listening
Moxie	Know-How	Readiness	Fairness
Leadership	Perseverance	Peace	Peacemaking
		Presence	

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