

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

ACUTE TRAUMA =

Sudden and severe event of terrifying experience

REPEATED ACUTE TRAUMA =

Numbers of sudden and severe events of terrifying experience

CUMULATIVE TRAUMA =

Chronic experiences of abuse, deprivation, and/or neglect

VICARIOUS TRAUMA =

Witnessing terrifying experiences with which you are helpless to intervene

The critical element that makes an event traumatic is the assessment by the victim of how threatened and helpless s/he feel.

- Although the reality of extraordinary events is at the core of PTSD, the meaning that victims attach to these events is as fundamental as the trauma itself.
- PTSD results from the individual's inability to come to terms with real experiences that have overwhelmed her/his ability to cope.

RESPONSES TO TRAUMA

The response is influenced by a person's developmental stage, basic temperament, and the kind of environmental in which s/he is living

- Avoiding and numbing
- Surrender = Immobilizing or 'freezing'
- Fleeing
- Hyperarousal
- Dissociation
- Inability to decipher accurately stimuli
- Inability to regulate your own arousal (your own physical sensations become a source of fear)
Only later...
- Fighting back/defiance