

BREAKING THE CHAINS OF GENERATIONAL TRAUMA



CARMEN PARRA

THE ROOTS:

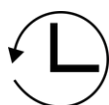
People can inherit trauma just as heirlooms, hair color, or secret recipes may be passed down through a family. Generational trauma is a cycle that repeatedly gets passed down through generations, commonly occurring biologically, environmentally or even psychologically. (Ryder, 2022) The roots of generational trauma typically begins when a groups experiences a traumatic events which can lead to an economical, cultural or even a familiar distress that leave them in an unknown position. Some historical examples of specific groups that have been affected in the past are Holocaust survivors, Black American, and Indigenous people. (DeAngelis, 2019)



"Sometimes breaking generational curses means becoming your own parent."
—Alex Myles

6 TYPICAL RESPONSES TO TRAUMA:

- Unpredictable Emotions
- Flashbacks
- Strained Relationships
- Physical Symptoms
- Anxiety
- Depression



WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma is an emotional response that happens after one is a part of a horrible event such as an accident, natural disasters, etc. In many cases, individuals are born into a world that already has shaped biases and stereotypes. Such norms are typically reinforced or taught from cultural socialization or through music or media. At times these values can create a burden of insecurity which can lead to following effects. (All Points North, 2022) When nothing is done to end such cycle of getting rid of biases and stereotypes then it can become worse and most likely will be passed on to the next generation.

"Some of us are here to be the change makers in our family system. We're here to end generational trauma and start passing down love, instead of pain."

-Sheleana Aiyanna



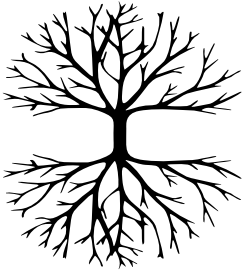
FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF HEALING:

Healing and acceptance can be one of the most difficult things we as humans may have to go through. The way that we embrace or try to understand our trauma controls the way that we may perceive life or carry ourselves out of that repeated cycle. (Indiana University Health, 2023)

HEALING METHODS:

1. Identifying the roots of your Trauma:

- Uncovering the patterns or beliefs that tend to be circulating within your family will help clear the path in understanding what the repeated tendencies are. By analyzing family history you are able to understand how you can handle situation differently than how your family was once taught



2. Accepting your Trauma:

- It may be difficult to accept and process trauma that may have happened within a family and identifying those long last effects that have reach you. Understanding and accepting will help clear an easier path to navigate away from the trauma



3. Practicing Self Care:

- Utilizing methods such as journaling, going on walks, practicing meditation, etc. will help keep you grounded during times of uncertainty, change, growth and most importantly healing. Investing in time directed towards yourself will ensure for you to balance and soak in the negative and positive outcomes

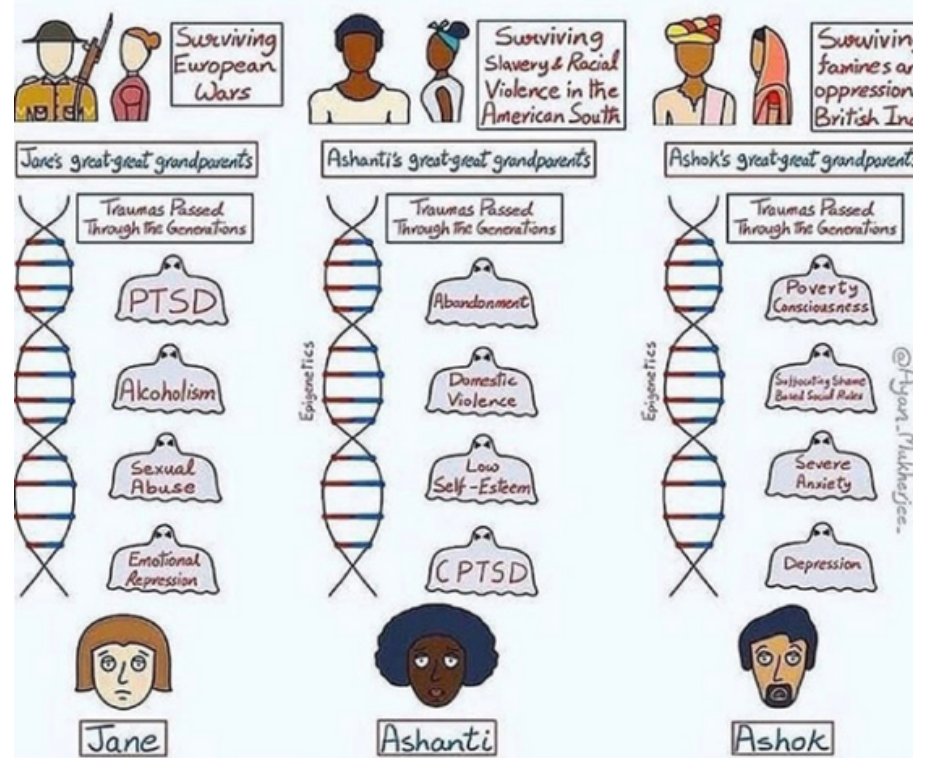


4. Seeking Support:

- It is always good to remember that you are not facing anything alone, seeking for professional help can point you towards a path of healing and understanding. Professional help can guide you with the proper techniques and methods needed when to break the chains of generational trauma once and for all



Inter-Generational Trauma



When you work on your trauma, you choose to not pass it on to the next generation.

This graphic shows three different examples of generation trauma being passed down from great-great grandparents. Including the symptoms and the repercussions

FURTHER OPTIONS:

Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET):

- A therapeutic model that directs its focus on treating patients that have experienced traumatic events in their life. A group setting is typically used to assist in challenges with the end goal of "contextualizame the experience" and dig into the positives that come out of it.

The Intergenerational Trauma Treatment Model (ITTM)

- The focus is directed on children and their caregivers. It is designed to treat trauma that is unresolved trauma from childhood, the goal is to treat two different generations in one.

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

- This method of treatment has a combination of psycho education and cognitive techniques to teach children/teens to find the skills to cope with emotions, deal with stressors, process trauma stories, and manage stable mental health.

(White et al., 2022)



"For those choosing to break generational cycles, your parents couldn't do it. Their parents couldn't do it. But for some reason, you noticed the pattern and decided it ends with you. You're the prototype. So much power you have. That must be a lot huh?"

-Anonymous

annotated bibliography

Breaking generational trauma: A guide. Transformations Care Network. (n.d.).

<https://www.transformationsnetwork.com/post/breaking-generational-trauma>

This article focuses on the occasional reflection of childhood that society pushes onto individuals. One of the ways that I would incorporate the information from this article is by analyzing how trauma that has been experienced by ancestors may affect someone now. Another piece of important information that I will use are the signs to watch out for that show evidence of generational trauma within someone

DeAngelis, T. (2019, February). The Legacy of Trauma. Monitor on Psychology.

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/02/legacy-trauma>

This article highlights different stories from different parts of the world that highlight different generational trauma scenarios. Something that I would like to take from this reading is the idea that "Each generation seemed to kind of learn from the previous one, with survivors telling children, 'Don't trust others, don't trust the world.'"

Greenberg, D. M., Baron-Cohen, S., Rosenberg, N., Fonagy, P., & Rentfrow, P. J. (2018). Elevated empathy in adults following childhood trauma. PLOS ONE, 13(10).

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0203886>

This article takes a closer look at how traumatic events can be a cause of depression. The research that was conducted helps me analyze the conclusion that when someone experiences childhood trauma their understanding and perspective of other feelings and mental state is heightened. This is something that I will want to incorporate into my final project as I feel like it is an important factor when it comes to trauma.

Indiana University Health. (2023a). Researching adverse childhood experiences and trauma. Adverse Childhood Experiences and Serious Youth Violence, 21–40.

<https://doi.org/10.56687/9781529225952-005>

This article introduces "ACES" which stands for "adverse childhood experience" meaning they describe abuse, trauma, or neglect. One of the important facts that was listed that I would like to incorporate into my research is that typically the parents of children that do experience ACEs may have most likely experienced the same kind of trauma or neglect then creating an ongoing cycle.

Petion, A. R., Chang, C. Y., Brown-Thompson, C., Mitchell, M. D., Grinnage, D., & Huffstead, M. E. (2022). "Battling something bigger than me": A phenomenological investigation of generational trauma in African American women. Journal of Counseling & Development, 101(1), 69–83.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12454>

The research that is conducted in this journal looks at different experiences that African American woman college students have experienced regarding generational trauma. I would like to further investigate the research findings as it explores "avoidance, functioning in dysfunction, gendered differences, and the motivation to cause changes."

annotated bibliography

Ph.D., D. K.-W., & MD, R. by: K. F. (2022, June 8). *Intergenerational trauma: What it is & how to heal*. Choosing Therapy. <https://www.choosingtherapy.com/intergenerational-trauma/>

This article displays the complexity of generational trauma and how it makes its way through families. I enjoyed reading this article as if showcased methods of healing that go to a more extreme depth such as more intense therapy that is stricter to help multiple generations at once.

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

This article explores how sometimes generational trauma works in a way that you may not have been directly abused but perhaps your great grandparents were. I would like to use the information from this article as it highlights how a big chunk of people that do experience passed down trauma tend to be people of color and those that may be lower income.

4 ways generational trauma affects families (and how to stop the cycle). All Points North. (2022, August 9). <https://apn.com/resources/4-ways-generational-trauma-affects-families/>

This article just adds more information from what I have already collected from the previous readings, how traumatic events may change the perspective from which people view the world and may put them in a constant state of "survival mode." This article will help me include the statistics and share about the higher likelihood of mental illness and addiction when someone experiences generational trauma