



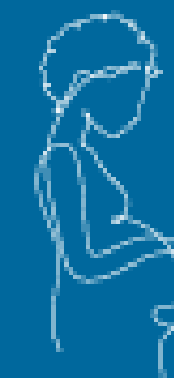
A Mother & Nurses Road to Healing

Autumn Mels, wife, mom x4,
DNP, MSN-Ed, RNC-OB, C-EFM, CNE

Objectives

1. Identify and learn how traumatic birth events can affect both patients and healthcare workers.
2. Understand the impact of trauma on the body

Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Mental Health Recommendations



Mental health conditions: includes the following disorders — anxiety, depressive, bipolar, psychotic, substance use, and other psychiatric conditions. Overdoses are included in this category.

38%

38% of all pregnancy-related deaths were caused by mental health conditions, as defined above in 2020.

88%

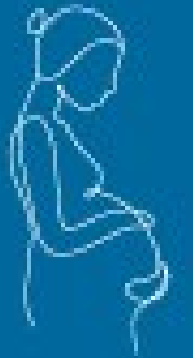
88% of pregnancy-related deaths caused by mental health conditions were due to overdose in 2020.

Other related outcomes

10,543

10,543 birthing people had a mental health or substance use disorder diagnosis at the time of delivery in 2020.¹

Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Mental Health Recommendations



Top mental health recommendations for providers

A provider is an individual with training and expertise who provides care, treatment, and/or advice.



Providers should refer patients with mental health conditions to wraparound services for care coordination to help with appointments, medications, and navigating systems.



Providers should complete screening for substance use disorder for all patients, and patients should be provided assistance and support in treatment of addiction.

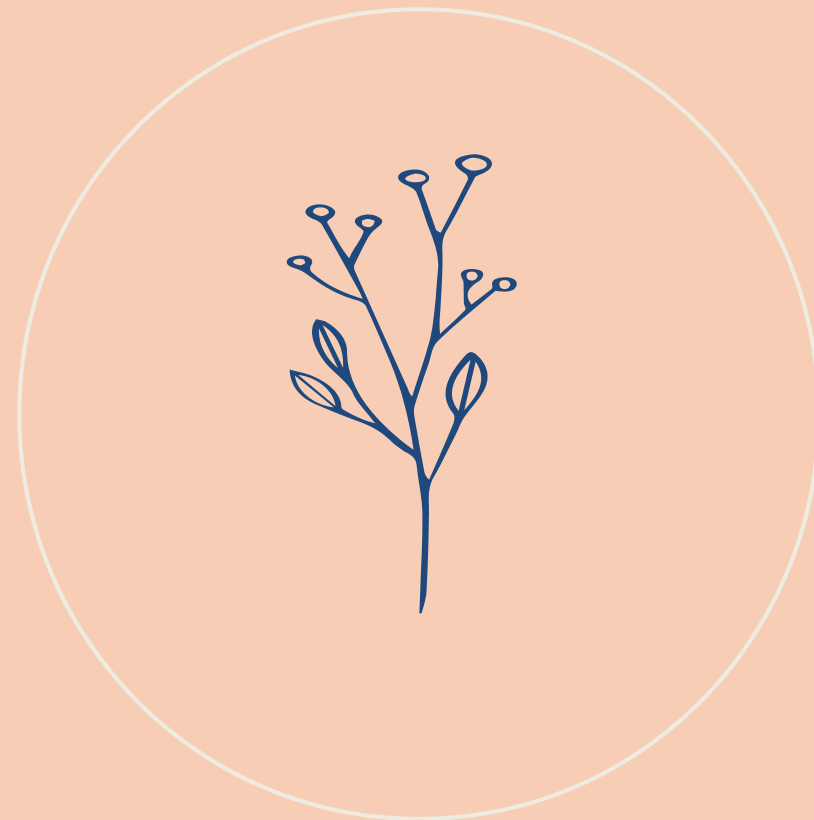


Providers should use [Periscope](#) or telehealth consultation services when patients present with mental health concerns to initiate treatment when possible.

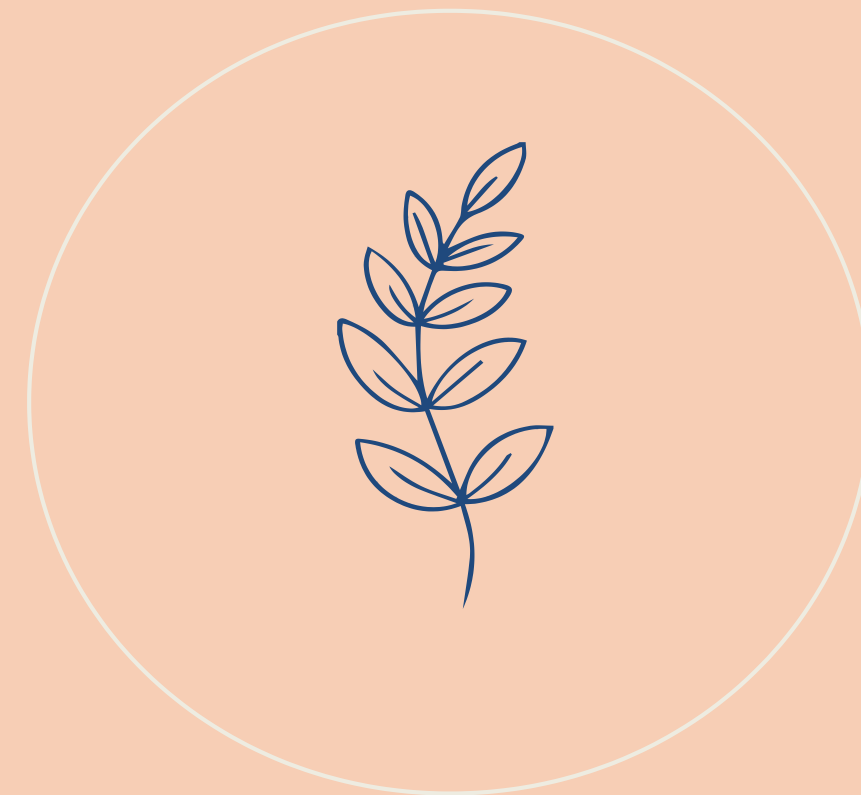




I am here for...



Patients



Nurses



How do you define trauma?

What is a traumatic experience?

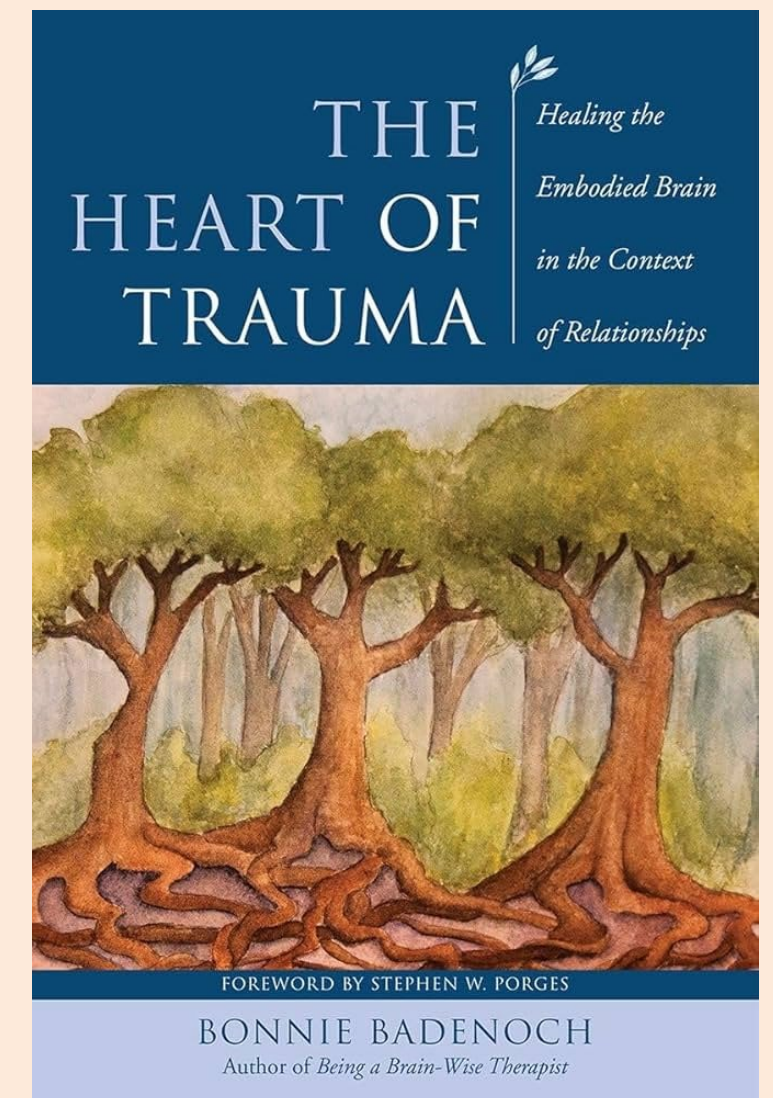
What messages have you received about trauma (from family, friends, media, church, society) and how to cope with it?

Trauma Definition

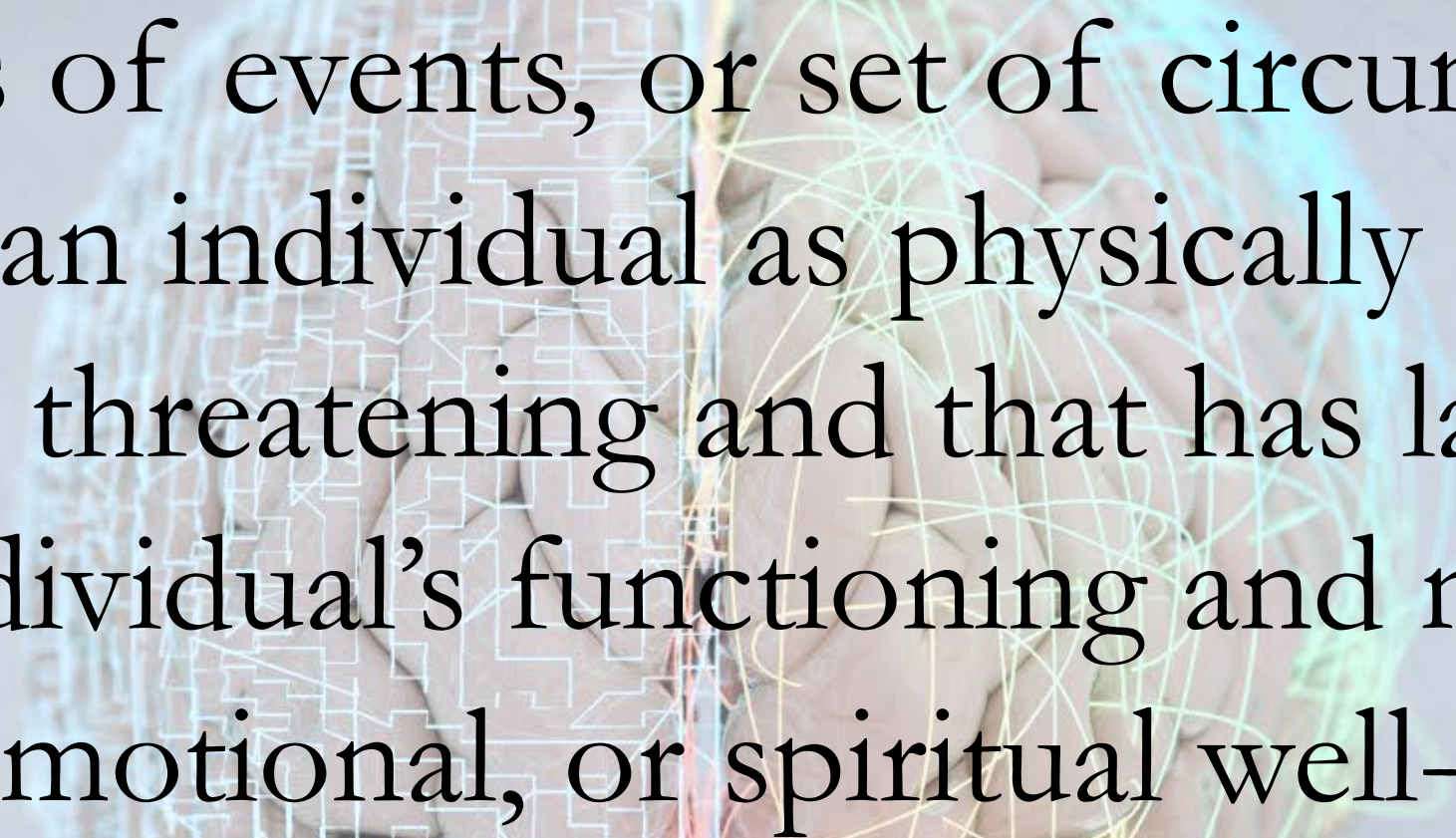
“Any experience of fear and/or pain that doesn’t have the support it needs to be digested and integrated into the flow of our developing brains”
(p. 23)

“It is possible that the origin of trauma has more to do with our interpersonal environment than with the event itself” (p. 24)

“The essence of trauma isn’t events but aloneness within them. Who we perceive as being with us before, during, and after an event is central to our ability to integrate the trauma” (p. 25)



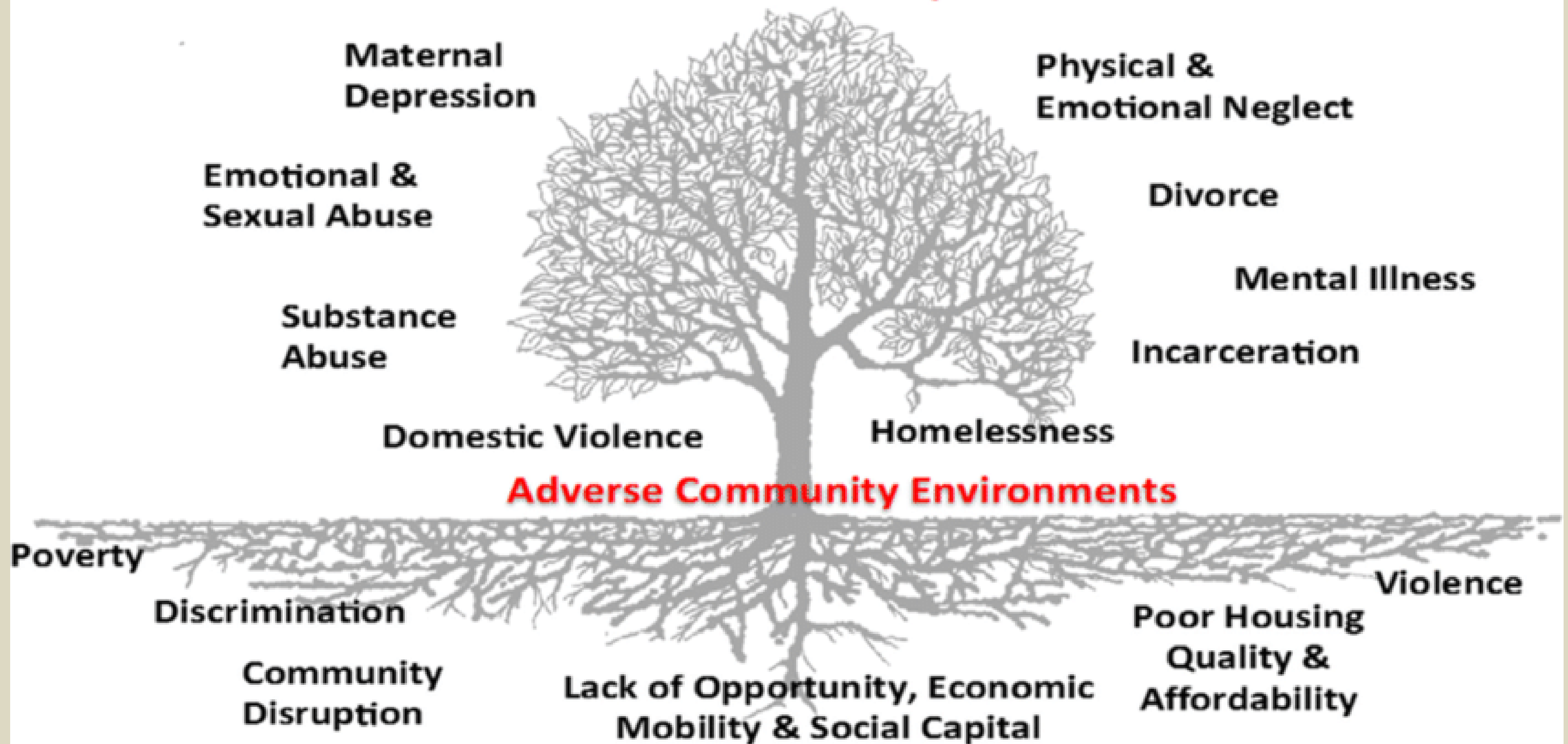
(Bonnie Badenoch, 2017)



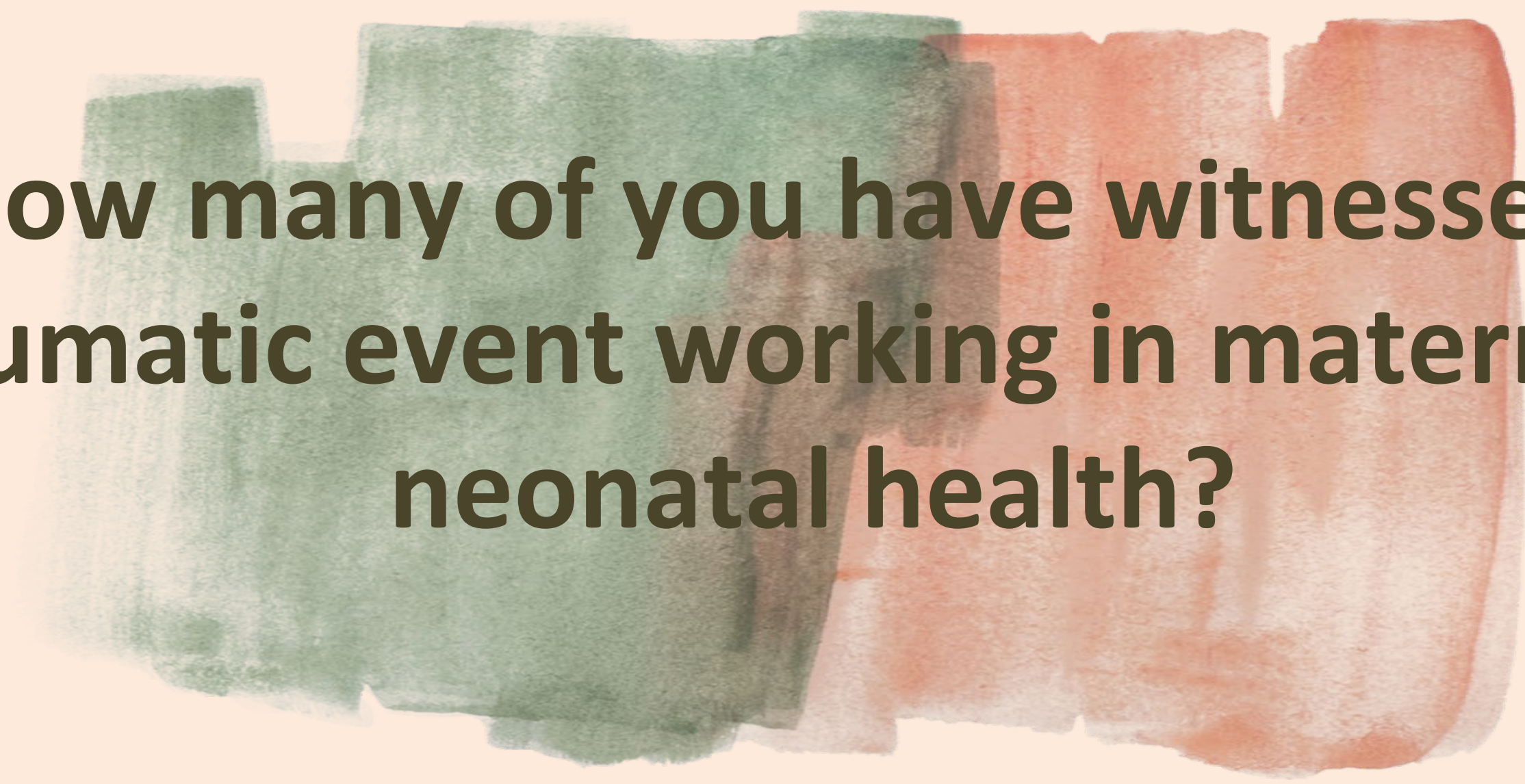
“An event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being”

-The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

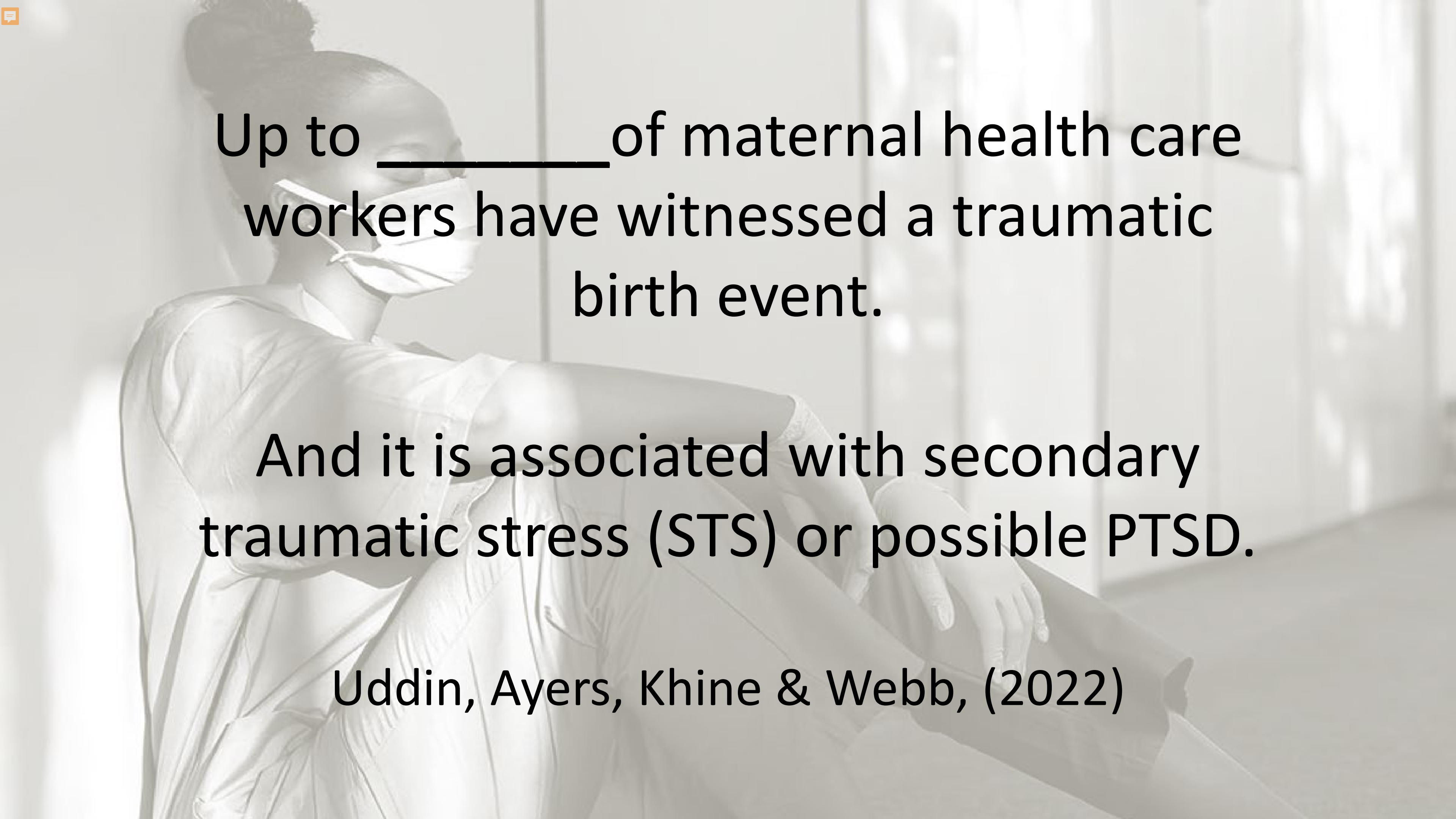
Adverse Childhood Experiences



The Pair of ACEs Tree indicating multiple types of ACEs and the relationship to adverse community environments. Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. Academic Pediatrics. 17(2017) pp.S86-S93. DOI information: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011>

The background features two overlapping watercolor brushstrokes. The left stroke is a muted green, and the right stroke is a warm, terracotta orange. They are positioned behind the text, creating a soft, artistic backdrop.


**How many of you have witnessed a
traumatic event working in maternal or
neonatal health?**



Up to _____ of maternal health care workers have witnessed a traumatic birth event.

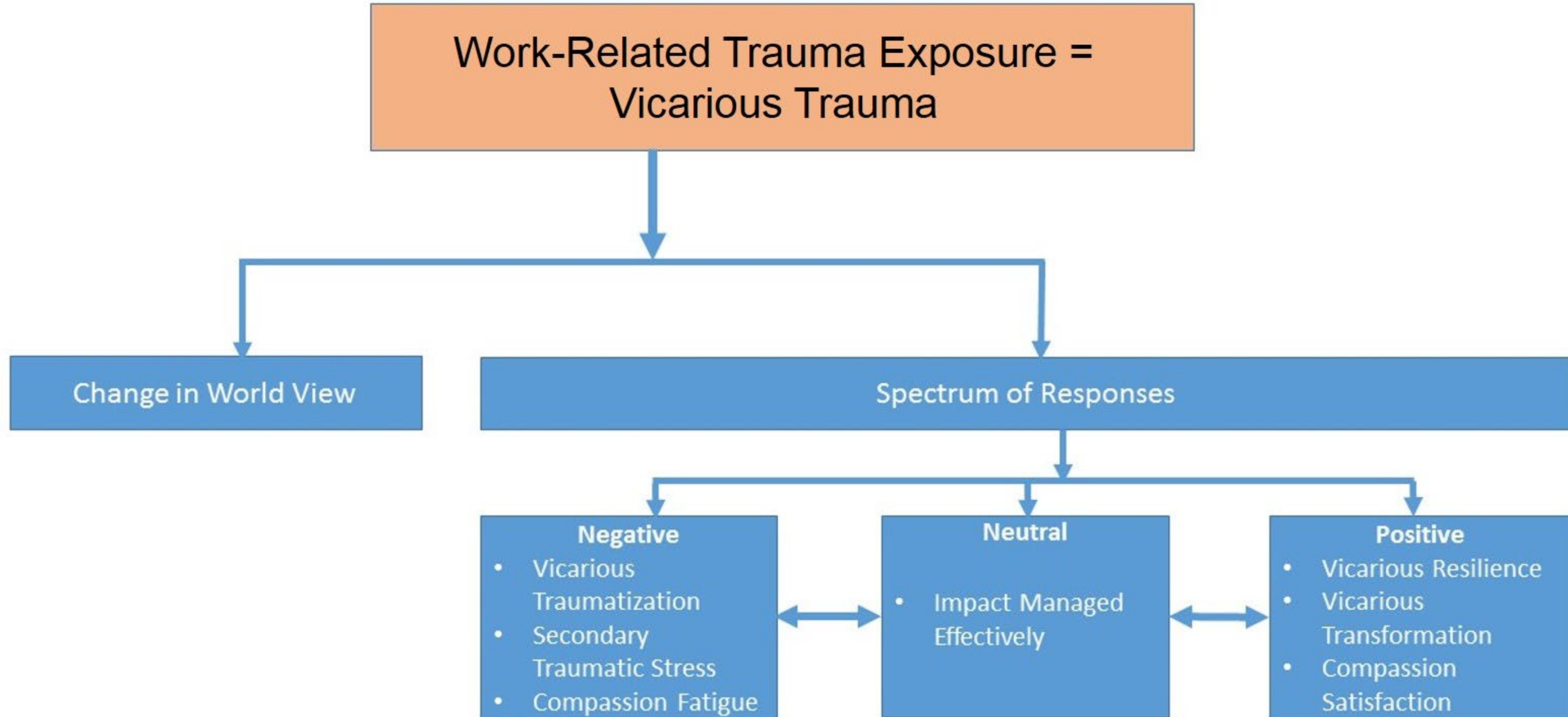
And it is associated with secondary traumatic stress (STS) or possible PTSD.

Uddin, Ayers, Khine & Webb, (2022)



Nursing is a “culture” of
n o r m a l i z e d t r a u m a

Vicarious Trauma Toolkit Model






Compassion Fatigue

- Emotionally exhausted
- Unable to manage personal relationships well
- Cynical towards patients and/or their needs
- Difficult to have empathy for patients and experiences

Burnout

- Result of chronic workplace stress
 - Characterized by feelings of energy negativity toward work and professional worth/value
- 

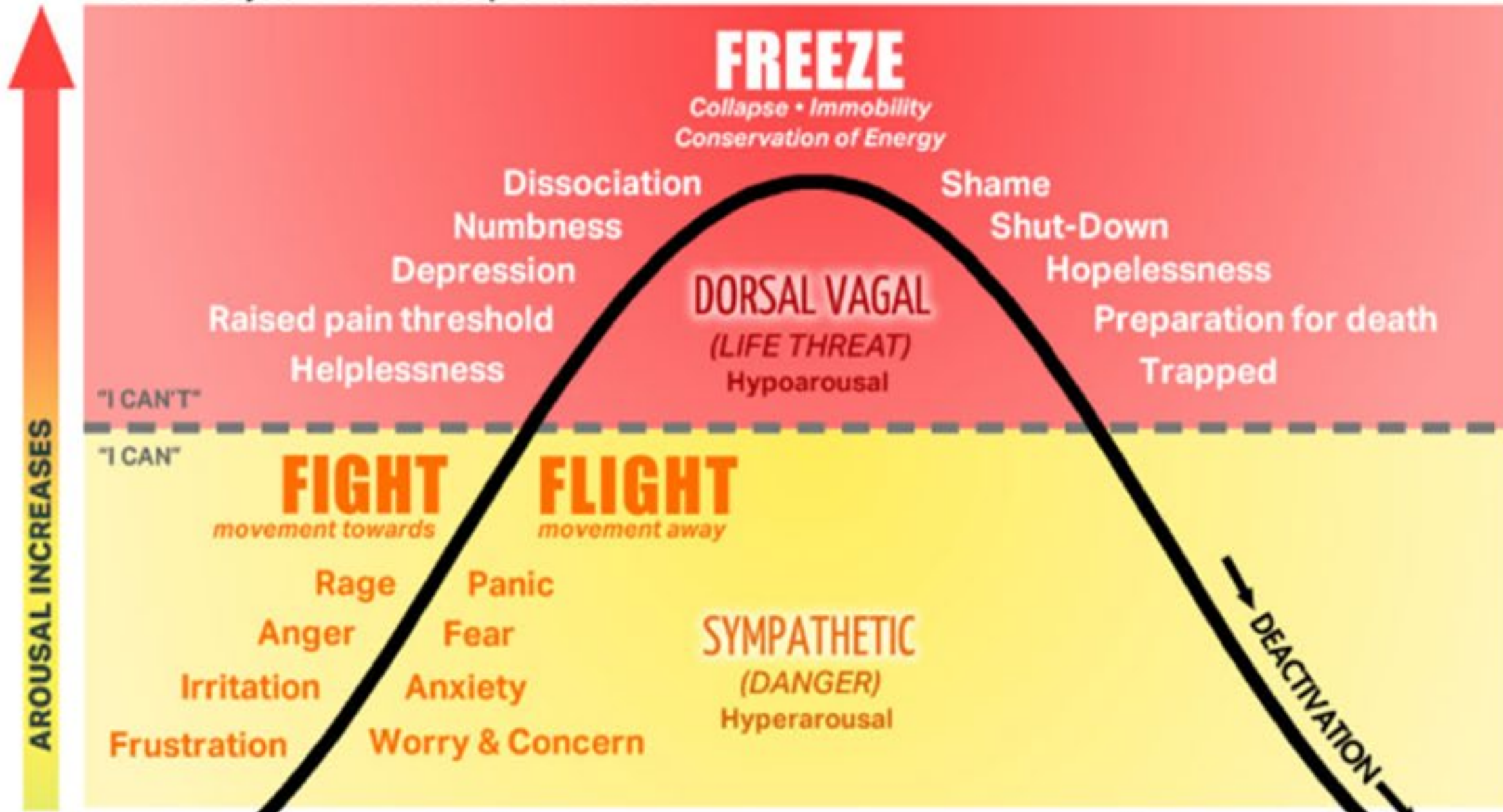


L&D Related Risk Factors for PTSD

- . Preterm delivery
- . Physical pain
- . Emergency C-sections
- . Instrumental delivery
- . Clinician/staff unsympathetic attitude
- . Postpartum hemoglobin <9 g/dl
- . Dissociative symptoms
- . Perceived lack of control/powerlessness
- . High level of fear for self or baby
- . Perceived lack of support from partner/staff

POLYVAGAL CHART

The nervous system with a neuroception of threat:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

DORSAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Fuel storage & insulin activity • Immobilization behavior (with fear)
Endorphins that help numb and raise the pain threshold
Conservation of metabolic resources

Decreases

Heart Rate • Blood Pressure • Temperature • Muscle Tone
Facial Expressions & Eye Contact • Depth of Breath • Social Behavior
Attunement to Human Voice • Sexual Responses • Immune Response

SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Increases

Blood Pressure • Heart Rate • Fuel Availability • Adrenaline
Oxygen Circulation to Vital Organs • Blood Clotting • Pupil Size
Dilation of Bronchi • Defensive Responses

Decreases

Fuel Storage • Insulin Activity • Digestion • Salivation
Relational Ability • Immune Response

The nervous system with a neuroception of safety:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

VENTRAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Digestion • Intestinal Motility • Resistance to Infection
Immune Response • Rest and Recuperation • Health & Vitality
Circulation to non-vital organs (skin, extremities)
Oxytocin (neuromodulator involved in social bonds that allows immobility without fear) • Ability to Relate and Connect
Movement in eyes and head turning • Prosody in voice • Breath

Decreases

Defensive Responses

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

The window of tolerance and different states that affect you



HYPERAROUSAL

- Abnormal state of increased responsiveness
- Feeling anxious, angry and out of control
- You may experience wanting to fight or run away



DYSREGULATION

- When you start to deviate outside your window of tolerance you start to feel agitated, anxious, or angry
- You do not feel comfortable but you are not out of control yet

SHRINK
your Window
of Tolerance

Stress and trauma
can cause your
window of
tolerance to
shrink



Meditation,
listening to music,
or engaging in
hobbies can
expand your
window of
tolerance

EXPAND
your Window
of Tolerance



DYSREGULATION

- You start to feel overwhelmed, your body might start shutting down and you could lose track of time
- You don't feel comfortable but you are not out of control yet



HYPOAROUSAL

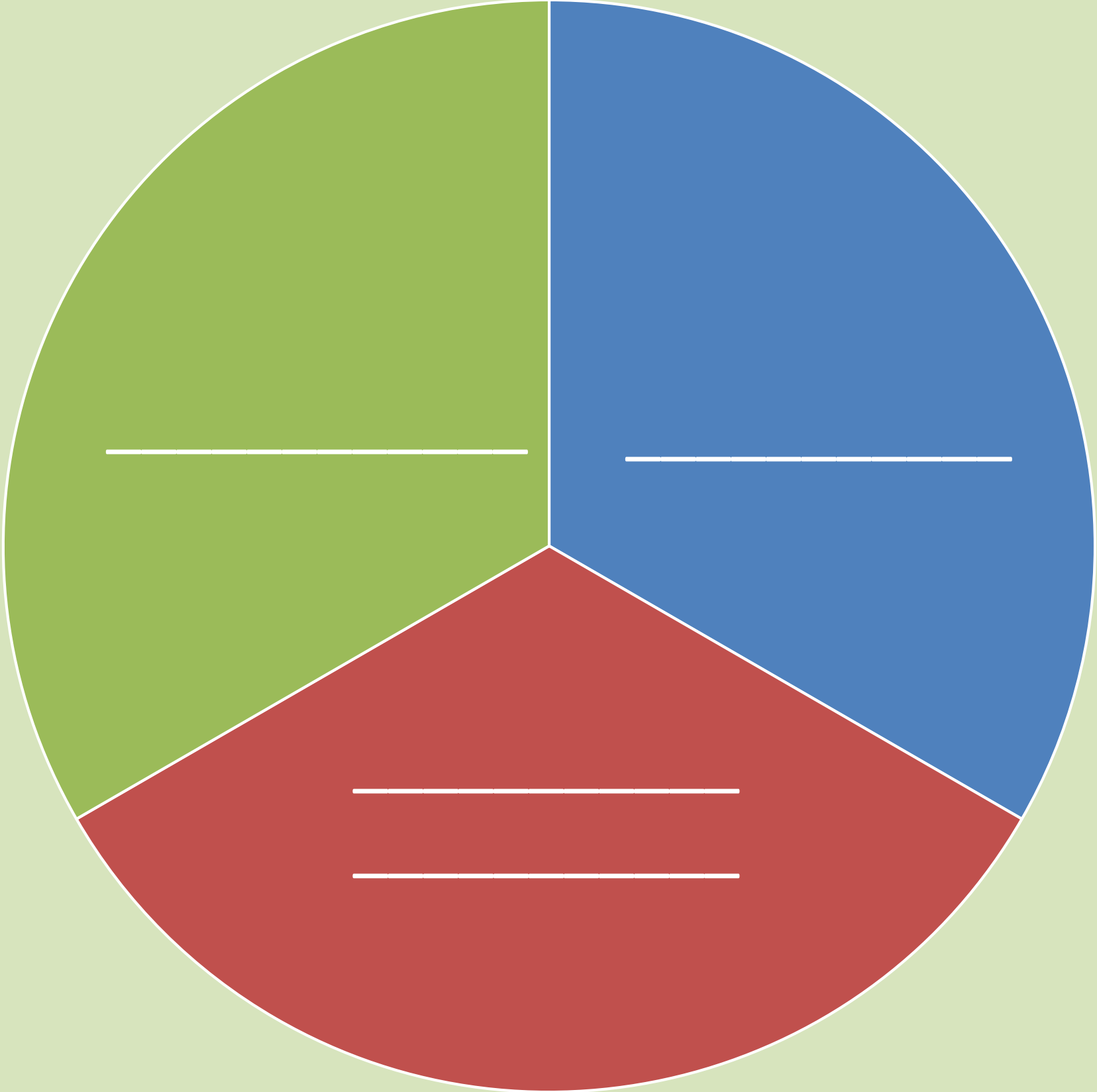
- Abnormal state of decreased responsiveness
- Feeling emotional numbness, exhaustion, and depression
- You may experience your body shutting down or freeze


Depression symptoms must occur > _____

Depressed mood and at least 5 of the following must be present for at least _____:

- **Sleep-** increased or decreased
- **Interest or pleasure-** decreased
- **Guilt/worthlessness**
- **Energy-** decreased or fatigued
- **Concentration/difficulty making decisions**
- **Appetite and/or weight increase or decrease**
- **Psychomotor activity-** increased or decreased
- **Suicidal ideation**

Three Pillars of Treatment for Perinatal Mental Health Conditions






“If they were as effective as we have been lead to be believe, it would be a minor issue in our society. Think about HIV/AIDS antivirals were developed and less people are dying/affected by it.

But now instead, what is happening to our mental health rates? They are sky rocketing.

Pts being treated has _____ within the last 2 decades” Vander kolk (p. 37)



“_____ is a biological necessity, not an option,
and this reality should be the backbone of all prevention
and treatment”

(Van Der Kolk, 2014)



Brexanalone

- Rapid onset of response and remission of symptoms (1-2 days)
- Lactation disruption
- No comparative-effectiveness data with SSRIs

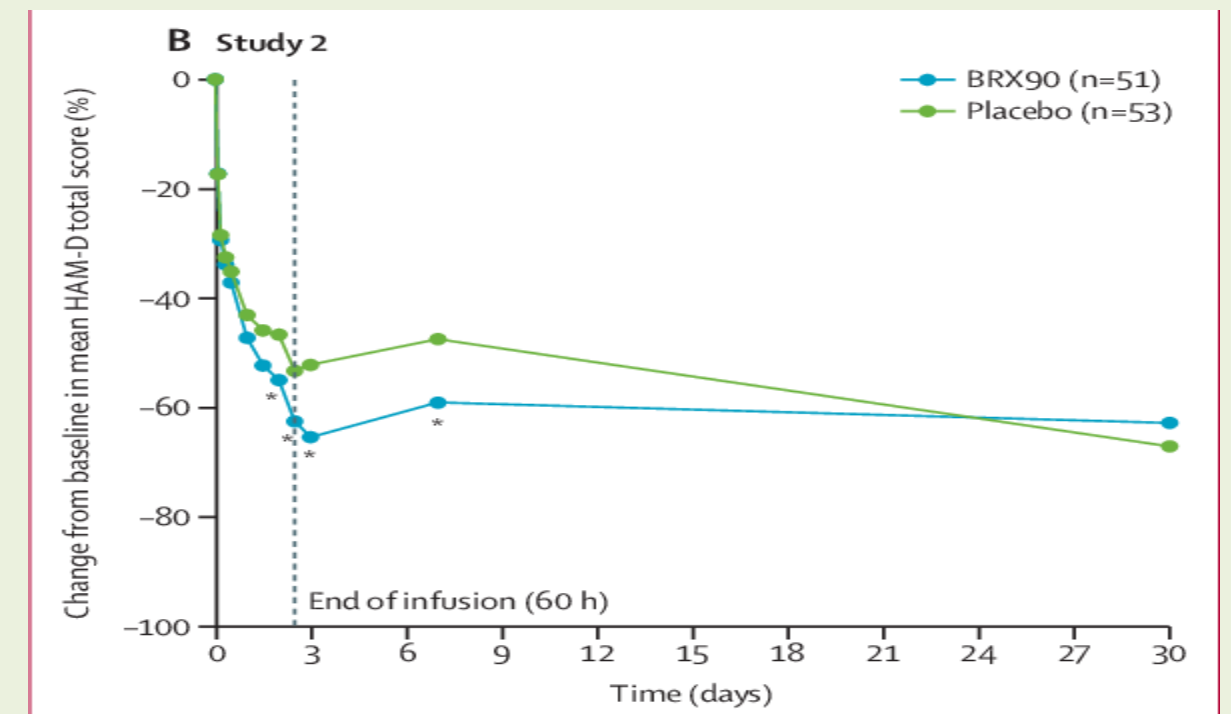
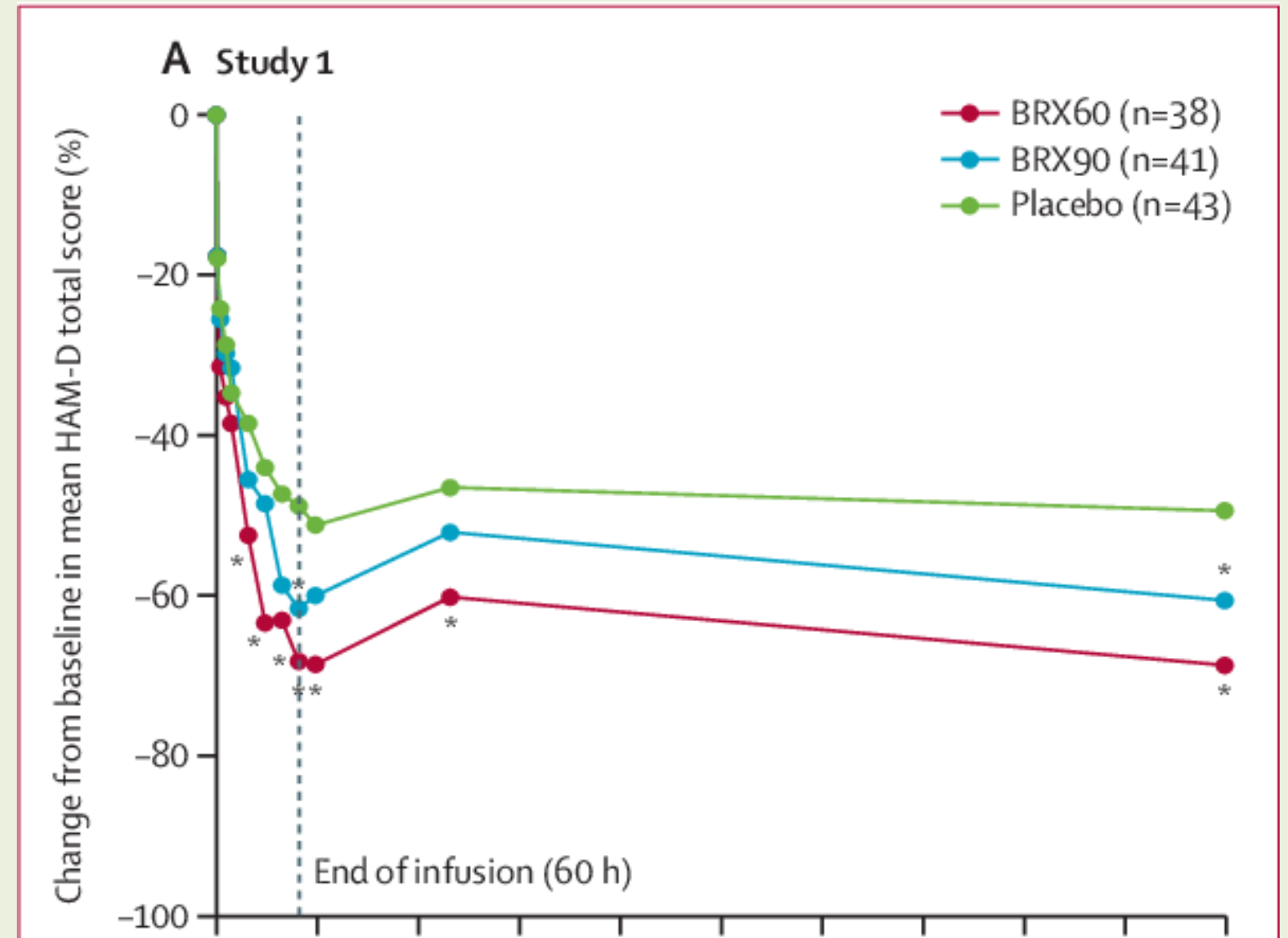
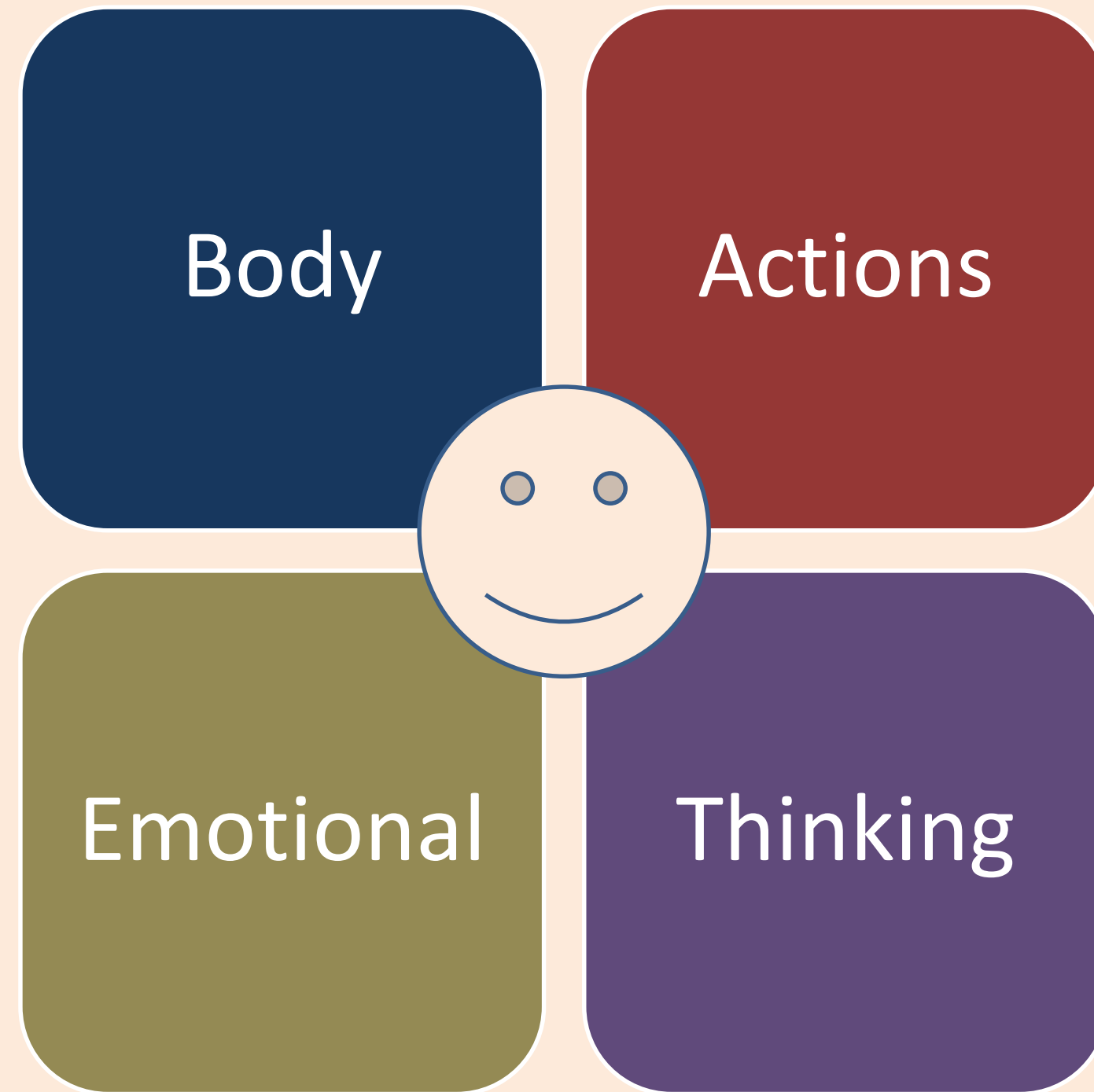


Figure 2: Percentage change from baseline in mean HAM-D total score in study 1 (A) and 2 (B)
p values were calculated by two-sided t test. BRX60=brexanalone injection 60 µg/kg per h. BRX90=brexanalone injection 90 µg/kg per h. *p<0.05 vs placebo.

Recognizing Stress Accumulation



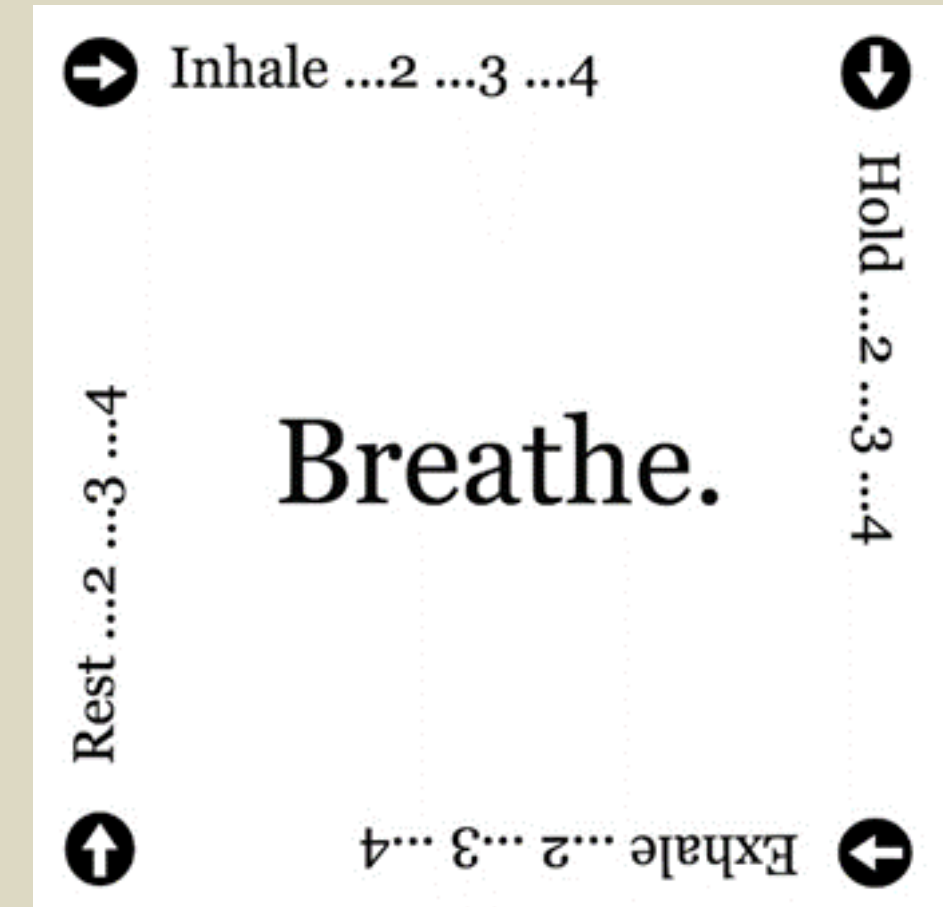
Settled bodies settle bodies

“Few skills are more essential than the ability to settle your body. If you can settle your body, you are more likely to be calm, alert, and fully present, no matter what is going on around you. A settled body enables you to harmonize and connect with other bodies around you, while encouraging those bodies to settle as well.” — Resmaa Menakem

Settling Exercises

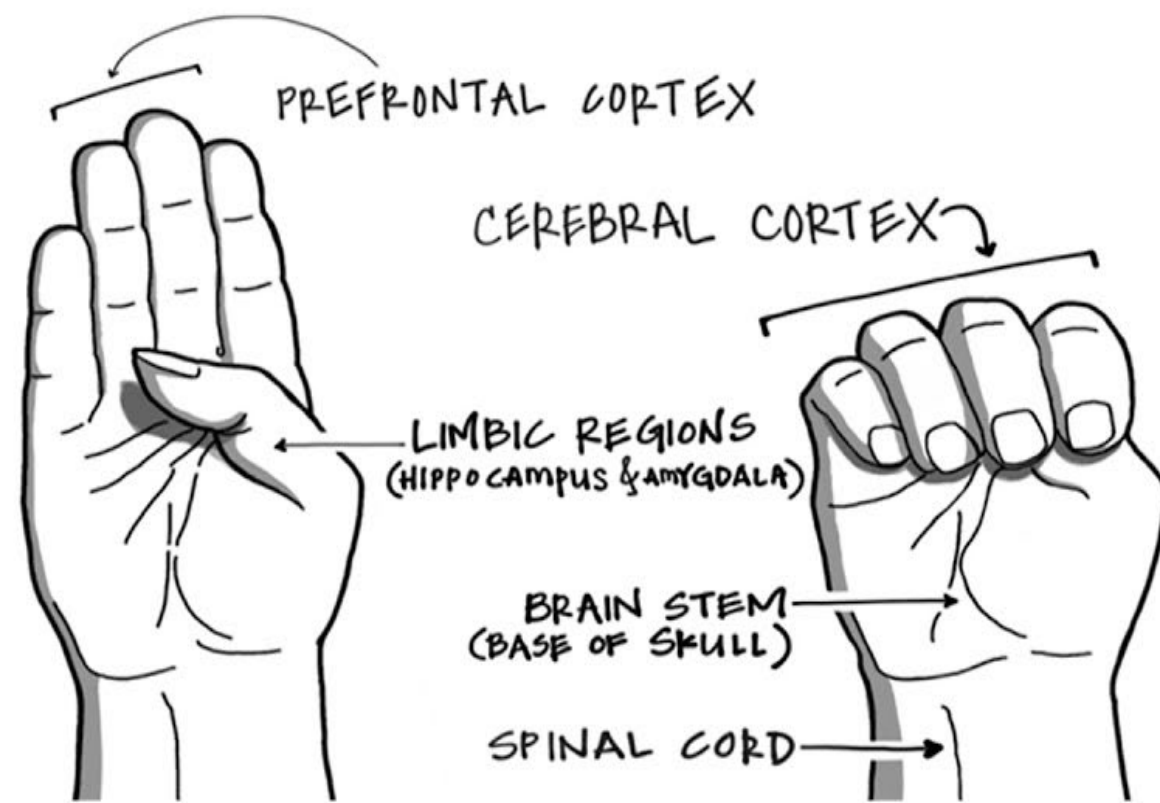
Notice your posture, gesture/movements

- Self Hug
- Contained Hand
- Happy Place
- Adult Choices
- Flipping the Lid
- Box Breathing



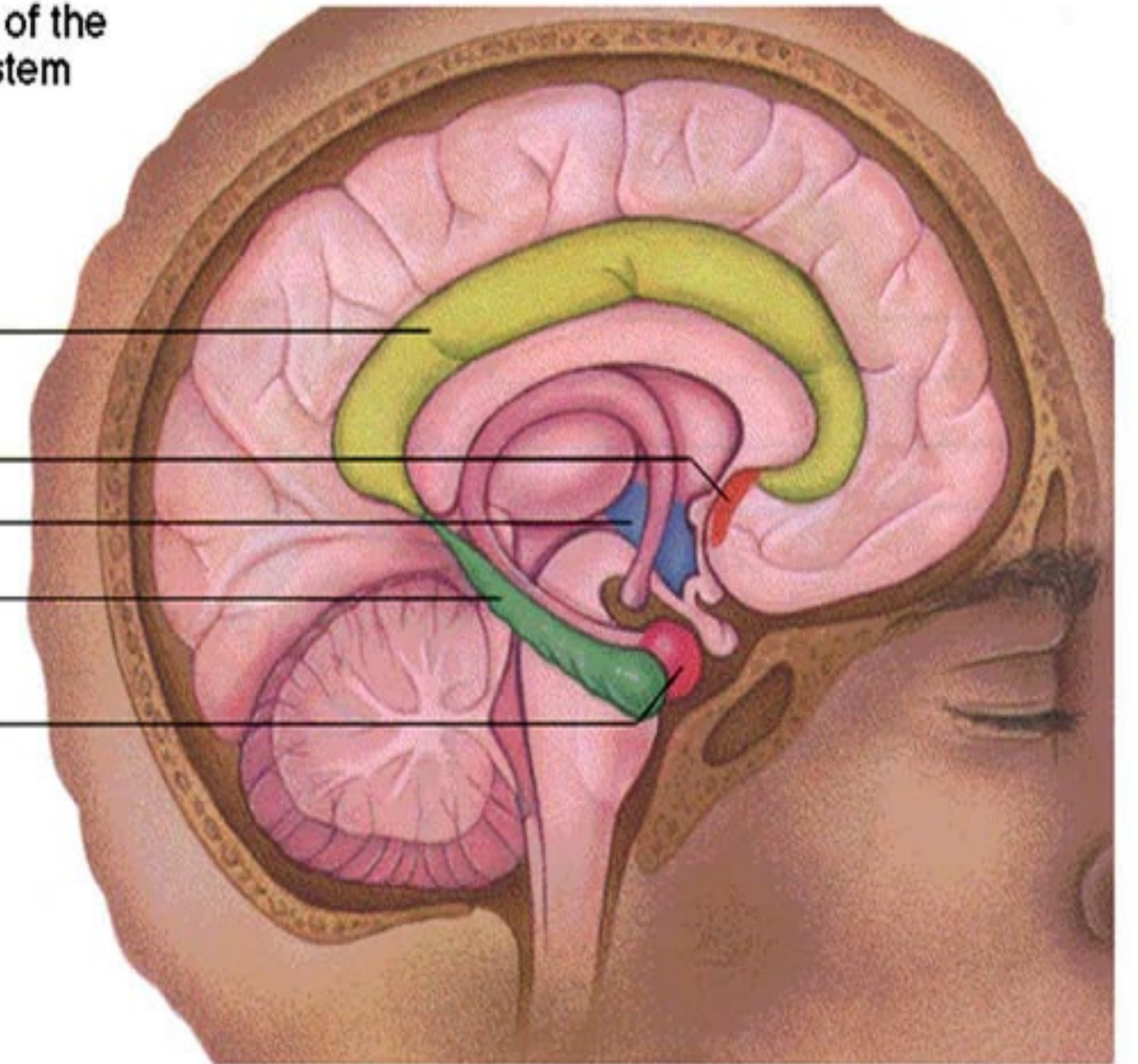
Flipping Your Lid

Hand Model of the Brain



Structures of the Limbic System

- Cingulate cortex
- Septal area
- Hypothalamus
- Hippocampus
- Amygdala



It's ONE day to the patient.
But might be everyday for a nurse.

Think about what you do AND say.

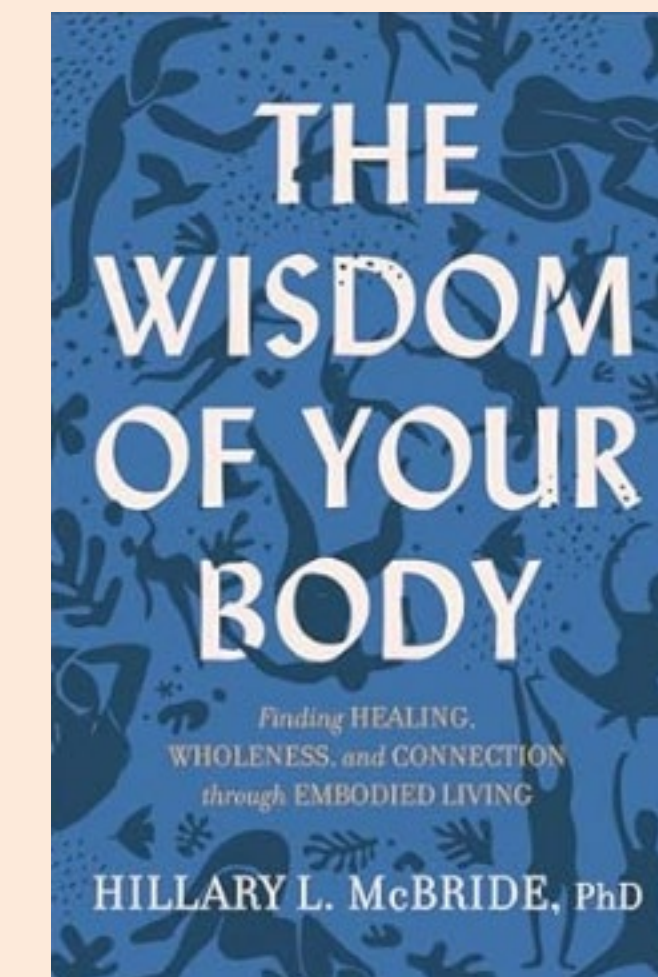
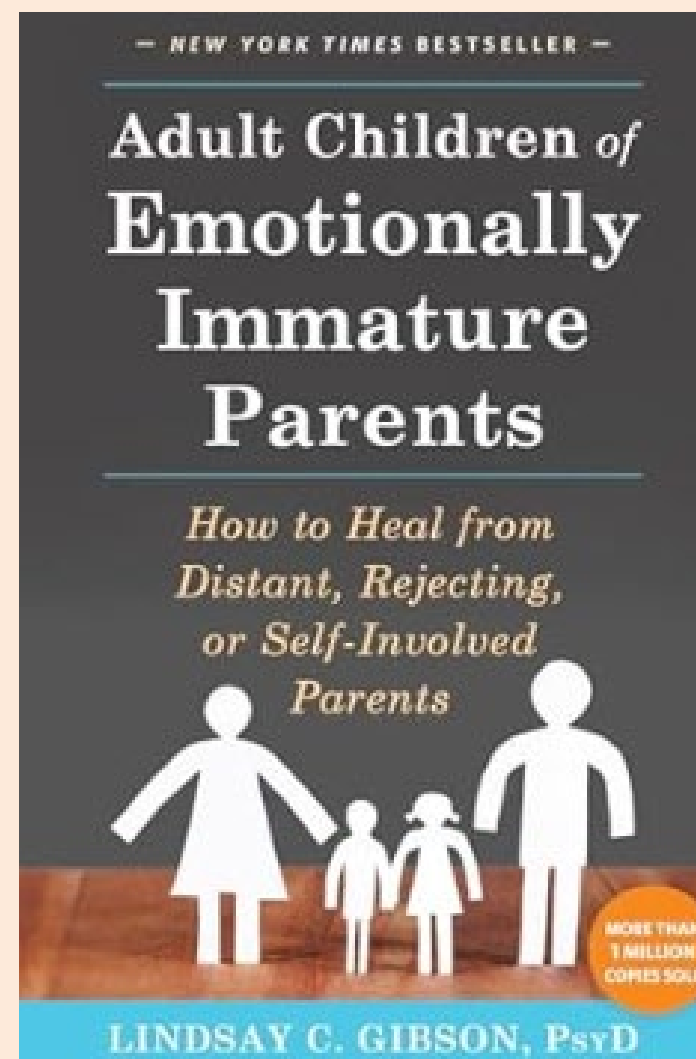
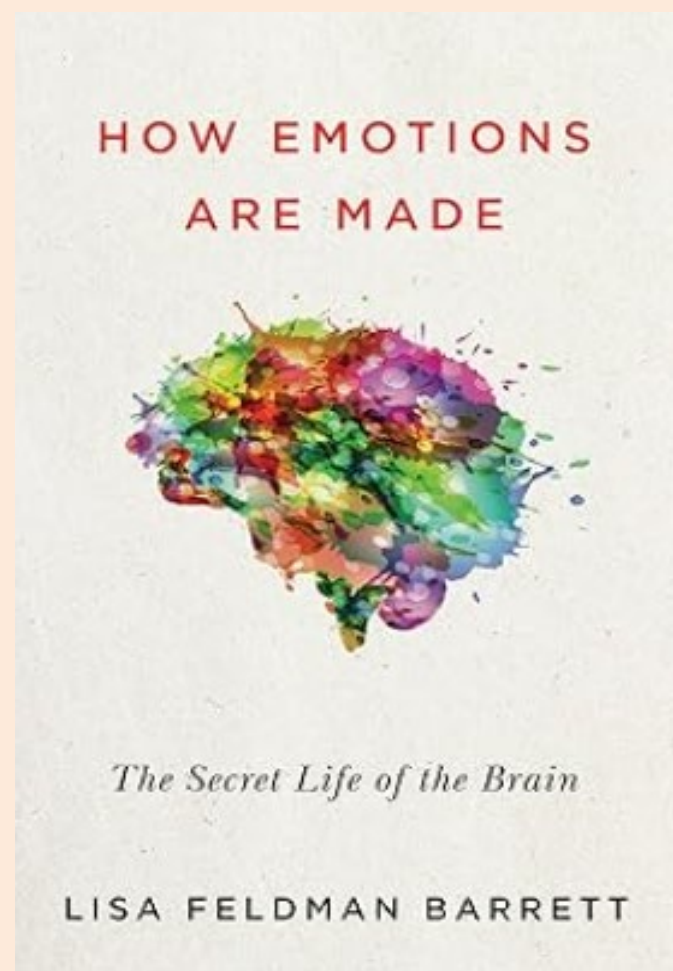
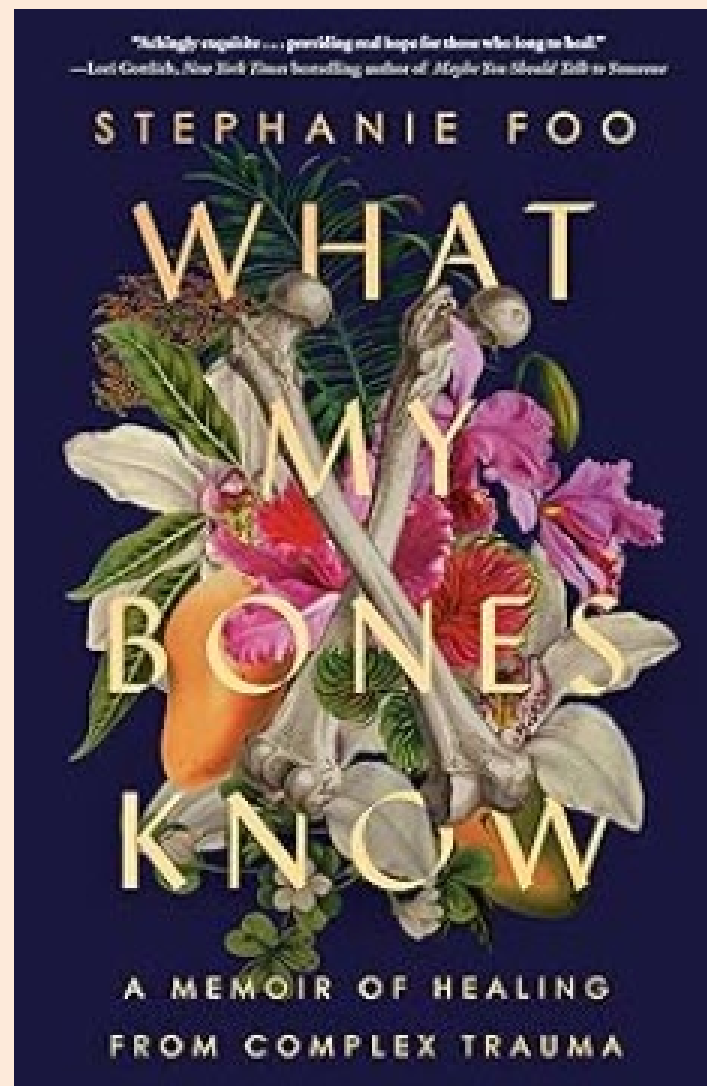
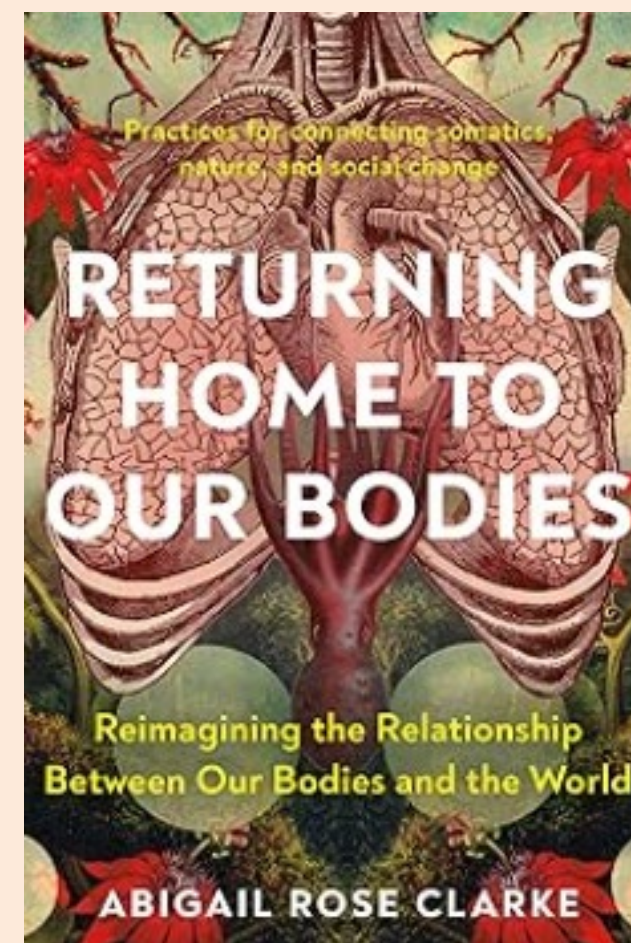
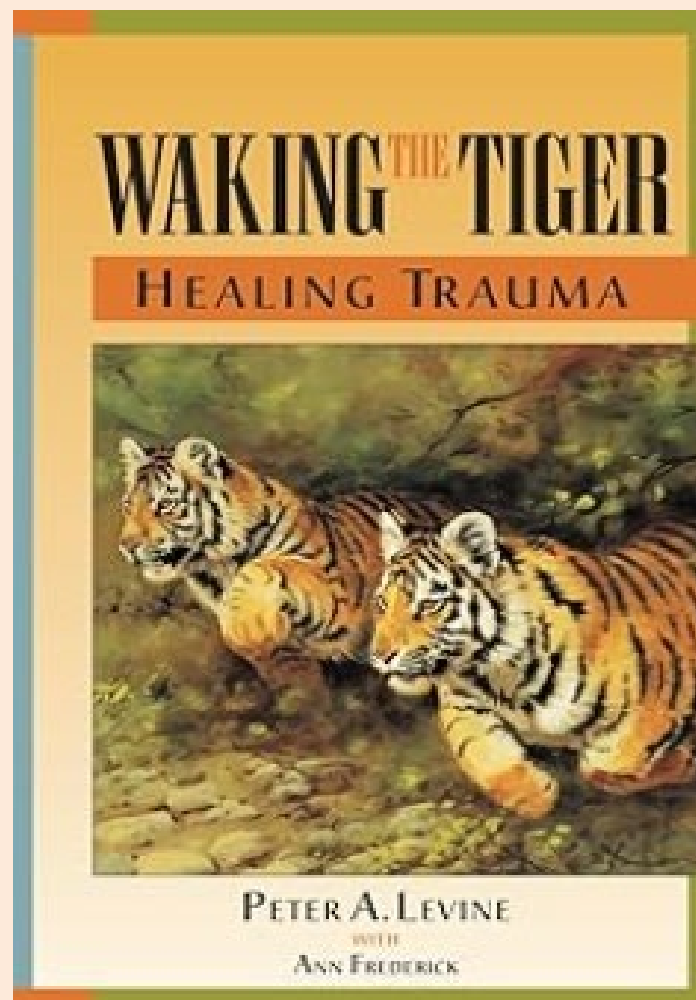
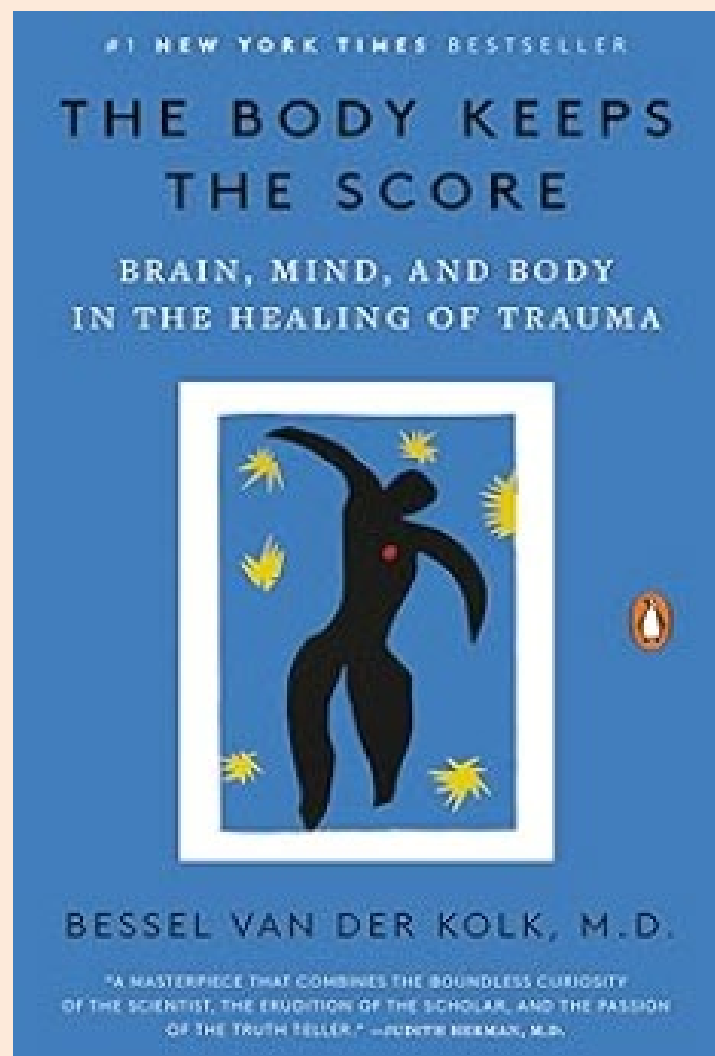
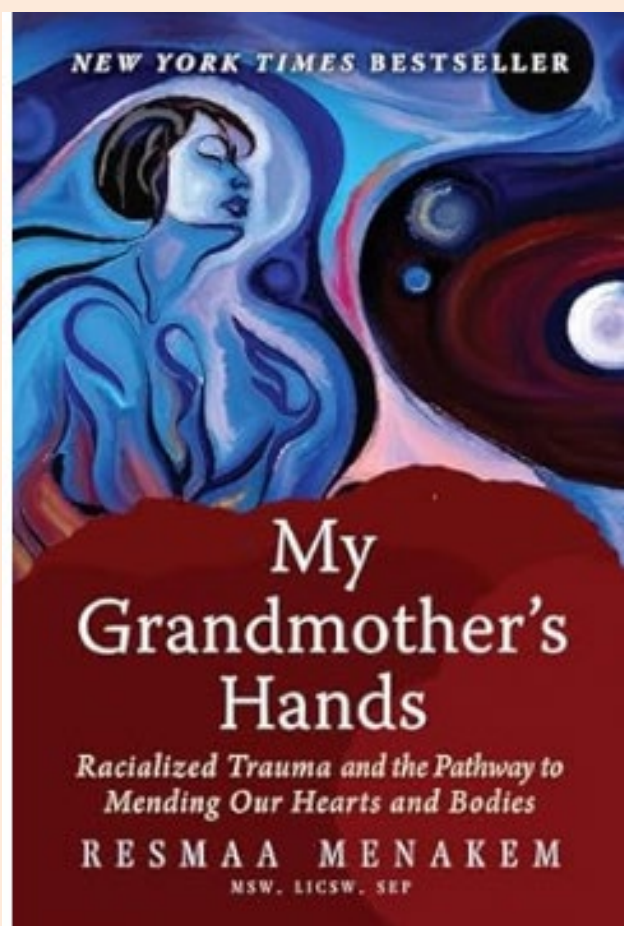


Wisconsin

- Moms Mental Health Initiative
- The Periscope Project

Nationally

- National Maternal Mental Health Hotline- free & available across the US- 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)
- PSI



Take Aways

- Healthcare workers can struggle with secondary traumatic stress (STS) and/or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Patient's who have an adverse/unexpected outcome have a higher rate of postpartum depression (PPD) and/or PTSD
- Healing involves social support & self assessment/awareness
- We can impact patients/nurses experiences with both our verbal & nonverbal behavior
- It is OK, to say that you're not OK
- Stop checking boxes & start checking people

THANK YOU!

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