



TRAUMA



"The essence of trauma is that it is overwhelming, unbelievable, and unbearable. Each patient demands that we suspend our sense of what is normal and accept that we are dealing with a dual reality: the reality of a relatively secure and predictable present that lives side by side with a ruinous, ever-present past."

Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*

What is Trauma?

Trauma happens when you go through something upsetting that changes how you live and interact with the world around you. It can be a one-time event or a long-term situation where you're mistreated, neglected, or hurt. For example, experiencing a sexual assault, growing up with an emotionally abusive parent, dating someone who doesn't respect your boundaries, or dealing with addiction—whether it's yours or a loved one's—can all cause trauma.

A lot of different experiences can be traumatic, and dealing with those troubling situations can bring significant

challenges to your life. It can mess with your mental health, causing you to feel down about life, anxious about what will happen next, or even dealing with severe PTSD.

It can also impact your relationships and how you connect with others. Trauma is often tied to the topics of addiction, self-harm, or eating issues, but there are a whole bunch of other challenges that it can bring up, too.

In short, trauma covers a wide range of distressing events and their effects on your life. If you've experienced something distressing and feel the heaviness of trauma, it is essential to know that there are resources available to help you. With support and hope, you can find healing and overcome the trauma in your life.

"Being traumatized means continuing to organize your life as if the trauma were still going on—unchanged and immutable—as every new encounter or event is contaminated by the past."

Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*

Physical trauma happens when your body is harmed, and it can vary in severity. It includes things like car accidents, mugging, and other forms of physical violence. Physical trauma can occur from a single event or multiple events over time. For example, someone may have grown up without any food, leading them to hoard food as they may not know when their next meal will come. Or they might have been hit by their parents for getting a bad grade on their test. Whether it happens once or repeatedly, physical trauma can affect your mental health.

Physical trauma can cause anxiety, depression, and PTSD, making you feel unsafe and stressed after the event. Physical trauma, whether it happened once or many times, needs serious attention and care. Taking care of your body and mind is vital to help you heal and feel better.



Physical



Emotional trauma happens when someone goes through deeply distressing events that affect their mental and emotional well-being. This could be from bullying at school or online, being called hurtful names by family members at home, or being in an abusive relationship. It can also include losing a loved one, going through natural disasters, or dealing with your parents' nasty divorce. No matter what the trauma is, it can seriously affect how your brain works, making it hard to trust others or fully recover from what happened.

The lasting effects of emotional trauma can lead to ongoing feelings of anxiety, depression, and a sense of being broken or unworthy. While it is just as serious as other forms of trauma, emotional trauma can be particularly challenging. But healing is possible, and there is always hope.

Spiritual trauma is when something happens that shakes up your beliefs or practices related to your faith beliefs. It could be caused by growing up in a church that was controlling, or that shamed you for your mistakes. Or maybe you were hurt and manipulated by someone in the faith community, which caused you to question the intentions of others who share your beliefs. It might even lead you to step away from your faith entirely, wondering how someone who claims to follow religion could be so hurtful.

Going through trauma doesn't fit into just one box. One event could cause all three of these types of traumas, or you may be feeling like your trauma can't be defined in these terms at all—and that's okay! Everyone's trauma experience is unique to them. What matters is if you are struggling, then you need to reach out. Your story matters. Once you talk about it, you can begin the journey of healing from whatever the trauma may be.

If you learn only one thing from this page, let it be this: healing from trauma is possible! We live in a time where tons of research has been done on how trauma affects the brain, mind, and body, and this research keeps growing. There's more support now than ever before! When you are ready to seek healing from your traumas, trained and caring people are prepared to help and guide you through it.

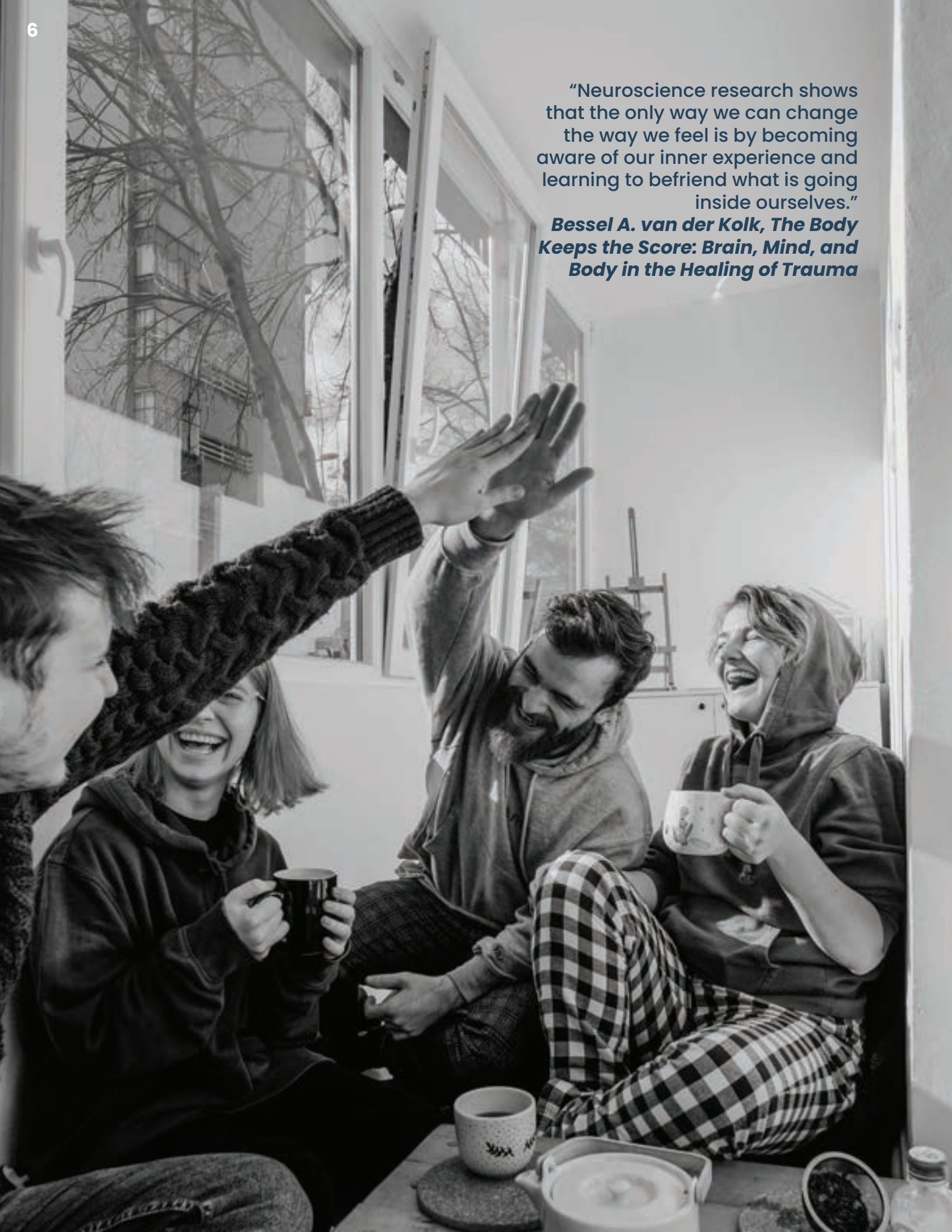


Spiritual



“Neuroscience research shows that the only way we can change the way we feel is by becoming aware of our inner experience and learning to befriend what is going inside ourselves.”

Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*



How Do You Heal From Trauma?

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Professional Guidance

Connection with a licensed therapist is a big step in healing from trauma. They can help you figure out what you may need to do next by listening to you, understanding your primary concerns, and suggesting ways to cope with your symptoms. A professional can also point you in the right direction for diagnosis and continued help. Even though social media has helped start some productive conversations about mental health, it is not the place for expert advice. If you find yourself relating to content about anxiety, depression, ADHD, PTSD, or other mental health issues, that is a sign to reach out to a licensed therapist for their input on what your symptoms could mean.

Caring for Yourself

Building connections with people who can help you is a big step, but you also need to consider how to help yourself through self-care. Self-care is not just about taking a warm bubble bath or going for some ice cream. It is about understanding what your brain, mind, and body need to heal. This might mean taking a break from social media if you find yourself losing time by mindlessly scrolling social media, it may mean focusing on your sleeping habits and getting some much-needed rest. The reality is that your brain is likely running overtime and needs to rest just like your body needs rest after a long workout.

Self-care may also include:

- Exercising.
- Cutting back on caffeine.
- Changing your work schedule.
- Taking a vacation.

Taking care of yourself means showing up for yourself and following the practices you and your therapist decide will help you work towards healing. Self-care will not heal your trauma completely, but it will be a great asset!

Spiritual Practice

Feeling "safely held" is a theme you'll see a lot in the Bible. One verse says, "Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close." (Psalm 27:10, NLT). Some verses even say we're etched into the palm of God's hand, meaning we're always held in love and safety.

But this doesn't mean we won't feel pain from being let down, betrayed, or hurt by others. Trauma can make it hard to feel love and safety, even if you want to believe that God or Jesus is holding your hand. Spiritual trauma might even make you push away the idea that there's any safety in being held by a loving God. But if you start to feel comfort in this promise, it can be a powerful part of your healing journey. As you begin to feel safe again, knowing that Christ's love and the love of those you trust will always be there can be freeing. No matter what's happened to you, what's been done to you, or what might happen in the future, you can be confident that you are safely held.

If you want to learn more about Christ's love or talk about your trauma, contact one of our Hope Coaches today. They're here to listen to your story without judgment and connect you with resources to help you move forward.

*get
prayer*

Send your prayer
requests today!

Real
People
Praying.



Next Steps

You deserve to be heard and understood. We help students and young adults in crisis by offering sound advice and a safe place to connect.

explore

Check out other topics on our website, TheHopeLine.com!

read

Browse through these posts and articles to learn more about trauma!

chat

Talk to a 24/7 Hope Coach for free now!

