

TRAUMA AND THE FAMILY

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is a psychiatric disorder involving extreme distress and disruption of daily living that happens in relation to exposure of a traumatic event.

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Potential PTSD Symptoms

Intrusion symptoms

Avoidance of thoughts & behaviors

Negative changes in thoughts & mood

Changes in arousal and reactivity

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

In PTSD, the traumatic feelings can be **triggered and re-experienced** over and over again. Even though the traumatic event is in the past.

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Effective treatment requires the courage to go behind the curtain of silence. Parents need to ask hard questions like:

- How severe is my teen's trauma?
- How did our family respond to the traumatic event?
- Did we underestimate the long-term effects of the trauma on our child?

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Teen Trauma Symptoms

Fear and Trepidation

Worry and Anxiety

Avoidance Reaction

Uncontrollable Rage and Angry Outbursts

Overwhelming Shame and Paralyzing Guilt

Extended Grief and Bouts of Depression

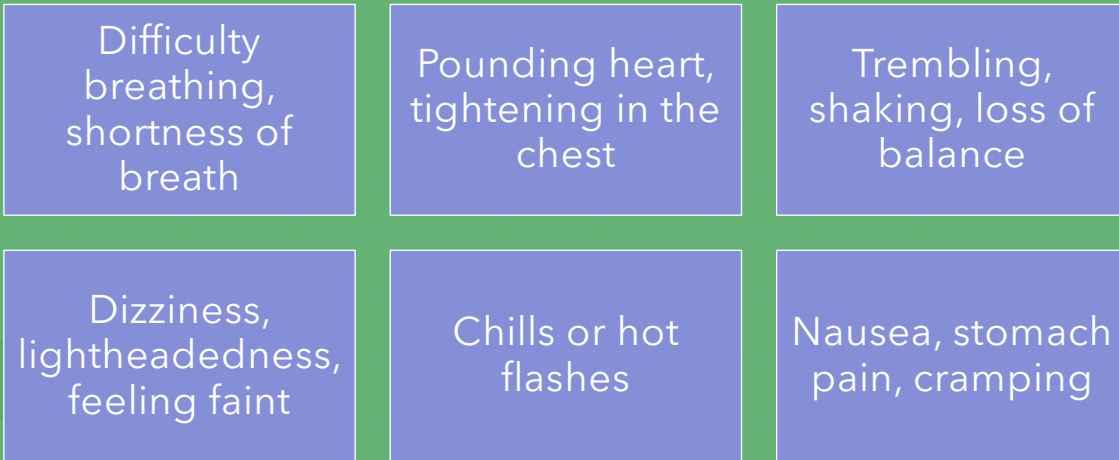
Numbing Out and Feeling Nothing

Extreme Disruption of Sleep Patterns

Night Terrors

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Symptoms of a Panic Attack



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Why A Teen That Experienced A Traumatic Event Has Trouble Communicating



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Seven Ways that Teen Trauma Triggers Family Problems

The traumatic event is ignored or denied by the family.

Communication about the traumatic event is restricted or avoided.

The family blames the teenager for not getting over it.

Different points of view about what happened divide the family.

The family downplays the traumatic event and treats it like a joke.

Parents lean on the teenager for emotional support.

The family fails to access the professional help they need.

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Steps for Parents to begin the Process of Healing



Find a quiet, comfortable place to talk to your teen. Avoid interruptions by turning off cell phones. Foster an atmosphere of security for your child.



Begin with safe and open communication. Reassure your child that they will not be judged, punished, or condemned.



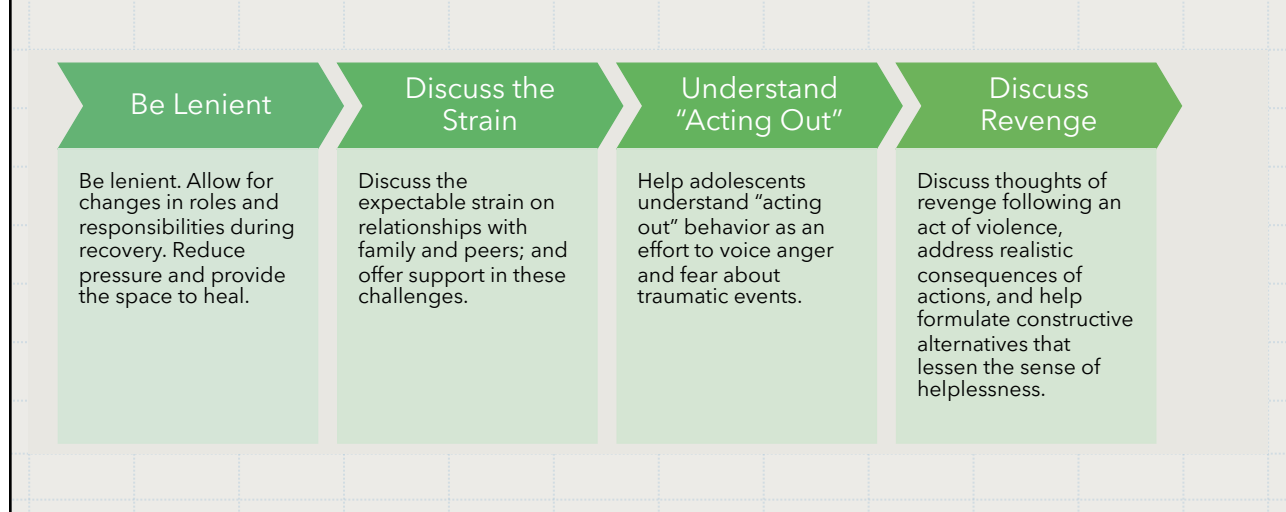
Listen first without commenting or giving your opinion. Your teen's communication process might be slow and halting. Be patient.



Make sure your teen knows that a strong reaction to a traumatic event is normal.

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Steps for Parents to begin the Process of Healing



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When to Seek Professional Help



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Seeking Additional Help

- **CommunityCounseling.com:**
- Individual, Couples and Family Counseling, Trauma recovery or Mental Health Life Coaching is available at Community Counseling.
- Jennifer Cross Uherek, LCSW-S, DSW, Psychotherapist, Clinical Director
- Chris Norman, M.Div., M.A., LMFT Associate
- Alex Rodriguez, M.A. in Human Services Counseling, Certified Life Coach

- For answers to any questions or concerns, please contact us at counseling@cof.tv, 832.447.1422.