



**UW PACC**

Psychiatry and Addictions Case Conference

UW Medicine | Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

# SEEING TRAUMA

MANDY OWENS, PHD

ADDICTIONS, DRUG & ALCOHOL INSTITUTE

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



# **SPEAKER DISCLOSURES**

✓ I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

# **PLANNER DISCLOSURES**

The following series planners have no relevant conflicts of interest to disclose; other disclosures have been mitigated.

Mark Duncan MD

Rick Ries MD

Kari Stephens PhD

Barb McCann PhD

Anna Ratzliff MD PhD

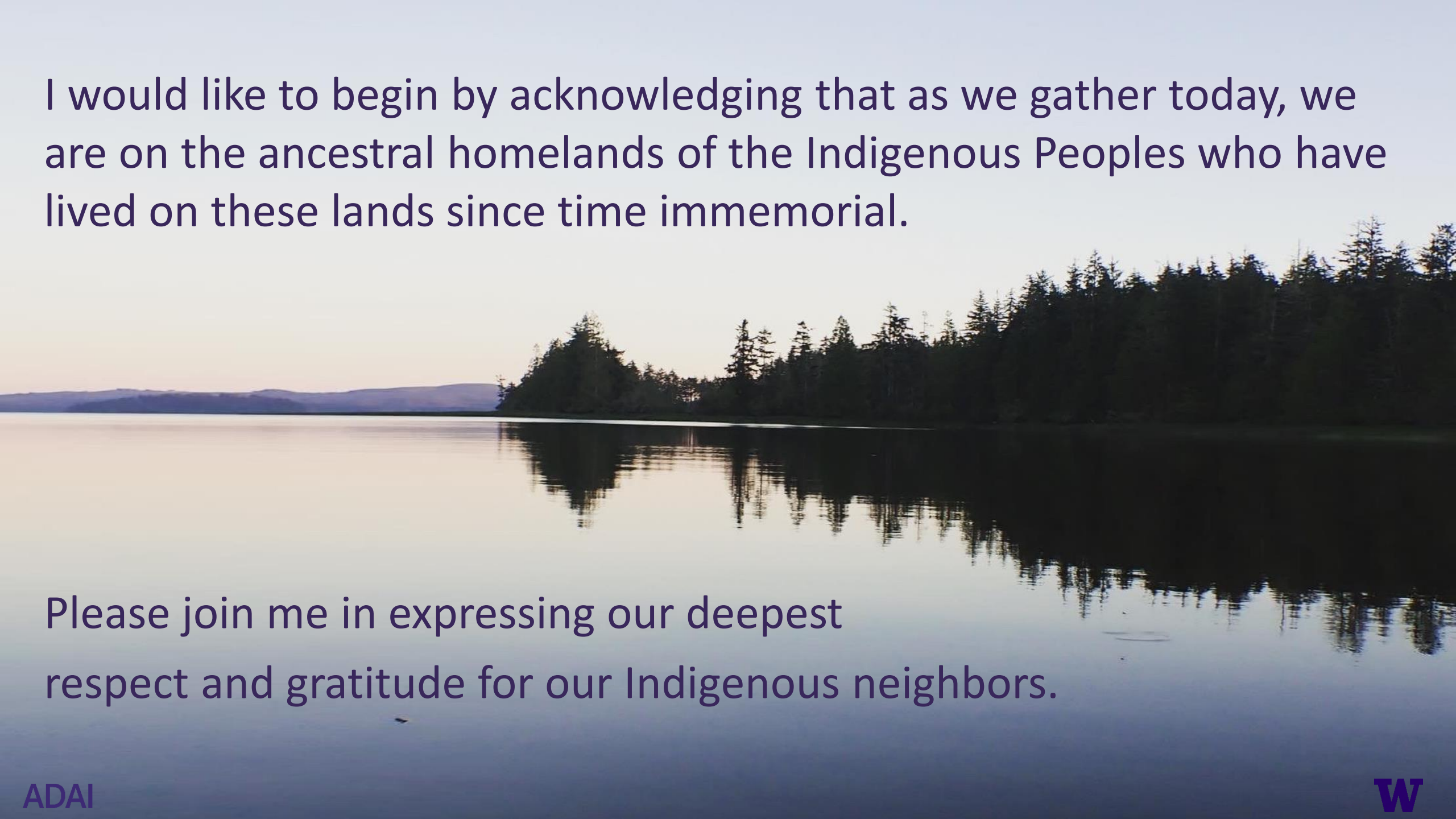
Betsy Payn MA PMP

Esther Solano

Cara Towle MSN RN

# OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how common trauma is.
2. Learn how to recognize trauma.



I would like to begin by acknowledging that as we gather today, we are on the ancestral homelands of the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on these lands since time immemorial.

Please join me in expressing our deepest respect and gratitude for our Indigenous neighbors.

# SEEING TRAUMA

# PATIENT EXAMPLE

- Jerry is a 39y/o Black man who is married, no children, housed, and employed full-time.
- He presented to therapy for insomnia and trauma.
  - “I know I finally need to work on my trauma.”
- He has tried prazosin for nightmares and gabapentin for sleep, but these have not helped.



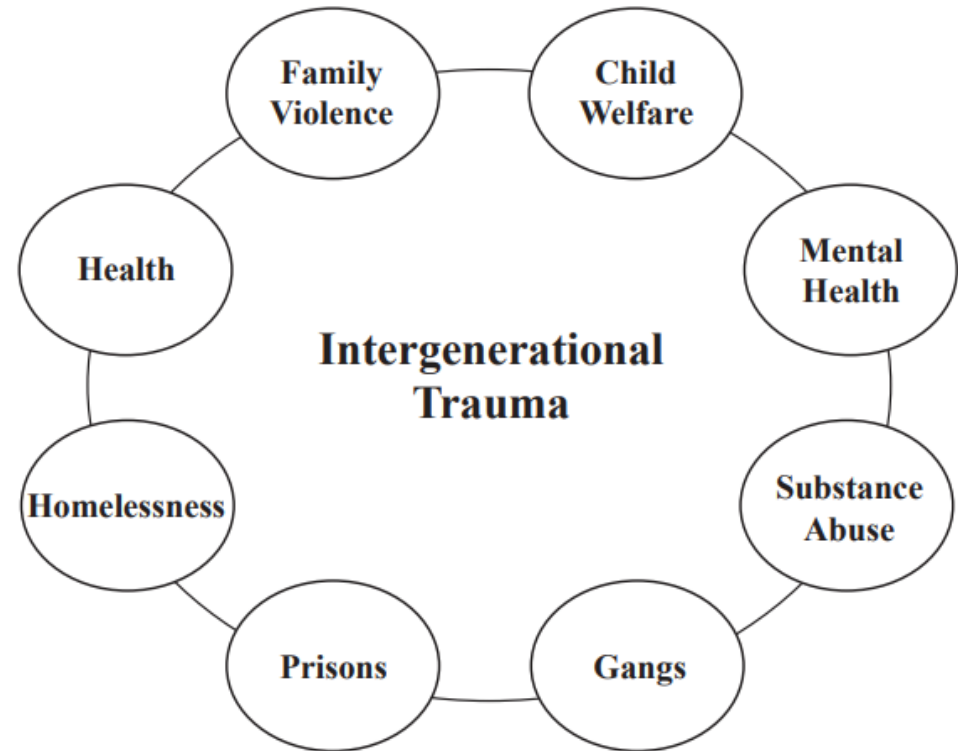
# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Trauma: An emotional response to a terrible event.
- Traumatic event: A deeply distressing or disturbing experience.
  - Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional)
  - Accident
  - Natural disaster
  - Colonialism, racism → intergenerational trauma

(American Psychological Association, 2022; Oxford Dictionary, 2022)

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Intergenerational trauma: "Ways in which trauma experience in one generation affects the health and well-being of descendants of future generations."
  - Slavery
  - Colonialism
  - Survivors of abuse
  - Armed conflict
  - Genocide



(Bombay, Matheson, & Anisman, 2009; Menzies, 2010; Sangalang & Vang, 2016)



# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

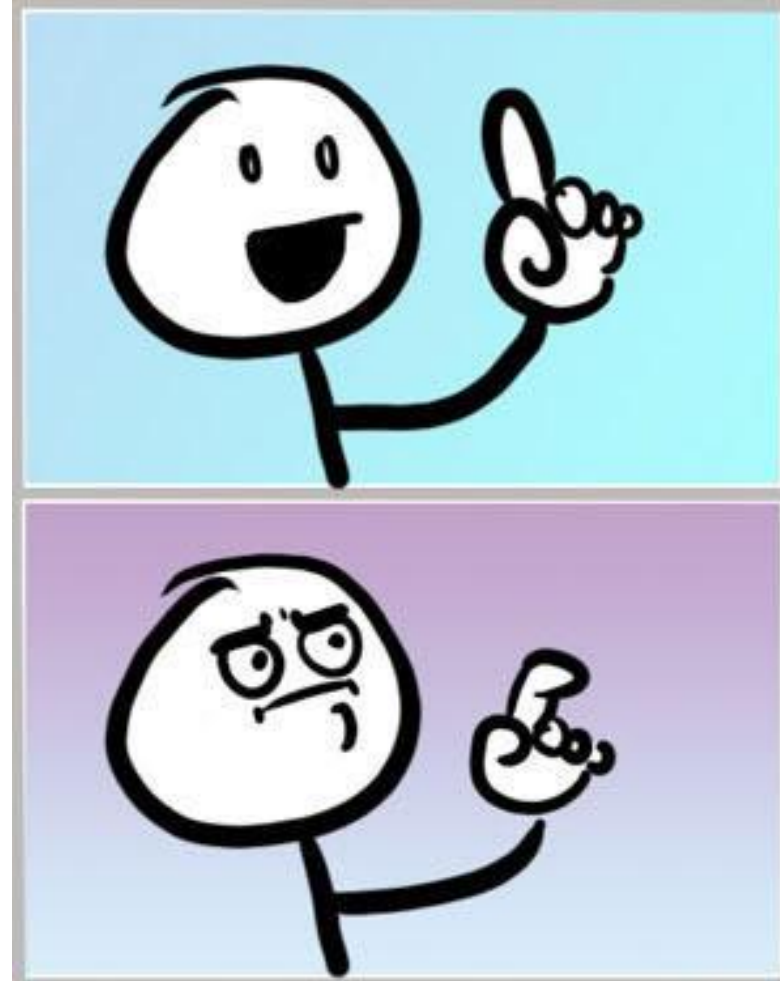
- Trauma-informed care:

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Trauma-informed care: ...

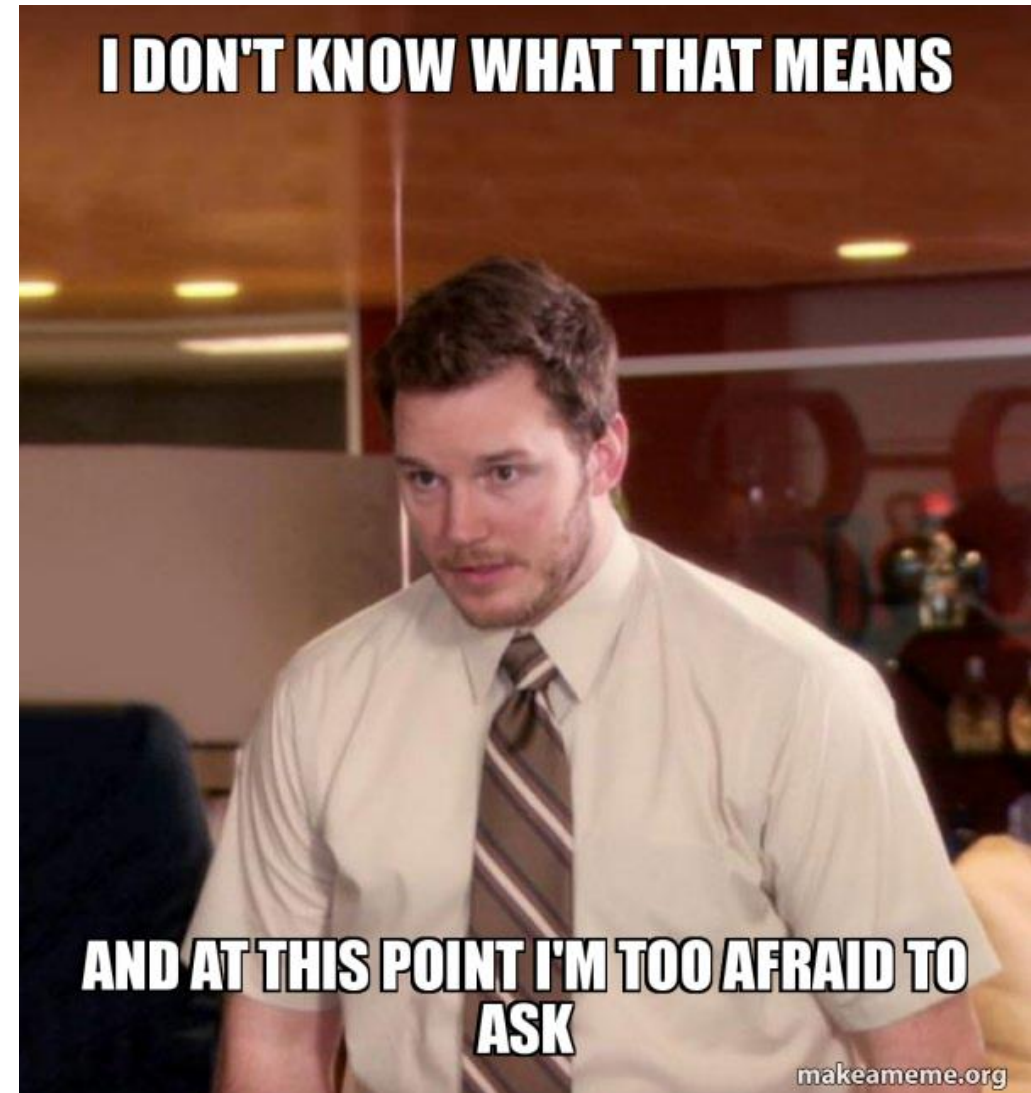
# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Trauma-informed care: ...



# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Trauma-informed care:



# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

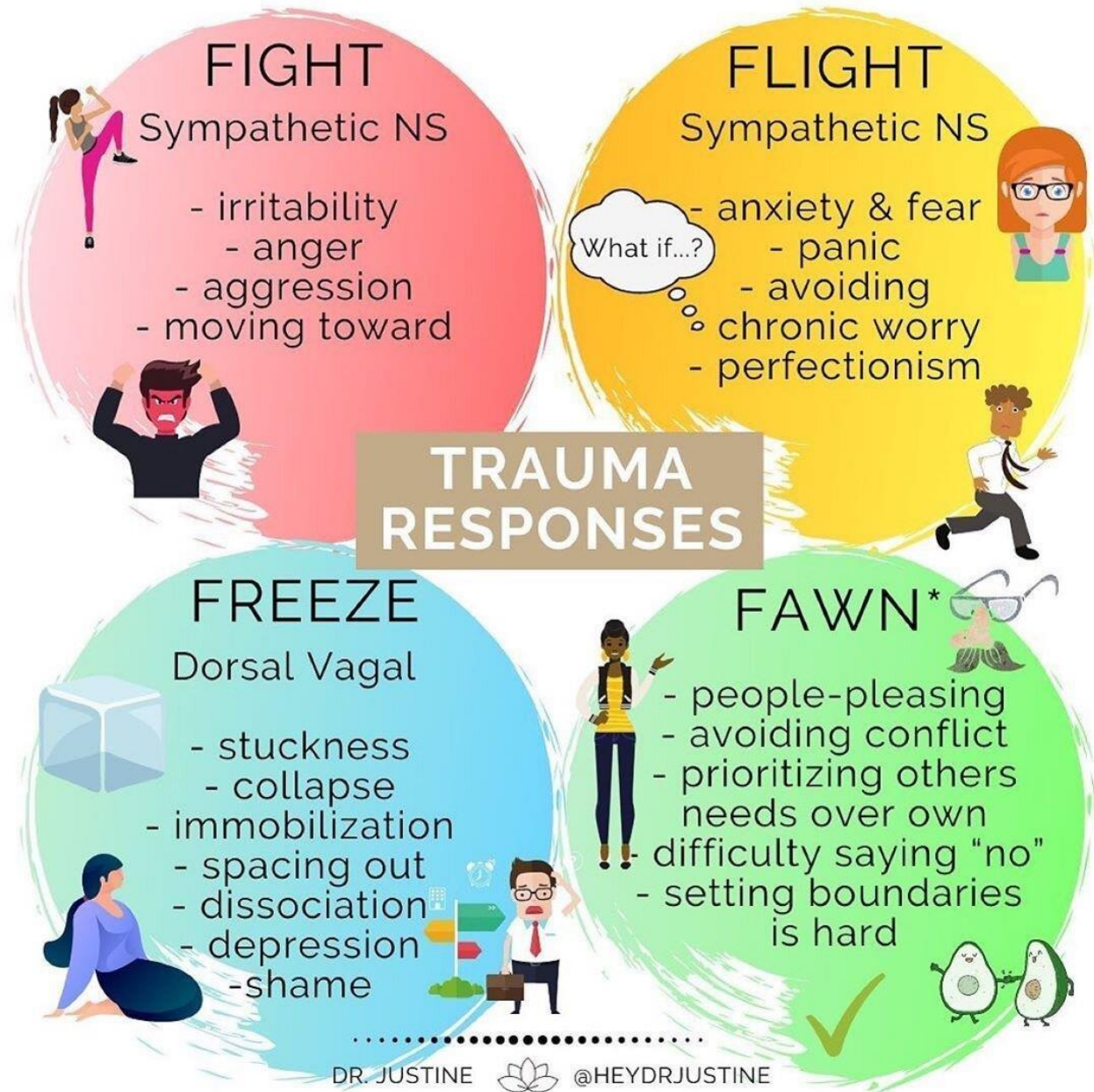
- Trauma-informed care:



# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

People often have an emotional reaction to a traumatic event, including shock and difficulty remembering key details.

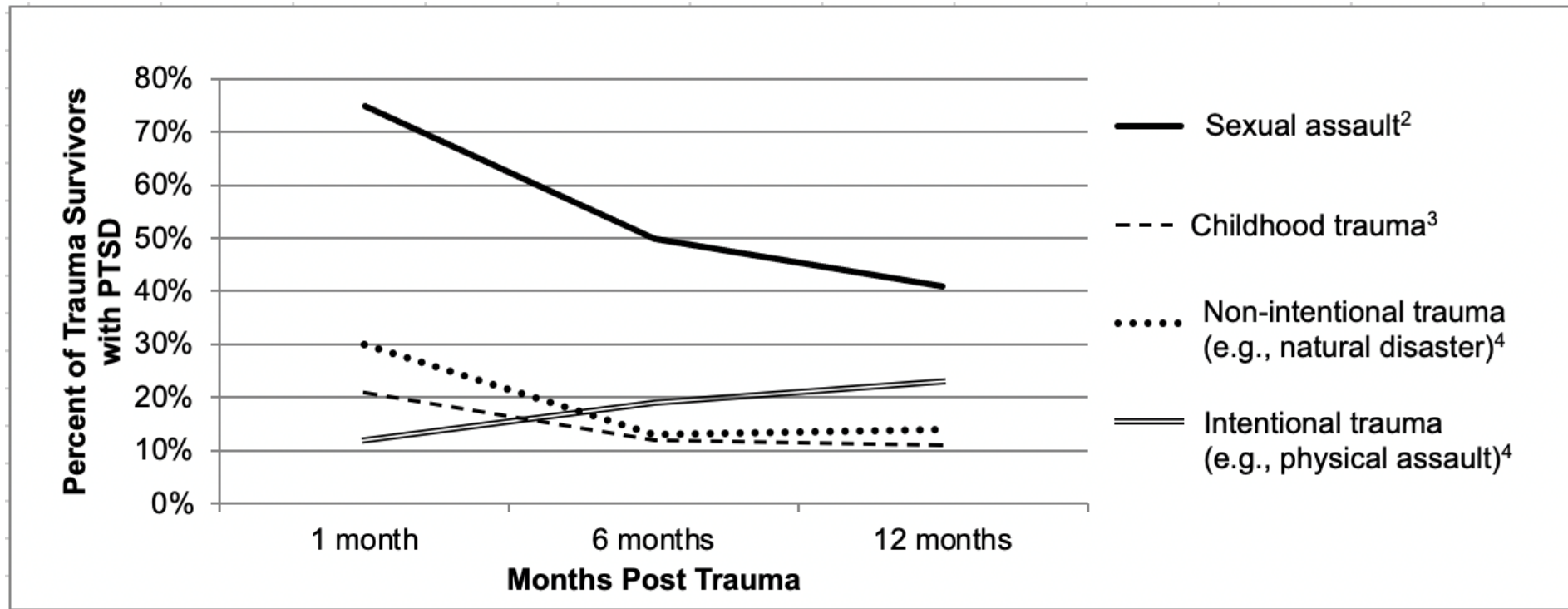
Sympathetic nervous system responds with survival mechanisms.



(image from Astrid Burke, 2022)

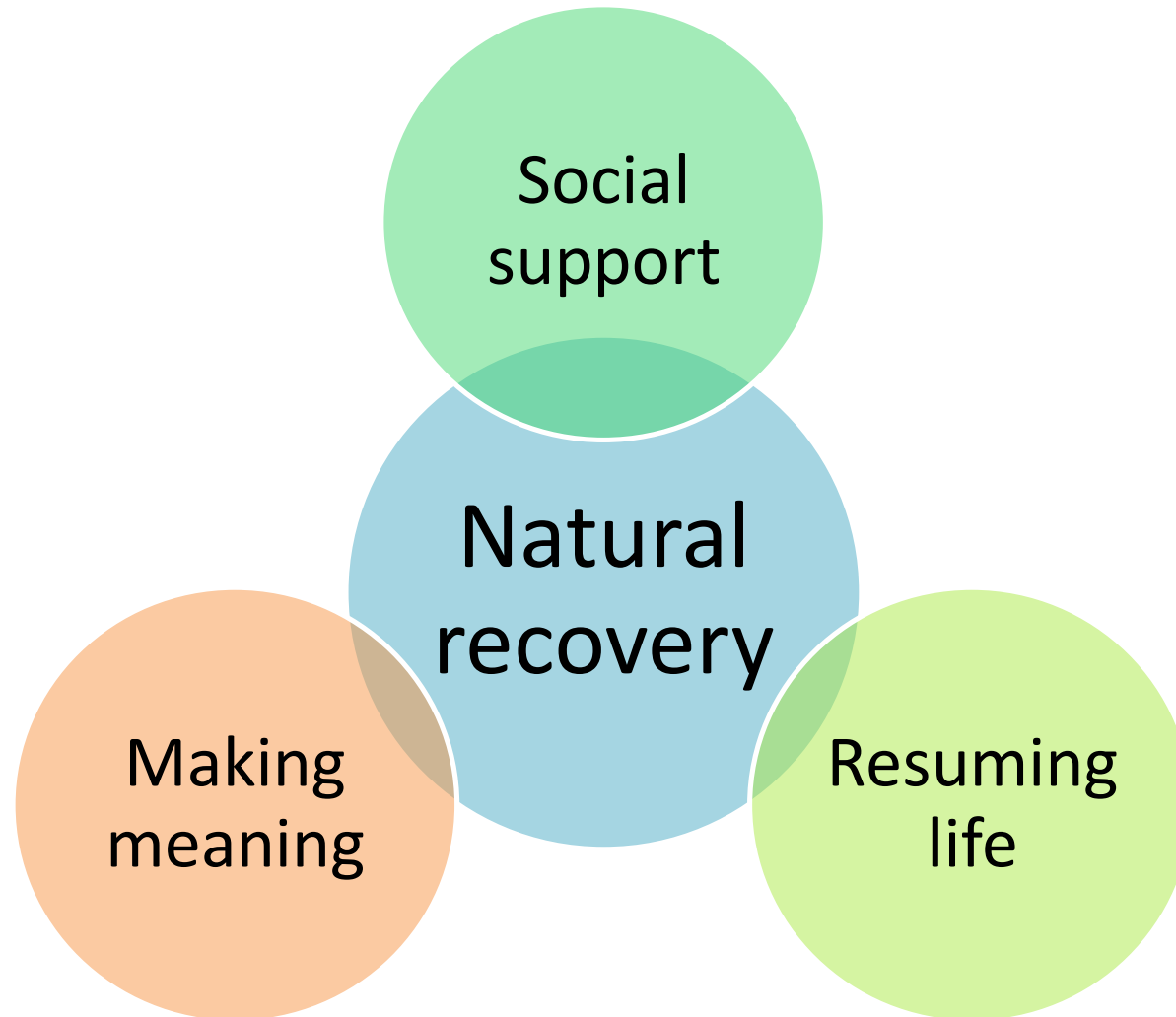
# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD

- 90% of people experience a traumatic event in their life.
  - Most recovery naturally – this is called **resilience**.



(ISTSS, 2022; Kilpatrick et al., 2013)

# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD



(ISTSS, 2022)



# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD

- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops when emotional responses continue and impair functioning.
- PTSD criteria per DSM-5:
  - Criterion A: Traumatic event

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013; ISTSS, 2022; Kilpatrick et al., 2013)

# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD

- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops when emotional responses continue and impair functioning.
- PTSD criteria per DSM-5:
  - Criterion A: Traumatic event – Directly exposed, witnessed, learned, or vicarious exposure to perceived or actual situations of “death”, “serious injury”, or “sexual violence”

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013; ISTSS, 2022; Kilpatrick et al., 2013)

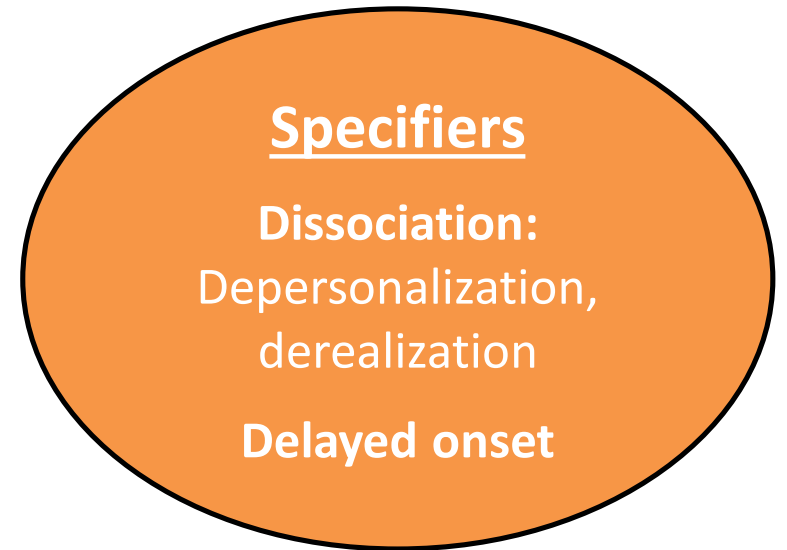
# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD

- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops when emotional responses continue and impair functioning.
- PTSD criteria per DSM-5:
  - Criterion A: Traumatic event
  - Criterion B: Intrusion symptoms
  - Criterion C: Avoidance
  - Criterion D: Changes in thoughts and mood
  - Criterion E: Changes in arousal (hypervigilance)

(American Psychiatric Association, 2013; ISTSS, 2022; Kilpatrick et al., 2013)

# NATURAL RECOVERY VS PTSD

- Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops when emotional responses continue and impair functioning.
- PTSD criteria per DSM-5:
  - Criterion A: Traumatic event
  - Criterion B: Intrusion symptoms
  - Criterion C: Avoidance
  - Criterion D: Changes in thoughts and mood
  - Criterion E: Changes in arousal (hypervigilance)



(American Psychiatric Association, 2013; ISTSS, 2022; Kilpatrick et al., 2013)

# PTSD SCREENING: PCL-5

- PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)
- Used for screening or monitoring symptoms
- If you ask, make sure to follow-up

**PCL-5**

**Instructions:** Below is a list of problems that people sometimes have in response to a very stressful experience. Please read each problem carefully and then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

In the past month, how much were you bothered by:	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0	1	2	3	4
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0	1	2	3	4
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0	1	2	3	4
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people,					

# PTSD SCREENING: PCL-5

- PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)
- Used for screening or monitoring symptoms
- *If you can't follow-up, don't ask*

**PCL-5**

**Instructions:** Below is a list of problems that people sometimes have in response to a very stressful experience. Please read each problem carefully and then circle one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

In the past month, how much were you bothered by:	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0	1	2	3	4
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0	1	2	3	4
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0	1	2	3	4
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0	1	2	3	4
9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people,					

# PATIENT EXAMPLE

- Jerry reported multiple traumatic events, but that most of current distress was related to be physically assaulted by police in California.
- He also reported:
  - Avoiding TV shows about police
  - Re-experiencing the event
  - Fights with his wife
  - Scored 58 on PCL-5 (out of 80)



# “HOW I KNEW I HAD PTSD”



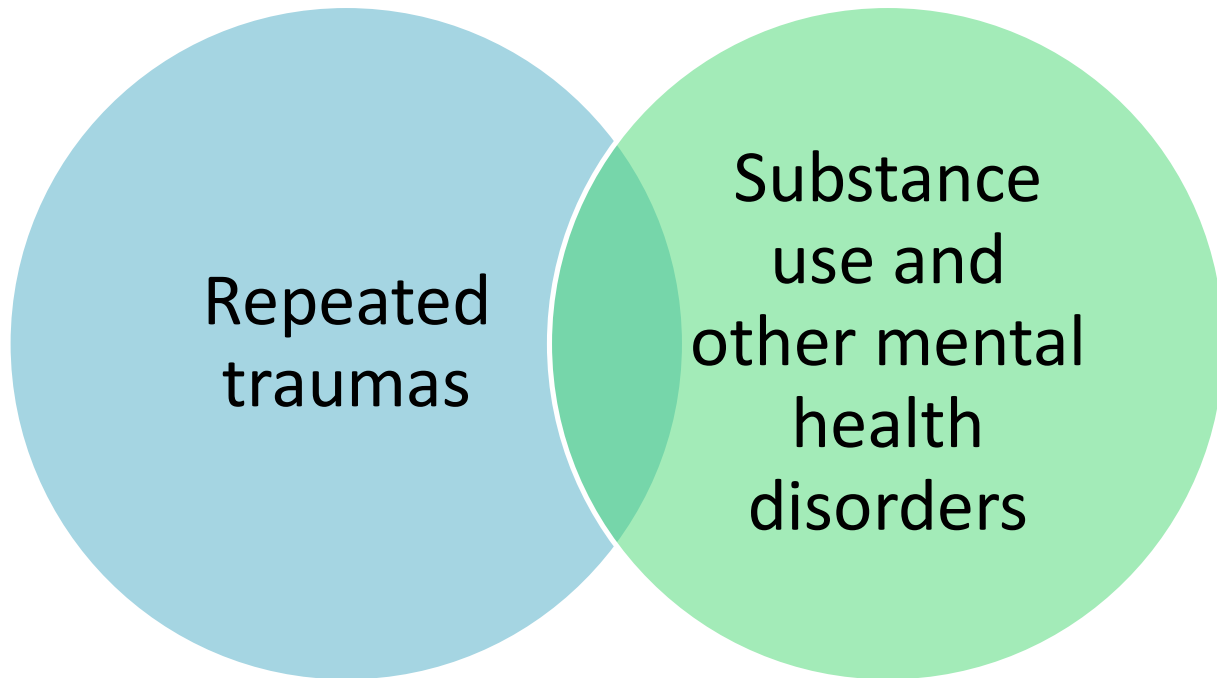


# RISK FACTORS OF PTSD

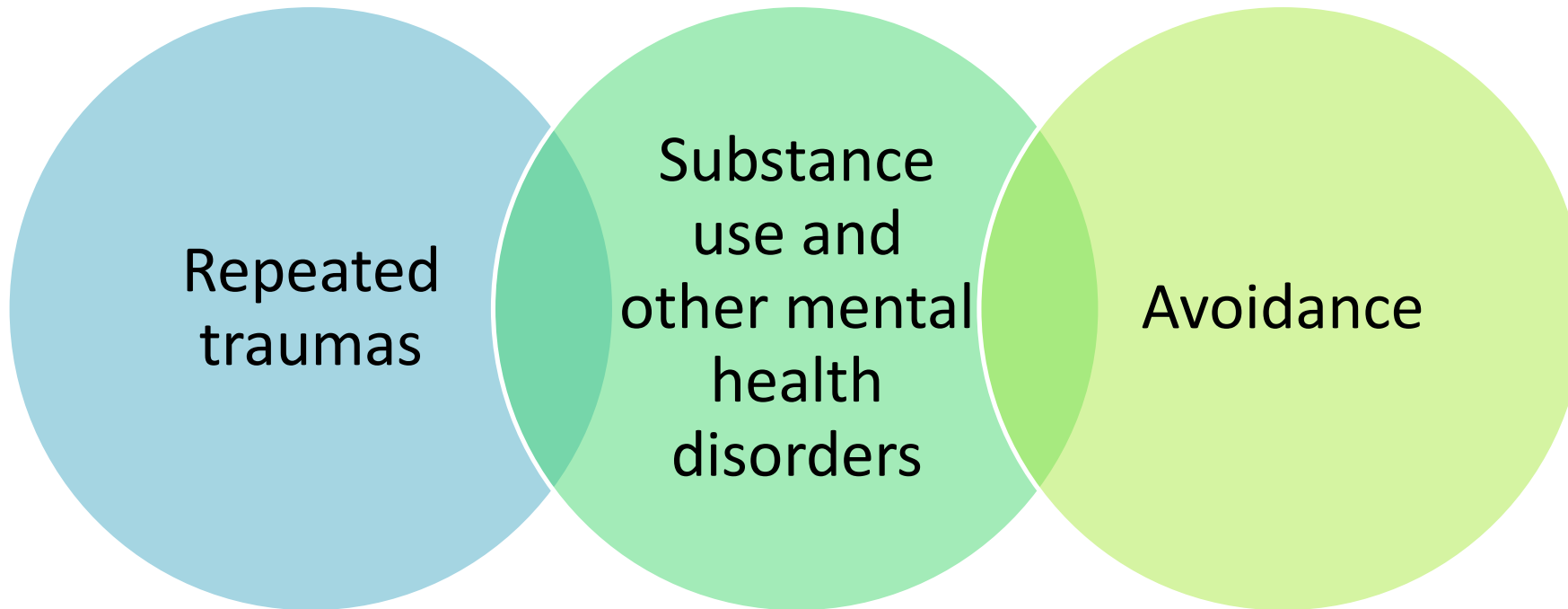


Repeated  
traumas

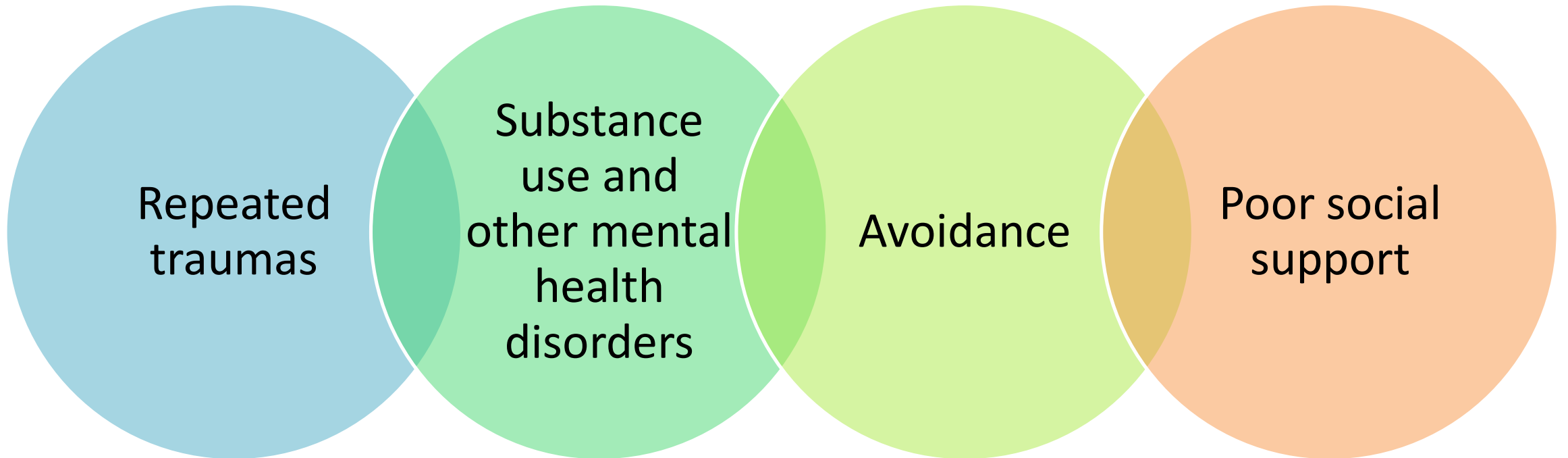
# RISK FACTORS OF PTSD



# RISK FACTORS OF PTSD



# RISK FACTORS OF PTSD

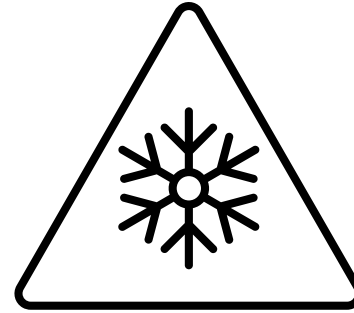
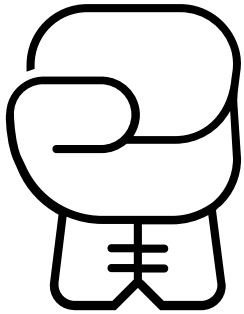


# WHAT IS A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- Returning to a fight / flight / freeze / fawn state

# WHAT IS A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- Returning to a fight / flight / freeze / fawn state:



## Fight

- Need to defend
- "Aggressive"

## Flight

- Need to run away
- "Avoidant"

## Freeze

- Cannot process
- "Uncooperative"

## Fawn

- Keep the peace
- "Push-over"

# DISCUSSION

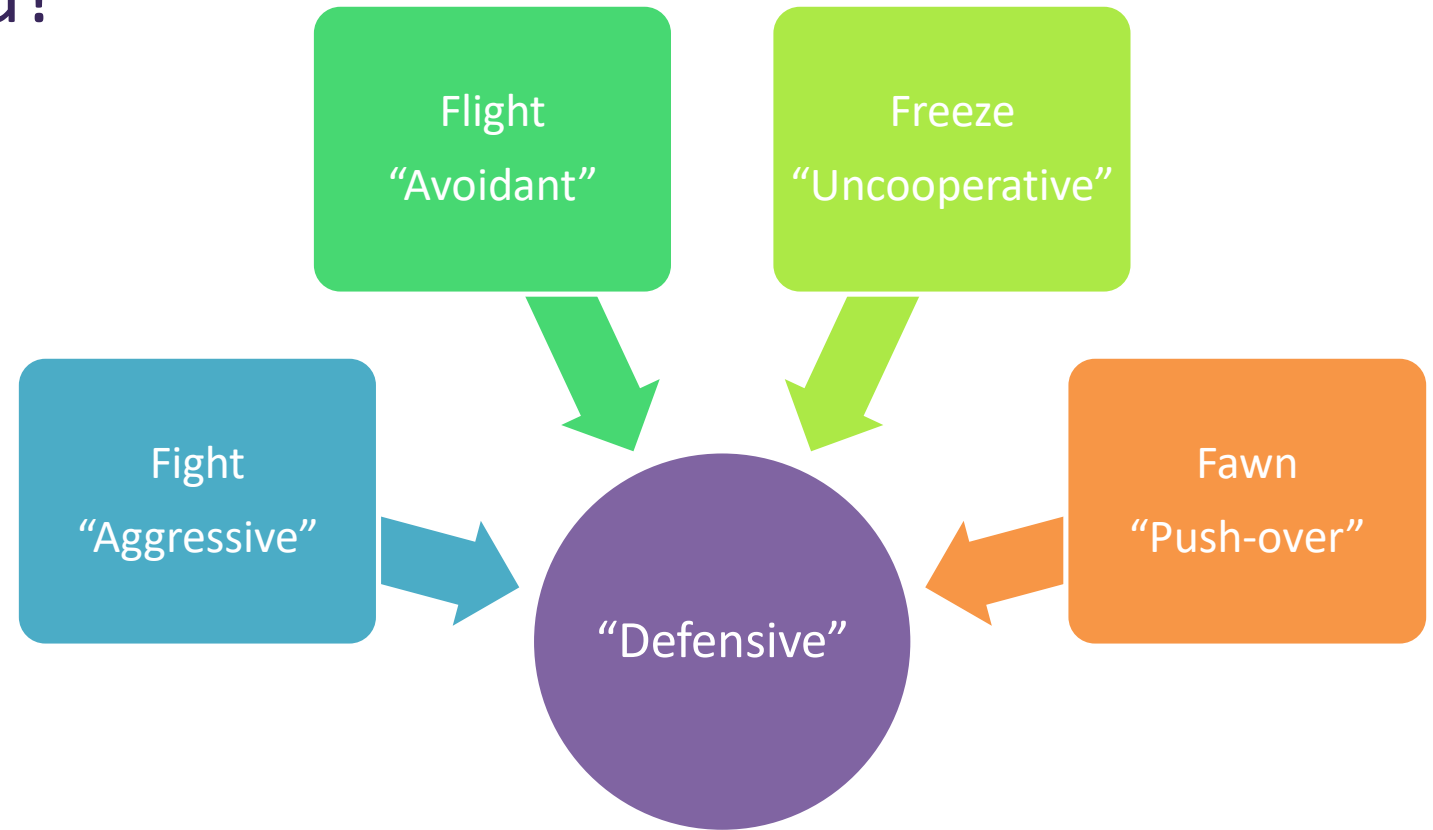


*How have you seen trauma responses come up (professionally or in your day-to-day)?*

Please be sensitive to triggers for yourself and others.

# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

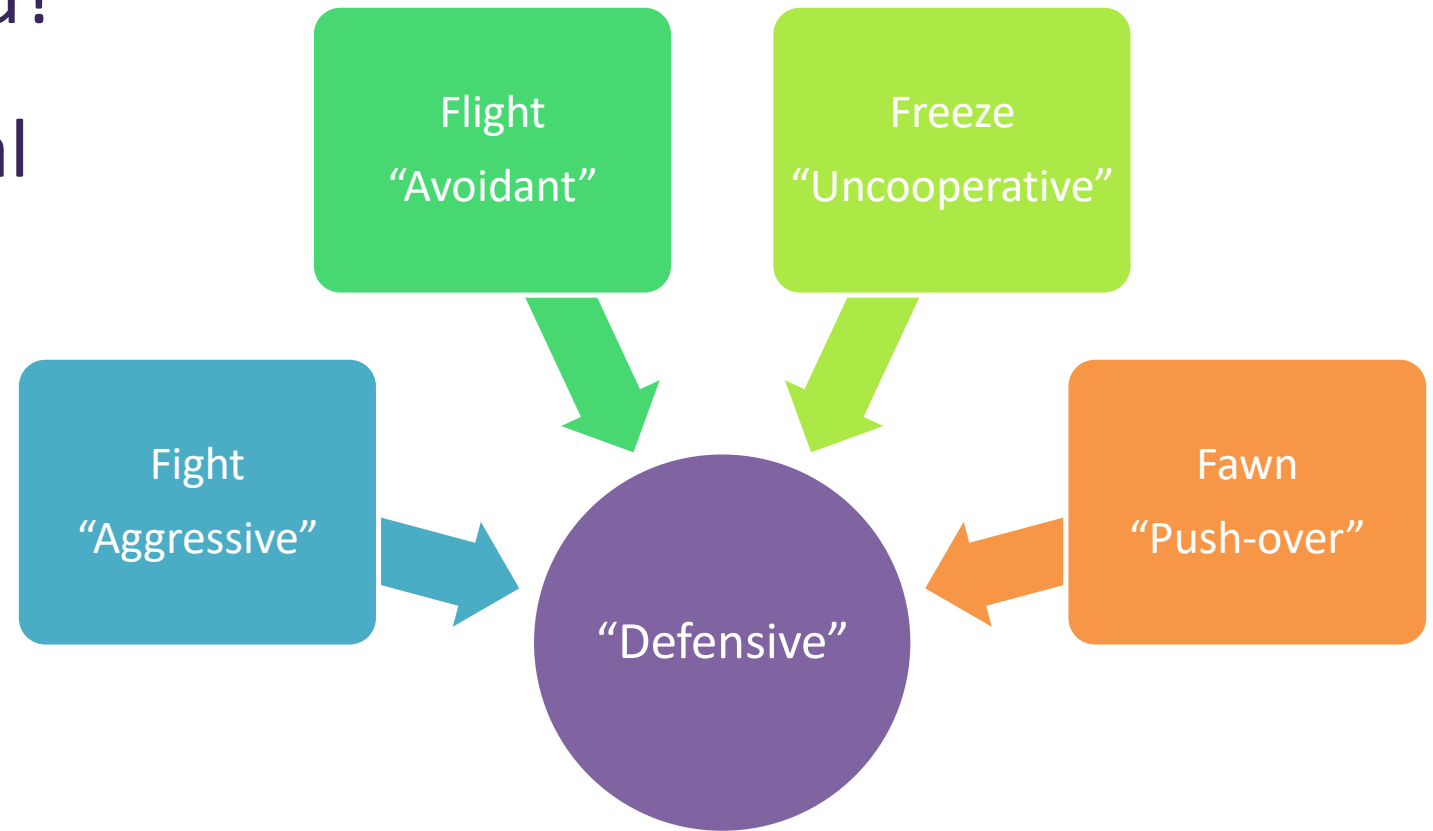
- Reviewing someone's chart:  
How are they described?





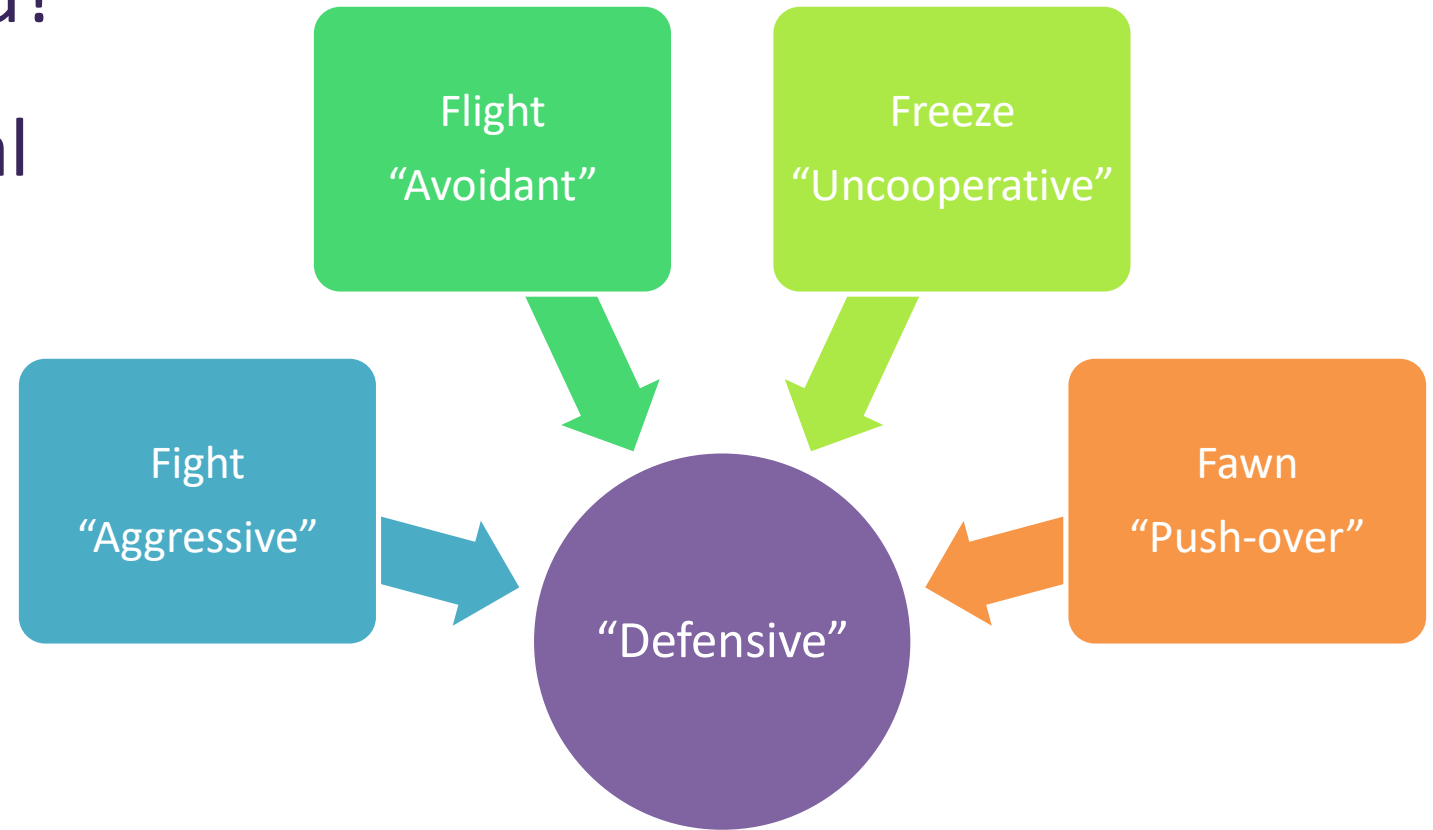
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- Reviewing someone’s chart:  
How are they described?
- Is this a learned survival response?



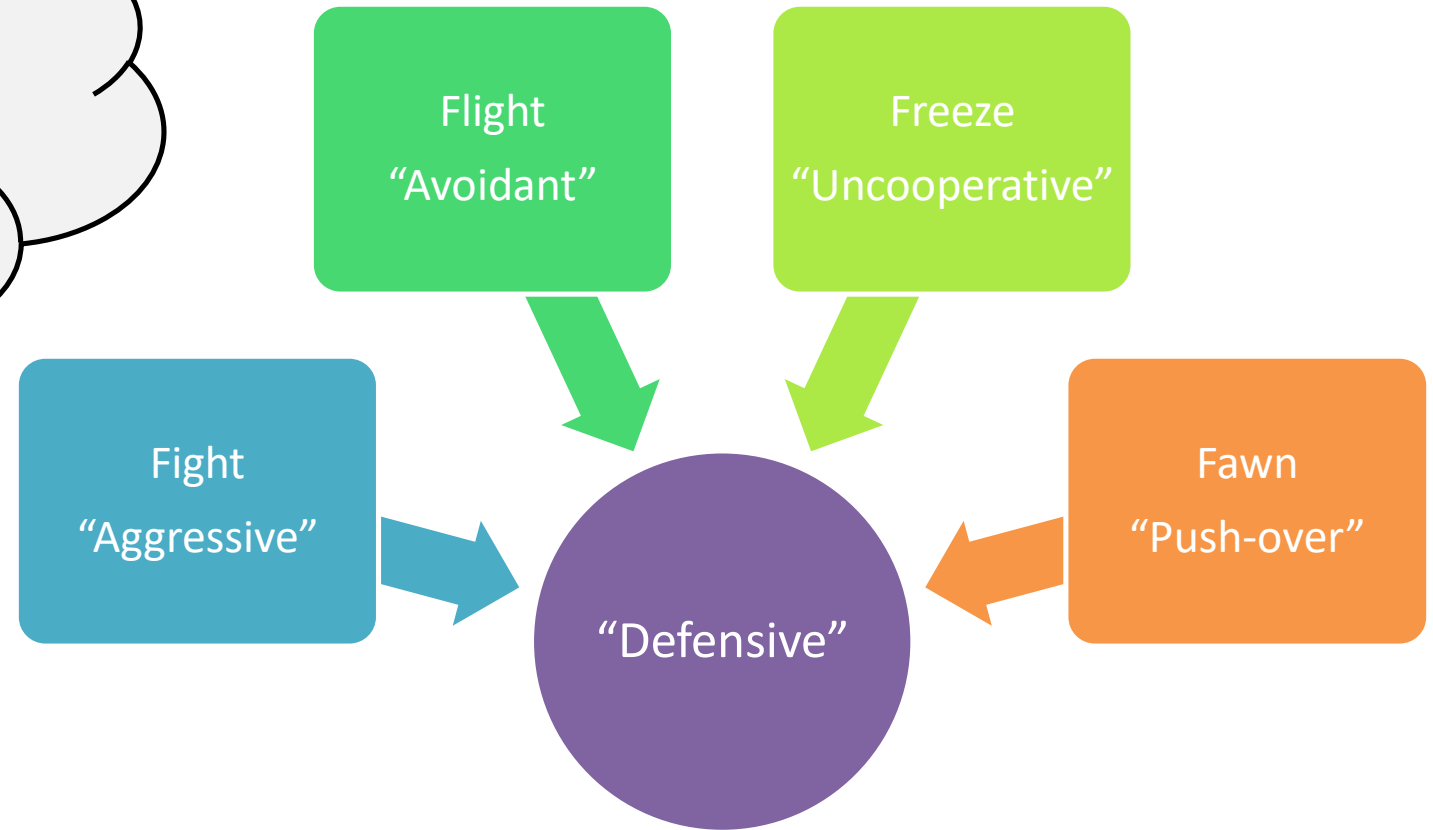
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- Reviewing someone's chart:  
How are they described?
- Is this a learned survival response?
- Other explanations:
  - Cultural
  - Personality
  - Mental health disorder
  - Combination



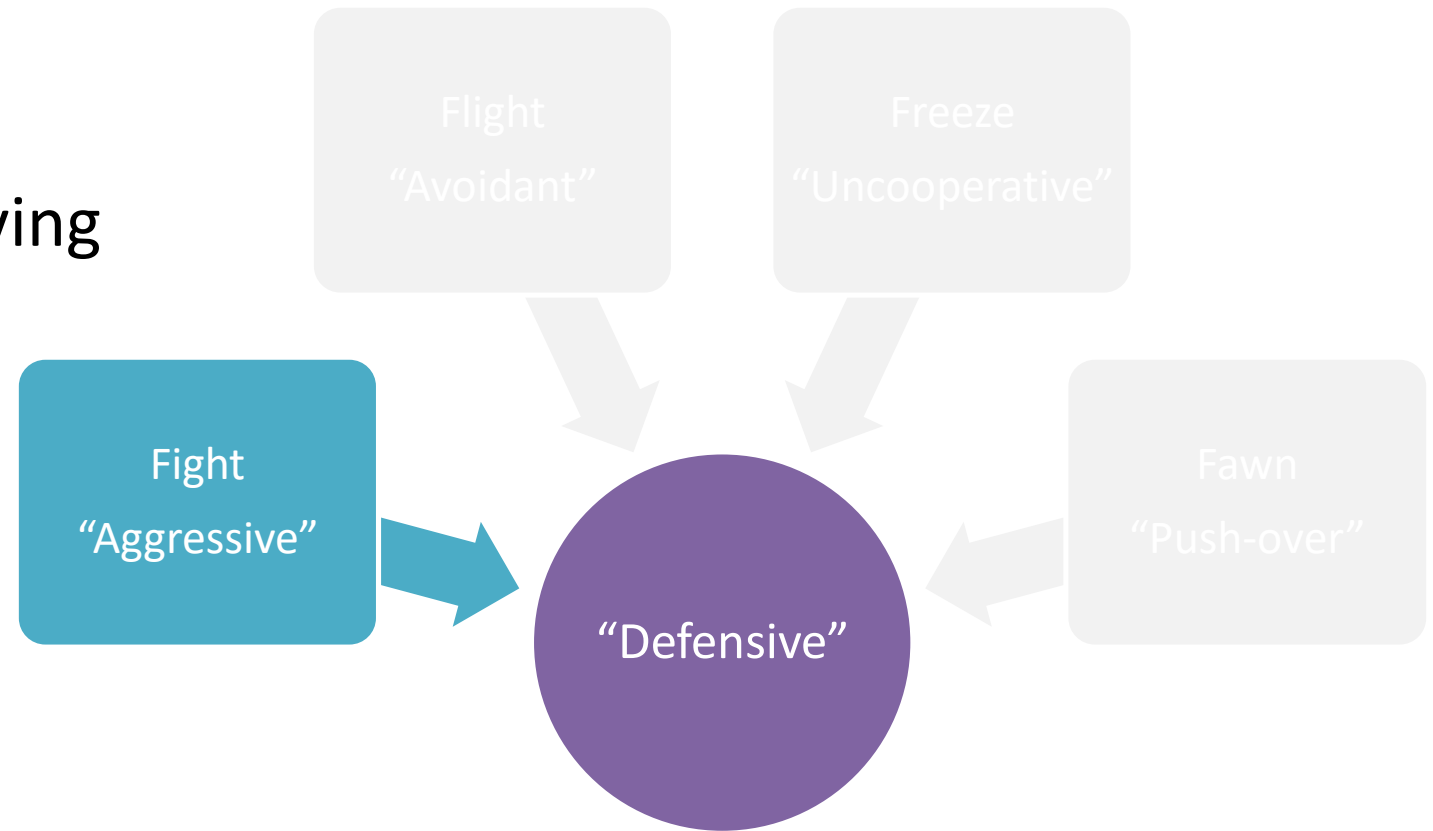
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

Maybe this person is not intentionally acting defensive but is operating under a survival response.



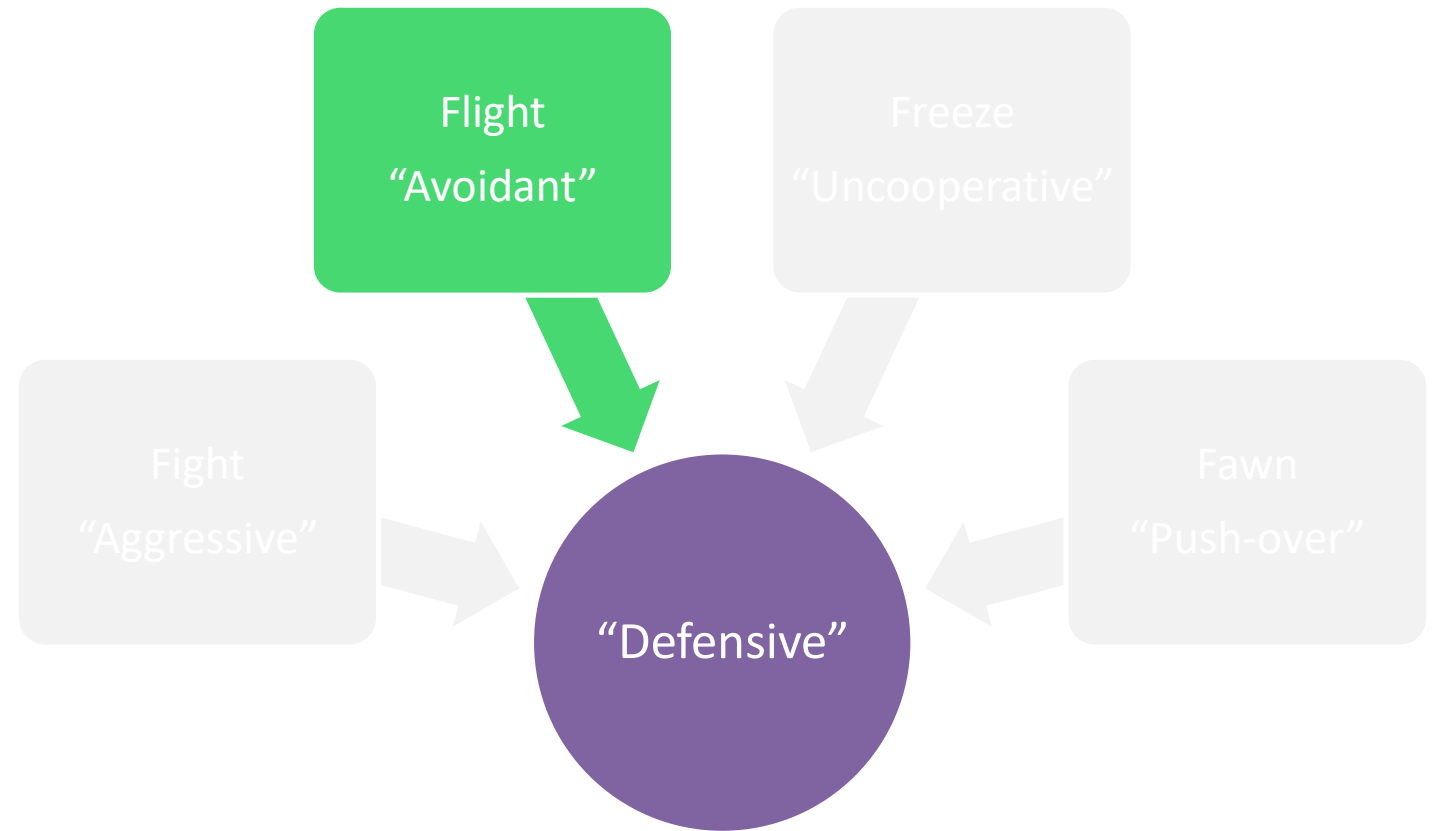
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- How do they present?
  - Tone, sarcastic
  - Raised voice
  - Pushing, throwing, shoving



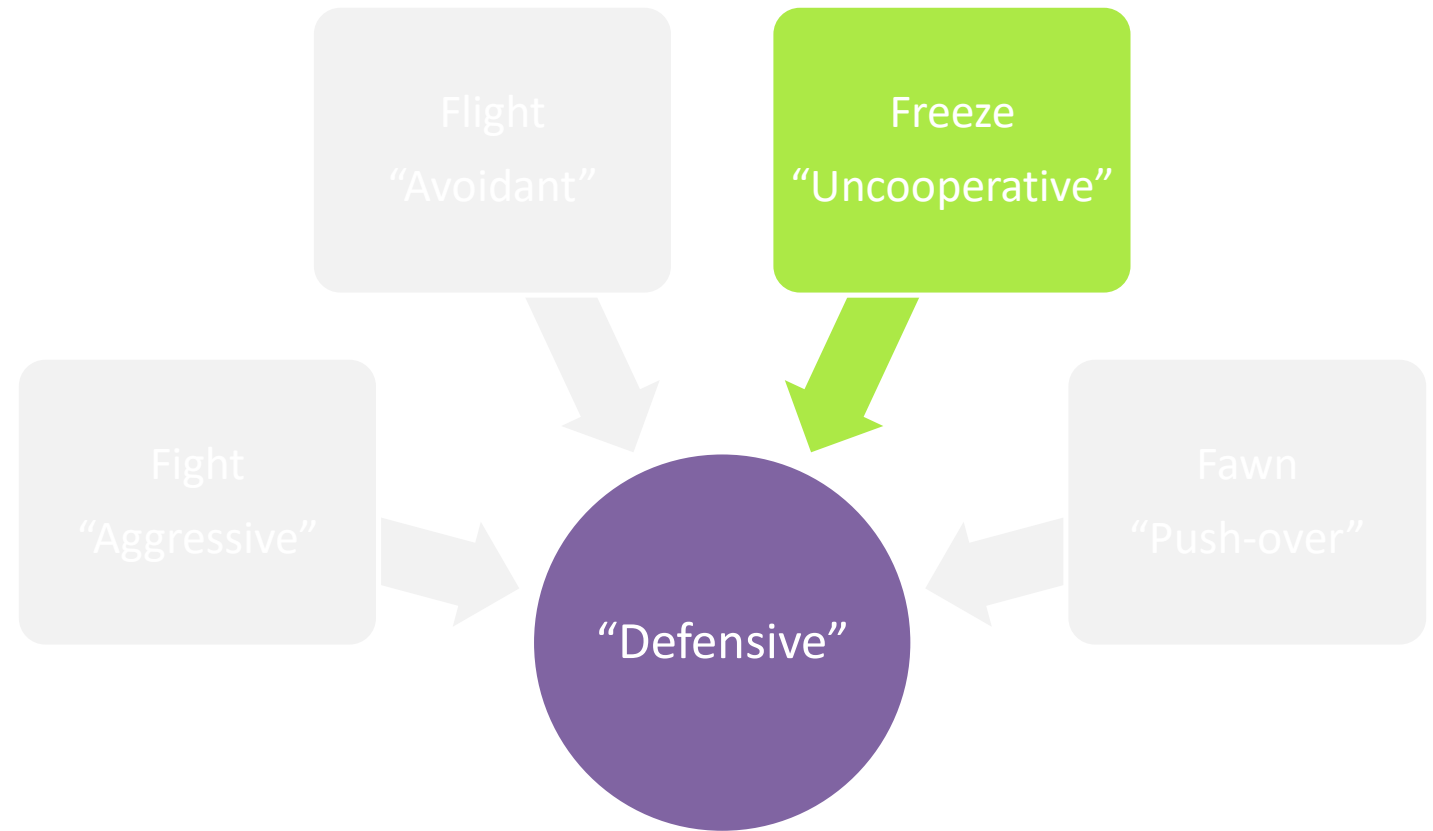
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- How do they present?
  - They don't show up
  - Avoiding eye contact
  - Short responses



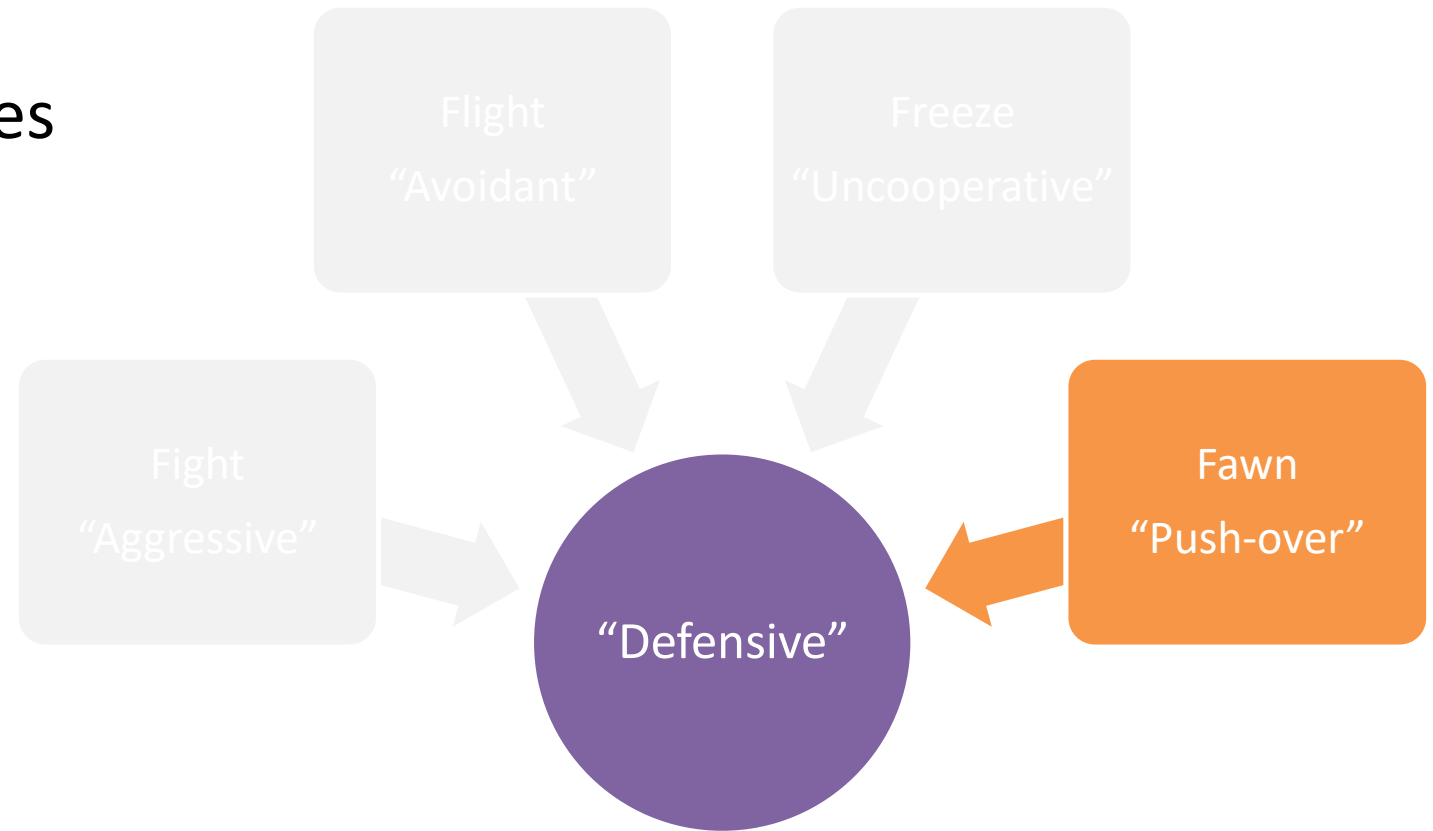
# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- How do they present?
  - “I don’t know”
  - Shutting down
  - Not responding



# HOW CAN YOU SPOT A TRAUMA RESPONSE?

- How do they present?
  - Says yes to everything
  - Agrees, but then behaves differently



# PATIENT EXAMPLE

- Jerry presented wanting to work on his trauma.
- However, in early sessions, his dialogue focused more on stress at work and in his marriage.
  - “Avoidant”?
- “No offense to you, but I don’t trust white people.”
  - “Aggressive”, “Uncooperative”?
- Unable to come to weekly sessions.





# DISCUSSION



*What is a trauma response that is new for you?*

Please be sensitive to triggers for yourself and others.

# RESOURCES

International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS)

- <https://istss.org/public-resources/trauma-basics/natural-recovery-vs-ptsd>

PTSD Check-List

- <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/adult-sr/ptsd-checklist.asp>
- [mandyo@uw.edu](mailto:mandyo@uw.edu)