

Introduction to Trauma Informed Yoga and Somatic Practices

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collective
R E S I L I E N C E

Community Agreements

- Take a breath before responding.
- Communicate using “I” statements. Speak to your own experience
- Move in, move out
- Make room and be respectful of different perspectives, and center kindness for yourself and others
- Be aware that Intention doesn’t always equal impact
- “ouch” and “oops”
- Practice confidentiality and do not speak about shared experience with other folks in the session without prior consent
- Balance self and community care
- We strive for this to be anti-oppressive space (be conscious of points of privilege and oppression that live in the room, and the power dynamics between us)
- Accept and expect non-closure

GOALS FOR THIS COURSE

- give you a trauma informed framework for how yoga and somatic practices can increase resilience
- offer tools for teaching/ practicing in a trauma informed way
- address the psychological dynamics that exist between teachers/ students, parents/ children, helper/ helpee

Why Trauma Informed Yoga?

- Trauma informed yoga is people informed yoga. This is a perspective that recognizes the humanity of our students and asks us to consider all that has shaped them. Trauma Informed yoga values emotional and psychological safety first.



Self-regulation is the goal of a trauma informed practice

- To feel grounded, centered and in present time, with access to one's breath in the postures.
- To safely discharge traumatic stress
- To be KIND to oneself
- To begin to trust in the rhythm of life again.
- To trust the signals of the body
- To feel integrated and whole
- To tolerate discomfort and know that you'll be OK
- RESILIENCE

Interoception

- The capacity to sense what's happening inside of us
- Interoception underlies many important skills, including:
 - Decision making
 - Intuition
 - Self-awareness
 - Social awareness
 - Empathy
 - Perspective taking
 - Flexibility of thought
 - Problem solving

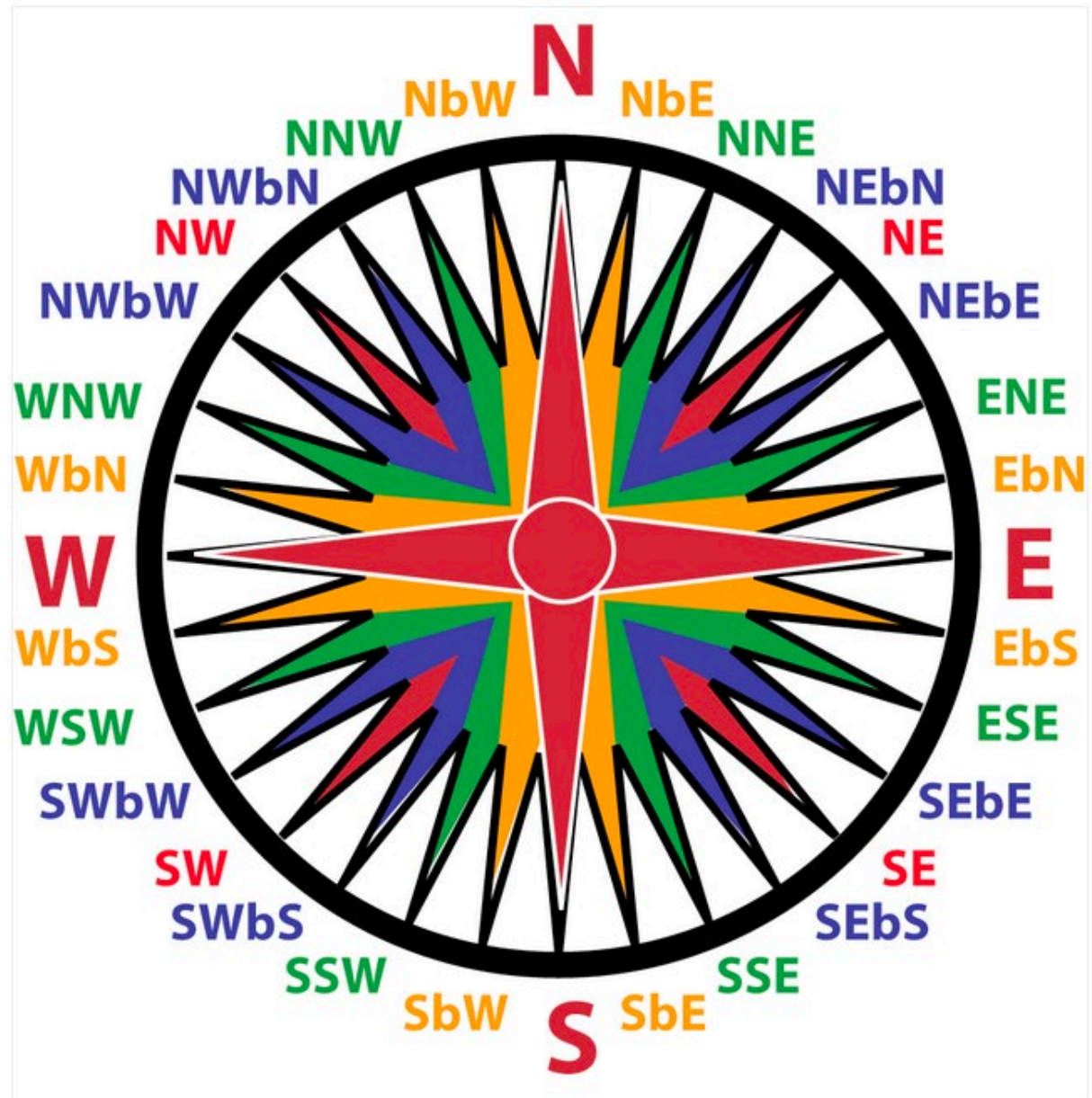


Resilience

- The ability to recover from adversity, to bounce back or be transformed by it.
- Resilience can also refer to an inner knowing that one can handle difficult situations should they arise.



Your body is
your GPS



Resourcing

- Orienting – external and internal
- Grounding
- Centering
- ‘The Good’
- Breath



Trauma

Anything that overwhelms our capacity to cope and respond, and leaves us feeling helpless, hopeless and out of control.



Shock Trauma

- An event that happened too fast and too soon, and overwhelms our capacity to cope and respond, leaving you feeling helpless, hopeless and out of control

A young child with dark hair is sitting on a carpeted floor, hunched over with their head buried in their arms. They are wearing a blue and white striped long-sleeved shirt and grey pants. The child is positioned in front of a window, looking out. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the window. The background is slightly blurred, showing a white wall and a dark door frame.

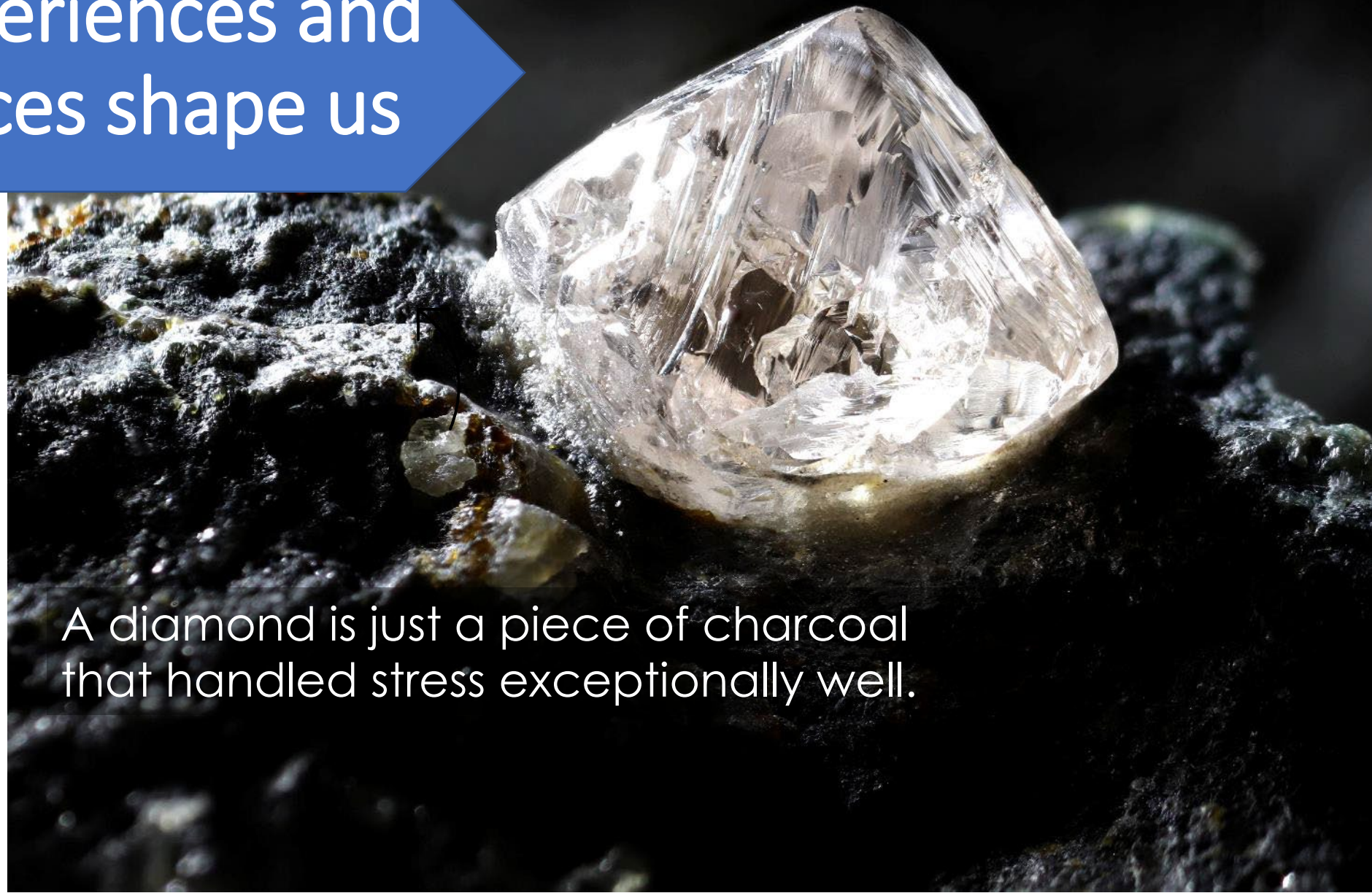
Developmental Trauma

- Caused by to an ongoing mis-attunement between a child and its primary caretaker.


Complex Trauma

- Caused by repetitive, prolonged, or cumulative experiences of trauma in which the person has little or no ability to get out of the situation

Our life experiences and
circumstances shape us



A diamond is just a piece of charcoal
that handled stress exceptionally well.

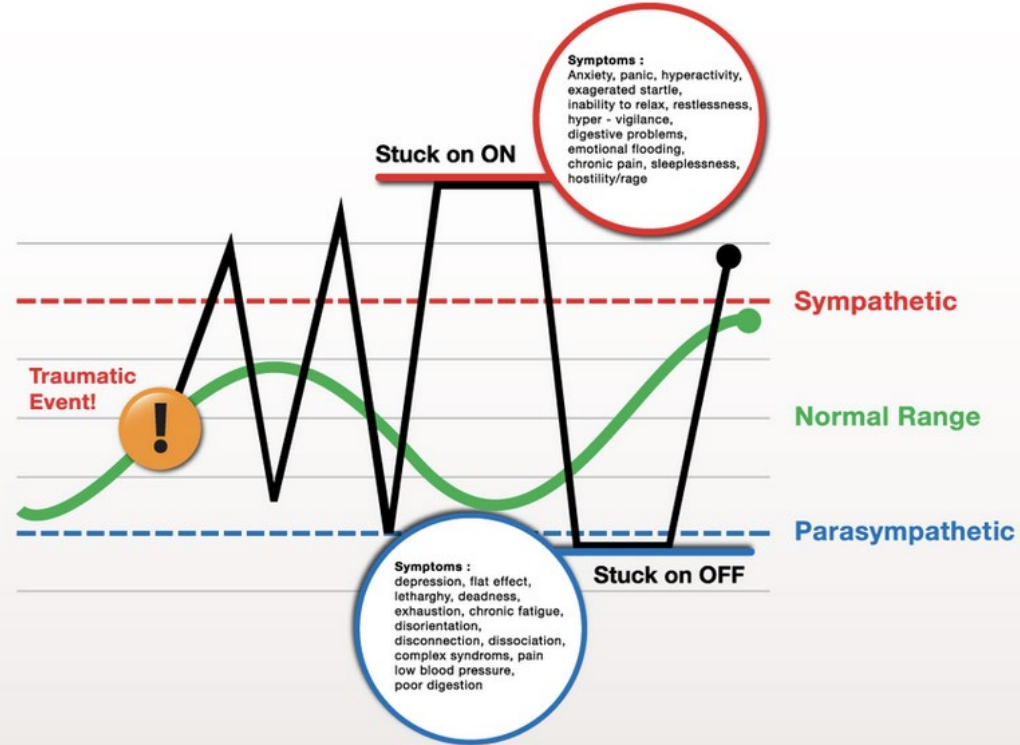
A man with curly hair and a beard is sitting on a light-colored couch, meditating. He has his eyes closed and his hands are resting on his lap in a mudra. The couch has several patterned pillows. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

When we are **self-regulated** we feel grounded, centered, and present in the moment.

When one is dysregulated there is a general lack of control over one's emotional state and/or behavior. It is reactive rather than responsive, impulsive rather than thought out.



Symptoms of Un-Discharged Traumatic Stress



Chronic stress levels that remain outside of our window of tolerance can be toxic to our bodies and brains.



Resource

Anything that feels solid, good supportive, neutral

TRAUMA/ TRIGGER + NO RESOURCE

=

TRAUMA SYMPTOMS

TRAUMA/ TRIGGER + RESOURCE =

HEALING

What all trauma survivors need

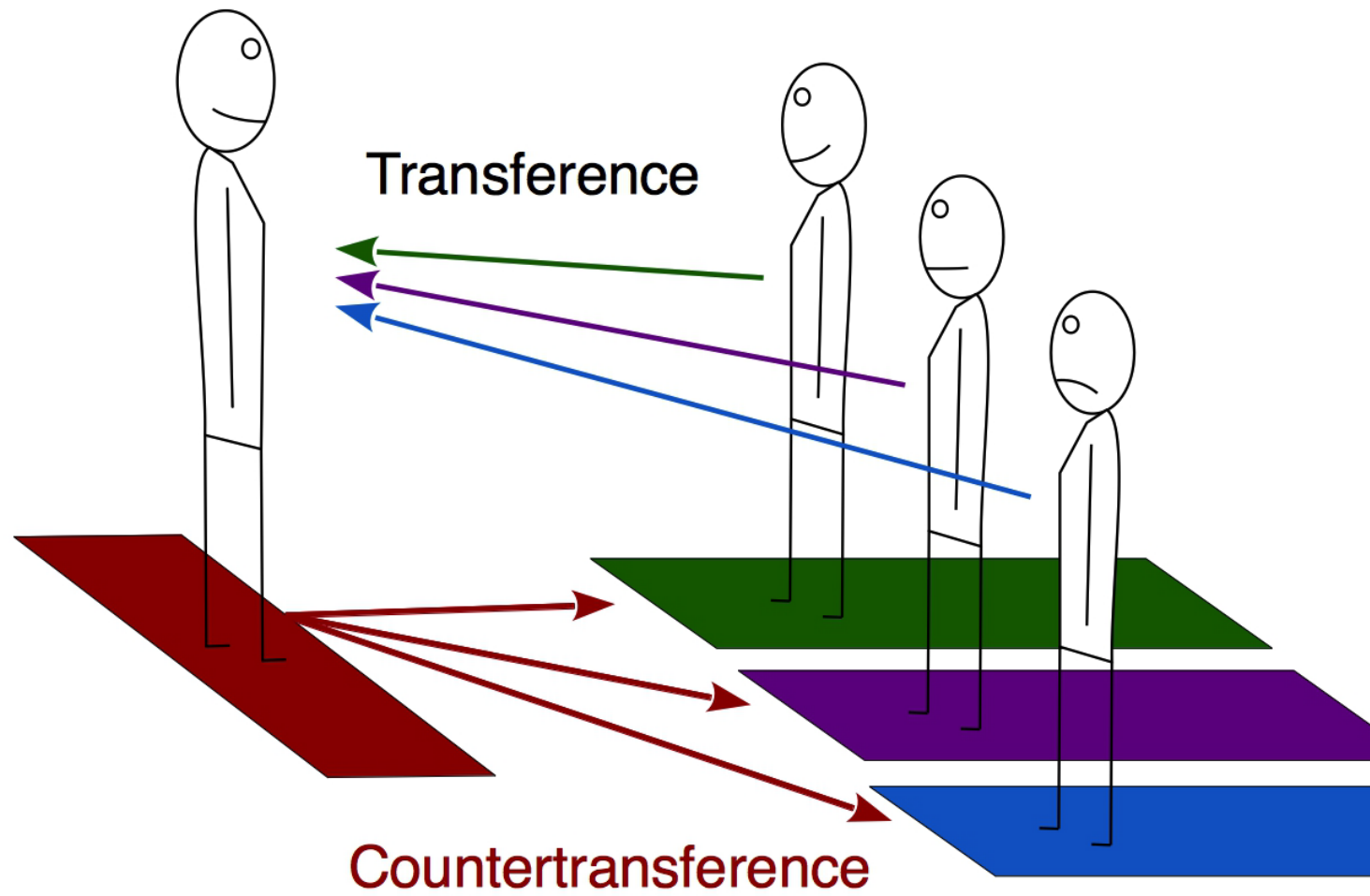
- A space to reconnect with sensations in a safe, titrated way.
- Clear boundaries between student and teacher
- Consent to touch
- Normalization of their symptoms to reduce shame
- Grounding, Centering and Breath
- Cues to be curious about their sensations without being overwhelmed

Different Needs in a yoga class

- Clear instructions and cues that are containing
 - Touch that is grounding and safe
 - Not too many options
 - Music (can be something to focus on)
 - Personal attention and acknowledgment
 - Strong poses
- Freedom to move as they need without too much constriction
 - No touch- touch feels unsafe
 - Lots of options
 - No music- overwhelming
 - Minimal personal attention- don't want to be the focus of attention
 - Gentle poses

Inclusive Language is Trauma Informed

- No “levels” ; instead, offer variations or option
- No “modifications”
- Limit/ omit gendered language
- Invitational language
- ”Notice”
- Don’t assume what your student is experiencing
- Hold space for people where they are, not where you want them to be





- “Trauma stewardship can be defined as a daily practice through which individuals, organizations, and societies tend to the hardship, pain or trauma experienced by humans, other living beings, or our planet itself. *Those who support trauma stewardship believe that both joy and pain are realities of life, and that suffering can be transformed into meaningful growth and healing when a quality of presence is cultivated and maintained even in the face of great suffering.*”

From *Trauma Stewardship* by L. van Dernoot Lipsky