



Strengthening Tribal Courts: Impact of Domestic Violence on Youth

◆ November 20 - 21, 2024 | Hochatown, OK ◆





Coming Up Next | Unit 5

Lived and Learned: Foundations of Tribal
Child Welfare: Understanding Abuse,
Neglect, and Their Impact on Childhood
Experiences

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Forensic Interviewer, Grayson County Children's Advocacy
Center





Unit 5

Lived and Learned: Foundations of Tribal Child Welfare: Understanding Abuse, Neglect, and Their Impact on Childhood Experiences

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Lived and Learned: Foundations of Tribal Child Welfare

Understanding Abuse, Neglect, and Their Impact on Childhood
Experiences





Session Objectives




- Understand the impact of childhood abuse and neglect
- Recognize the effects of foster care on children
- Look beyond behaviors to understand trauma's impact
- Explore ways to create change, even in challenging situations



Flight of Ideas Stick with me!

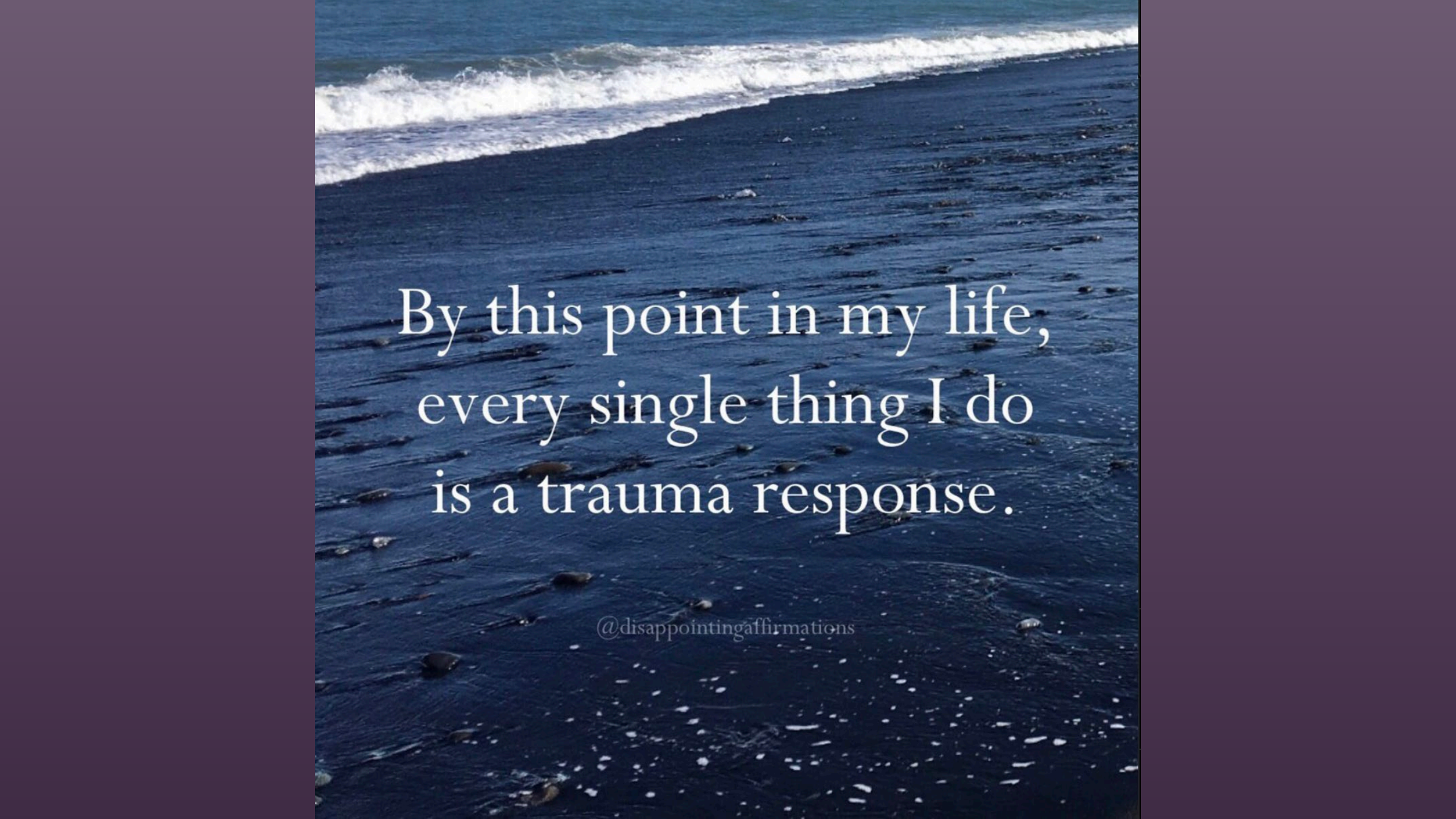
Trauma may present as chaos and be hard to follow, so stick with me;
it will all come together in the end.



This may feel chaotic and unorganized but trauma is not linear

Understanding that it's not linear allows us to prepare for:

- Setbacks along the way – two steps forward, one step back
- Approach healing with more patience and compassion
- Recognize that progress is not always visible to others



By this point in my life,
every single thing I do
is a trauma response.

[@disappointingaffirmations](#)

**What doesn't kill you
makes you stronger.**

NO!!!!

WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU

Makes you tired and bitter

Cynical

Jaded

Poor boundaries

Bad at relationships

Temperamental

Emotional

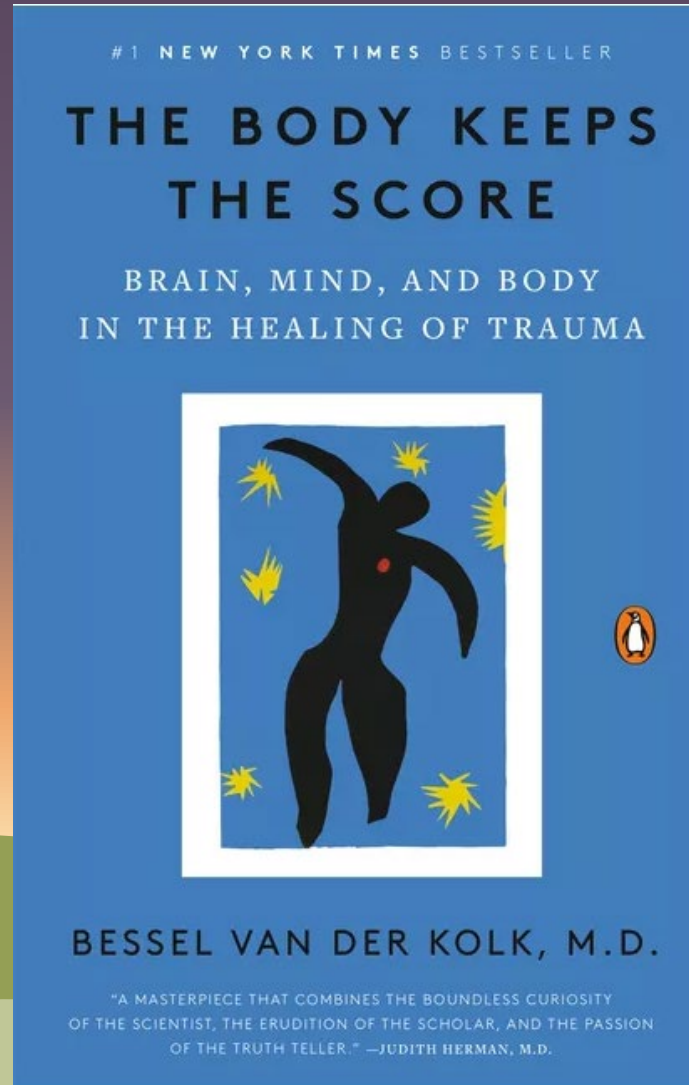
And SOOOOO many other things besides STRONG!





“Traumatized people chronically feel unsafe inside their own bodies.”

- Dr. Bessel Van der Kolk



ACE Questionnaire – Questions 1 - 5

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often ... push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? Try to or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal sex with you?
4. Did you often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or that your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
5. Did you often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? Or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

ACE Questionnaire – Questions 6 - 10 (cont'd)

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
7. Was your mother or stepmother often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? Or sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a household member attempt suicide?
10. Did a household member ever go to prison?

Add up your “yes” answers. This is your ACE Score _____



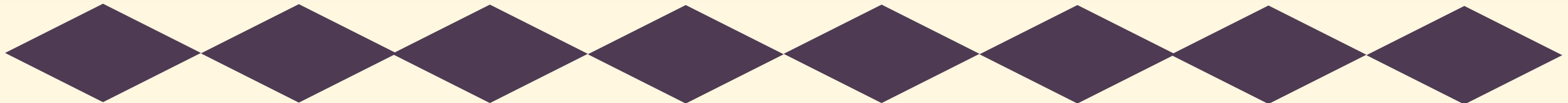
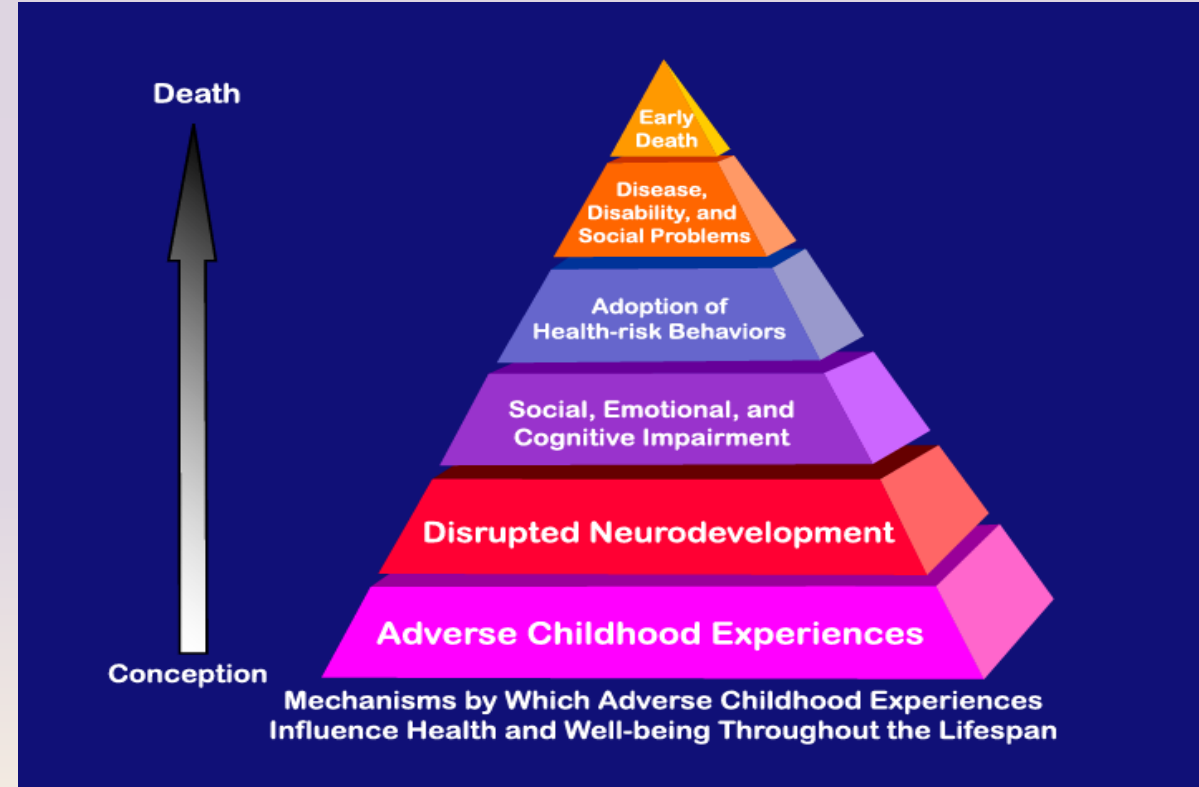
About 64% of adults in the United States report at least one ACE before age 18, and nearly one in six reporting four or more ACEs. As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for various health problems later in life. These include:

- Alcoholism and substance abuse
- Depression and suicide attempts
- Heart disease, cancer, and stroke
- Obesity and diabetes
- Risky sexual behaviors and sexually transmitted diseases

ACEs can negatively impact brain development, immune systems, and stress-response mechanisms, leading to difficulties in attention, decision-making, and learning.

Children with three or more ACEs are 5 times more likely to have attendance issues, 6 times more likely to have behavior problems, and 3 times more likely to experience academic failure

ACEs can decrease a person's overall life expectancy by nearly 20 years compared to someone without ACEs





Have you ever considered the profound impact that childhood abuse and neglect can have on a person's life?

Understanding the lasting effects of early trauma is crucial to providing support and healing for those who have experienced it.





WHEN trauma occurs can
make all of the difference.

Early vs. Later

“The truth is you cannot love
yourself unless you have been
loved and are loved. The
capacity to love cannot be built
in isolation. “

~ Dr. Bruce Perry



**EVERY KID IS
ONE CARING
ADULT AWAY
FROM BEING A
SUCCESS
STORY.**

Impact of Early Trauma

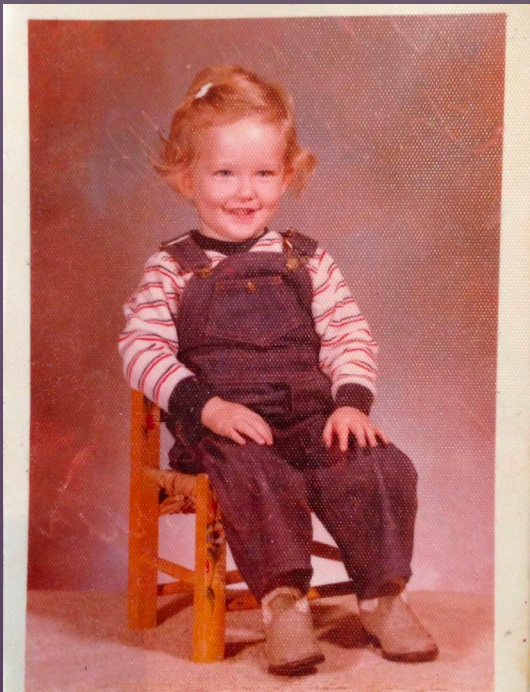
- Brain Development

Trauma experienced in early childhood can significantly affect brain development. Early childhood trauma has been associated with reduced size of the brain cortex, which is responsible for complex functions such as memory, attention, thinking, and language

- Vulnerability of Young Children

Young children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of trauma because:

- Their rapidly developing brains are very susceptible to negative influences
- They lack the cognitive ability to fully understand and process traumatic events
- They are entirely dependent on caregivers for protection and emotional regulation



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REFERENCE

CASE NUMBER(S) _____

Date 9-23-83 Time of Call _____
Received by Cynthia Kernet Location _____

A. Complainant Larry Hignight Relation _____
Address Ardmore P.D. Phone _____
City Ardmore Follow-up _____

B. Children	Birth or /
<u>2 children, 1 a toddler & the other slightly older</u>	

Children's address _____
Children's whereabouts Harbor Route, Box 1
Abuse _____ Neglect

E. Description of Circumstances Mother arrested [redacted] yesterday for "Entering a forged instrument." She had written approximately \$2,500 worth of checks on her parents & grandmother. She told Det. Hignight she wrote \$1,000 worth of the checks to provide for her younger child's needs. She is presently in Carter County jail. She has not posted bond, [redacted] which will probably be \$4,000 - \$5,000. She has no known priors. Mother has drug/alcohol problem. Her parents keep the older child a good part of the time, but she was arrested yesterday & had the younger one with her. Mother, if convicted, may be in jail for awhile. Younger child was released to Betty Rose, Ms. Crider's mother. Mrs. Rose & her husband are very upset w/ Ms. Crider & want some type of formal custody. Det. Hignight has no knowledge of the type of care she provided the children, but feels because of her drug/alcohol problems, she needs some type of supervision at the least. He added Mrs. Rose & Maxine Rose, appear to be very fine people. He feels children would be better off living with Betty Rose.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REFERRAL FORM

CASE NUMBER(S) KC 591398

Assigned/Referred to: Rich Gaylor

Date 8-3-87
Received by J. Barnes

Date 8-4-87
Time Complaint Received 10:45
Location _____

*referred to us by asst. D.A. Chris Ramsey
(wants to remain anonymous)*

A. Complainant Melini Rose Relationship great grandmother
 Address 706 B. St. SE Phone No. 223-8344
 City Admore Follow-up Information Requested: Yes No

B. Children	Birthdate or Age	Sex	Race	School/Day Care
<u>Melissa Harris</u>	<u>9/1/10</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Dickson</u>
<u>Crystal Cride</u>	<u>4 yrs.</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>W</u>	

Children's address Hwy 199 - Atimplement Co. across street Phone _____
 Children's whereabouts _____
 Abuse Neglect Other _____

E. Description of Circumstances

last Monday or Tuesday night, the great grandmother was called by Melissa + Melissa was begging her to come + get them at 10:00 at night. When she went over + got them, Melissa told her that Kelly had beat upon her mother + the mother told Melissa to go down the road + get her grandma to come get her + take her to the doctor. Kelly Carroll put them in the bedroom to keep them from going + nailed the bedroom door shut + the window shut. They did get out + called great grandmother.

They have no stove - just hot plate to cook on + no bathtub. They take baths with water hose outside.

3 months ago Tammy moved out + left Kelly + lived @ in a trailer by her parents + they told her they would take care of her if she would stay away from Kelly but she stayed 2 or 3 days + went back to Kelly. Grandmother says she depends on Kelly for her dope supply + Kelly also uses dope. Grandmother states that Melissa told her they are not fed properly + never get anything hardly to eat. Melissa begged her grandmother not to take her back home + also spent the weekend with her maternal aunt + also begged her not to take them home. She says they sleep on a small bed together + Kelly's son, who is 16 years old, sleeps on the other bed.

Melissa told her grandmother that her mother did not pick her up from church camp last Thursday. She said she called + called but her mother did not answer so she spent the night with another little girl until Monday + the little girl's mother said she had to leave so Melissa could not get a hold of her mother until Monday, when her great grandmother came + got her + took her to her mother's.

Grandmother states that the mother has been on dope now for approximately 5 years & the mother leaves them nearly every weekend with whomsoever she can find so that she & Kelly can go to Kelly's brother's house, who is also on dope.

F/ Other Sources of Information Grandmother said that then the mother got mad at the little girl & told her to get out of car because she was going to get whipping for lying about this & Melissa was afraid to get out of car, so grandmother took off in the car & Jammy & Kelly chased her in their car. They had an argument over this & little girl ~~is~~ begged her grandmother again to not let them take her home. Grandmother says that Melissa will talk to investigator, if they will talk to her alone, without her mother & Kelly around. Also grandmother says that this has been reported several times & that we haven't done anything & that one time they called Bob & Betty Rose to tell them they were coming out & then Bob & Betty warned Jammy immediately that someone was coming out to check on them. These grand parents keep denying that anything is going on because they do not care about taking care of these children. Grandmother says to please help them before something happens to one of these children.

Trauma can lead to DNA changes, affecting how genes are expressed without altering the DNA sequence itself. This process can impact:

- Stress response genes
- Brain development
- Glucocorticoid receptor expression



Traumatic experiences can guide which genes are activated or deactivated, similar to adding marginal notes in a book.

Developmental Disruptions:


- Alterations in cognitive, emotional, and physiological capacities
- Disruptions in social cognition and behavioral regulation
- Challenges in forming secure attachments
- Chronic or recurrent physical complaints (e.g., headaches, stomachaches)
- Difficulties in emotional regulation and expression
- Problems with attention and learning

Impact on Childhood Experiences


- Psychological, emotional, and social effects
- Long-term consequences on adulthood such as mental health, and developing relationships
- Understanding behaviors as reflections of trauma rather than identity
- Empathy as a tool for fostering healing

Many children suffer in silence, feeling ashamed or afraid to speak out.







Foster care presents unique challenges, impacting emotional well-being.









Trauma influences behaviors, requiring empathy and compassion to support healing.





Change can feel daunting, but small steps can lead to significant progress.



The GOOD news!

Where SHOULD we start?

Prevention vs. Treatment



Strategies for Effective Support

- Trauma-informed approaches
- Community-based and culturally sensitive interventions
- Creating safe environments for sharing experiences
- Supporting resilience and fostering healing





Considerations of Resilience

When researchers measured seven positive childhood experiences, their findings were consistent with the ACEs research.

There are protective qualities to such experiences, which is more than simply having a low ACEs score.

Bethell C, Jones J, Gombojav N, Linkenbach J, Sege R. Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2019;173(11):e193007. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.3007



Donna Jackson Nakazawa

CHILDHOOD

DISRUPTED

How Your Biography
Becomes Your Biology
And How You Can Heal



“We’ve all heard of ACEs, but what about BCEs, or Benevolent Childhood Experiences? I’ve sat and listened to 100s of individuals with trauma tell me their stories. As I listen to the narrative of what happened “then,” and how they came to find healing “now” -- how they are evincing a new sense of self as teens, or young adults, or in adulthood -- I always listen for the answer to this question: Who helped you? Who were your benefactors? With whom did you feel safe, known, seen?”

~ Donna Jackson Nakazawa

The Good Enough Parent. The School Nurse. The Neighbor. The Aunt. The Grandmother. The Coach. The High School Teacher. The Friend's Mom.

Kids and teens NEVER FORGET who made them feel safe, who gave them emotional shelter. Even decades later people tell me who these benevolent elders or benefactors were during the difficult passages of their childhood, or during their teenage or college years. That person who took that extra time to really see them.

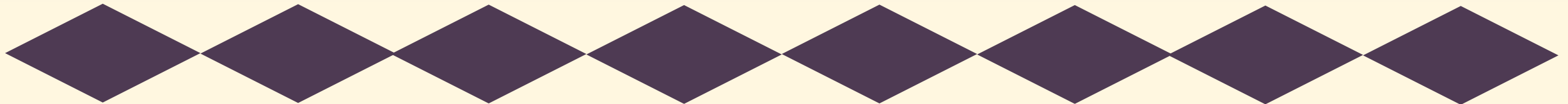


Table 1. The Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCEs) 20-item scale

Item #	When you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:
1	Did you have at least one caregiver with whom you felt safe?
2	Did you have at least one good friend?
3	Did you have beliefs that gave you comfort?
4	Did you like school?
5	Did you have at least one teacher who cared about you?
6	Did you have good neighbors?
7	Was there an adult (not a parent/caregiver or the person from #1) who could provide you with support or advice?
8	Did you have opportunities to have a good time?
9	Did you like yourself or feel comfortable with yourself?
10	Did you have a predictable home routine, like regular meals and a regular bedtime?
11	Did you feel accepted for who you were?
12	Was there at least one adult who cared about your progress and achievements in school?
13	Were you usually able to get a good night's sleep?
14	Did you have access to food that was healthy and nutritious?
15	Did you have access to adequate medical care when you needed it?
16	Did you feel that you were treated fairly (e.g., in your family and community)?
17	Did you have adequate law enforcement in your community that made you feel safe?
18	Did you have at least one person to teach you how to say 'no' to negative influences?
19	Did you regularly spend time outside in the sunshine or around nature?
20	Did you have something that you felt you were good at or that made you proud?

Note. Items #1-10 are from Narayan et al. (2018). Bolded items compose the BCEs-Revised scale.

Who believed in you?

Knowing who and what helped you to be resilient -- who made you feel understood, valued, worthy -- is an important aspect of understanding the science of ACEs and the science of human resiliency.




"A relationship
with one loving
and attuned
parent or
caregiver is the
single most
protective factor
for any child. "

Donna Jackson Nakazawa

What is your why?



A blurred waterfall with white text overlaid. The background is a vertical image of a waterfall, heavily blurred to create a sense of motion. The water is a mix of white and light blue. The text is in a white, serif font. The overall image has a dark purple gradient background.

Stop worrying so much
about everything.

Instead, pick one thing and obsess
over it to the point that it gives
you daily panic attacks.



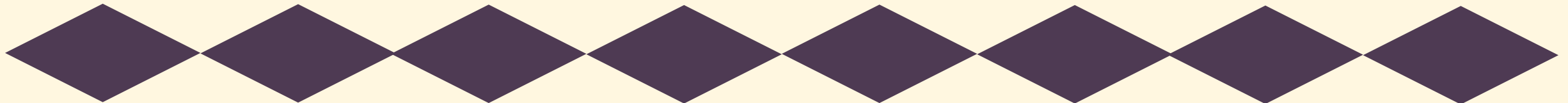
Thank you for sticking with me!
I hope it was worth it.

Melisa Harris

mharris@cacgc.org

Kathryn England-Aytes

kengland-aytes@csumb.edu





DON'T EVER
BE ASHAMED
OF LOVING THE
STRANGE THINGS
THAT MAKE YOUR
WEIRD LITTLE HEART
HAPPY

-ELIZABETH GILBERT



**Lunch Break! We will
see everyone in
1-hour**





Coming Up Next | Mock Hearing Pt.1

Trauma-informed Courts: Setting the Stage

Hon. Ron Whitener (Ret.) (Squaxin Island Tribe)

Chief Judge for the Tulalip Tribes (retired), Co-Owner of
The Whitener Group

