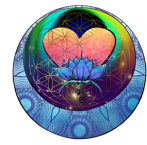# TRAUMA

MARGARET BELL
COUNSELING

Trauma symptoms:

- Feeling disconnected like you are watching the world from behind a window or like you are a balloon floating above yourself
- Disassociation
- Depersonalization
- Problems sleeping
- Nightmares
- Easily startled
- Feeling uneasy
- Feeling unsafe
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Easily angered
- Numbness
- Denial or disbelief
- Difficulty concentrating or confusion
- Mood swings
- Fear
- Guilt and/or shame
- Withdrawn
- Hopeless
- Muscle tension

Trauma can be

- a single event, repeated events (ex. car accident years later being robbed) or extended (chronic- child abuse, domestic violence)
- Developmental- happening before 18 and impacts development
- Complex- cumulative and repeated
- Generational- trauma that has happened to my family (grandparents, great-grandparents ect.)
- Historical- ethnic, cultural, historical events that impacted a group of people
- Institutional- trauma from institutions
- Collective trauma- trauma experienced as a community
- Experienced directly or indirectly

TRAUMA BRAIN AND BODY

BRAIN
amygdala-activates sympathic nervous system, emotional process center, holds trauma memories, perceiving and processing threats

prefrontal cortex- makes decisions, regulates emotions, awareness and attention, voluntary behavior, makes meaning out of situations

hypocampus- creates new nueropathways from experiences

thalamus-processes sensory information

NERVOUS SYSTEM
sympathic nervous system- in charge of our flight or fight response, controls our involuntary bodliy responses to stress and danger

parasympathic nervous system- relaxes the body, slows or stops high energy functions.

hyperarousal- overactivation of the sympathic nervous system- anxiety, anger, agitation, hyerviigilance, nightmares, pain, panic, exaggerated startle response

hypoarousal-overactivation of the parasympathetic nervous system-dissassociation, numb, flat, depressed, fatigued

BODY
Somatic- "In response to threat and injury, animals, including humans, execute biologically based, non-conscious action patterns that prepare them to meet the threat and defend themselves. The very structure of trauma, including activation, dissociation, and freezing are based on the evolution of survival behaviors. When threatened or injured, all animals draw from a "library" of possible responses. We orient, dodge, duck, stiffen, brace, retract, fight, flee, freeze, collapse, etc. All of these coordinated responses are somatically based- they are things that the body does to protect and defend itself. It is when these orienting and defending responses are overwhelmed that we see trauma." Peter Levine

Neuroscience & Yoga in the Treatment of Complex, Developmental or Repeated Trauma Irina Diyankova, https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-mindful-self-express/201809/how-ptsd-and-trauma-affect-your-brain-functioning

"The symptoms of trauma can be stable, that is, ever-present. They can also be unstable, meaning that they can come and go and be triggered by stress. Or they can remain hidden for decades and suddenly surface. Usually, symptoms do not occur individually but come in groups. They often grow increasingly complex over time, becoming less and less connected with the original trauma experience." Peter Levine

"Beneath the surface of the protective parts of trauma survivors there exists an undamaged essence, a Self that is confident, curious, and calm, a Self that has been sheltered from destruction by the various protectors that have emerged in their efforts to ensure survival. Once those protectors trust that it is safe to separate, the Self will spontaneously emerge, and the parts can be enlisted in the healing process."
Bessel Van Der Kolk

" Soul loss can be caused by any type of trauma: emotional, physical, spiritual, or psychological. And trauma can be the result of many things including verbal or physical attack, surgery, abuse, or a sudden loss. From a shamanic perspective, when trauma occurs, a soul part can become "frozen outside of time." When this happens, the soul part does not evolve with the person as they continue their life….The task in soul retrieval is to travel outside of time, in non-ordinary reality, to recover the parts of the soul that have become separated from the main psychic structure." **Isa Gucciardi**