

Recovering from Trauma



Trauma is, in a nutshell, a response—either mental, physiological and/or psychological—to a real or perceived disturbing or threatening event. Trauma may stem from—but is not limited to—natural calamities, pandemics, neglect, abuse, bullying, community violence, poverty, and discrimination.

People who are recovering from trauma need a lot of understanding and support as they walk the difficult journey towards healing. It is normal for them to take weeks, months, or even years to completely recover from trauma. During this time, they may have irrational reactions of anxiety, anger or fear when they experience triggers- which can be a sound, a tone of voice, a picture, or a conversation. A traumatized person might shut down, and find it difficult to communicate or interact. Having an understanding of how trauma can impact people is important when we work in roles where we are caring for others.

*Even though I walk through
the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

Psalm 23:4 (NIV)

The Bible reminds us that God is close to those who are brokenhearted, and He walks with them in their times of pain. We too, as caregivers, must remember to walk with those who are hurting and healing, and be patient with them as they recover from their pain.

Questions to Consider

How can I respond with patience and love when someone I am caring for is angry, anxious or afraid?

How will I give space to those who might not be ready to engage, interact or communicate?

3 Things to Remember

- Recovering from trauma can be a long journey.
- You may not know who has experienced trauma in their past and is still being triggered.
- Your patience and kindness can go a long way in providing a safe space for someone to recover.

Practical Steps

1. Be intentional in building relationships.
2. Create programs that are predictable and consistent.
3. Give motivation and encouragement generously.