

# Inside Trauma

## A word from the editor

As we step in the technological world, internet counselling is an alternative to traditional face to face counselling. There are many benefits to internet counselling.

Some of these are:

- **Accessibility.** Those individuals who live in rural areas, or those who are unable to leave the home due to physical illness can now have access to counselling services from the comfort of their own home.
- **Convenience.** The hassle of scheduling and driving to appointments are removed from counselling. Internet counselling also allows access to clients who would otherwise be uncomfortable in a face to face appointment.
- **Affordability.** It is generally more economical as overheads of rent, commuting and administration procedures are decreased.
- **Anonymity.** Clients are able to communicate more openly without concerns for bias of race, gender, age, weight or physical appearance. This may lead to an increased level of honesty.



In this newsletter, we will continue to discuss internet counselling, its benefits, advantages and uses.

*Elizabeth Lourenco*  
*Provisional Psychologist*

**Inside trauma**  
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### **Inside Trauma**

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# Inside Trauma

## Can You Be Prepared for Trauma?

According to the Australian Psychological Society (APS), psychological trauma is associated with an event which is life threatening or there is a significant threat to an individual's psychological or physical wellbeing. Therefore, while some events such as acts of violence, natural disasters and accidents are often associated with trauma, we often find ourselves in situations that we perceive as traumatic however do not meet that criteria. For example, waking up the morning to find a huntsman spider in the corner of the room may be highly traumatic for one individual, however not at all for another.

As a traumatic event is unexpected, people may believe there's no way that we can really be prepared for such an occasion however this is simply not the case. Having an understanding of psychological first aid, even a basic one, can be highly beneficial in a crisis event. According to Australian Red Cross, psychological first aid aims to reduce initial distress, meet imminent needs of the individual or group, encourage flexible coping and adjustment. Psychological first aid involves five main components:

- Promoting safety
- Promoting calm
- Promoting connectedness
- Promoting self-efficacy
- Promoting hope

In some situations, people may opt for a more structured approach, allowing a third party to assist in supporting a loved one, or even their staffing group after a traumatic event. The Trauma Centre Australia offers critical incident and trauma response to workplaces and people nationwide, and operates on an immediate response model to encourage people back to recovery as soon as possible. Incidents may range from a serious injury to being on the receiving end of severe verbal abuse, and supporting people throughout these incidents in an effective and efficient manner is crucial toward ensuring good psychological wellbeing.

While it may not seem possible to be prepared for the unexpected, there are options available, it's just a matter of making the first step.

*Emma Sestan*  
*Provisional Psychologist*



*“Trauma does not have to occur by abuse alone...”*  
*- Asa Don Brown*

*“I am prepared for the worst but hope for the best”*  
*- Benjamin Disraeli*

*“We are what we are because we have been what we have been, and what is needed for solving problems of human life and motives is not moral estimates but more knowledge”*  
*- Sigmund Freud*



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## Quick Tips on How to Make Your Workplace Mentally Healthy

Think about what would help promote good mental health in your workplace and how you can contribute. After all, improving workplace mental health is in everyone's interest, and everyone has a role to play. The benefits are clear – mentally healthy businesses are positive, productive places where people want to work.

### Priority areas for businesses

You can take action in three key areas:

- A. Raise awareness of mental health conditions and reduce stigma
- B. Support someone with a mental health condition
- C. Create a positive working environment

### 1. Increase awareness of mental health conditions

Make information about mental health condition available in the workplace (e.g. place resources in lunch areas or on notice boards)

### 2. Increase awareness of people's responsibilities relating to mental health

The Trauma Centre of Australia is available to provide staff with information about looking after their own mental health and their legal responsibilities relating to mental health.

### 3. Reduce stigma

Speak openly about mental health conditions in the workplace and encourage others to do the same.



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## 4. Build the skills and confidence to approach someone who may be experiencing difficulties

Check how to have a conversation with a staff member who you may be concerned about and encourage staff to look out for each other.

## 5. Encourage staff with mental health conditions to seek treatment support early

The Trauma Centre of Australia can help tailor information about nearby support services and info lines to suit your needs.

## 6. Support staff with mental health conditions to stay at or return to work

Where necessary and in collaboration with your staff and team, make changes to their role and/or working environment to enable them to fulfil their work duties. This might include giving them time off to see a health professional, adjusting work hours, avoiding unnecessary shift changes or reallocating tasks.



## 7. Monitor and manage workloads

Encourage your people to speak up at an early stage and seek guidance.

## 8. Increase input in how people do their work

Your staff and team have direct insight and experience of achieving the tasks at hand – they can help. Listen to their ideas and feedback on how tasks are completed.

*A guide distributed by the Trauma Centre Australia*

## Brain teasers

### Question One

I have three children.

The youngest is the same age as the first digit in my age, another is the same age as the second digit in my age, and the third is the same age as the sum of the two digits in my age.

The total of our ages is 33.

How old am I?

### Question Two

What well known saying has had its consonants removed:

\*a\*\* \*a\*\*\* \*a\*e \*i\*\*\*  
\*o\*\*

### Question Three

Using five potatoes, how can you feed six children an equal amount of potatoes, without resorting to fractions?

See last page for answers



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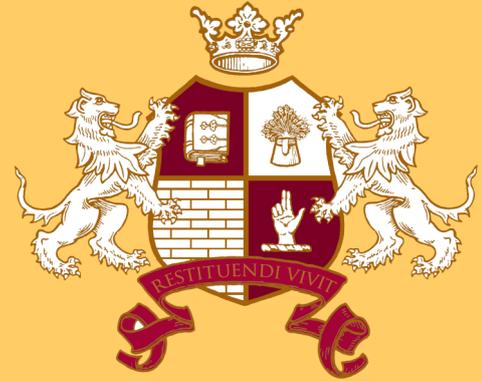
## Is There a Glamorous Side of Trauma?

More often than not when we are confronted with the word “Trauma”, our responses and reactions to what is before us is pivotal on a flight or fight response. Trauma by definition means injury of the body or psyche. Many observers of a critical incident ignite an interpreting and potential onset vision; of the person/people being traumatised requiring help and support, but is this the total case?



We cannot argue that traumatised people may be physically or mentally injured and onlookers would categorise those involved people as being affected, however, more to the mark may be that these people are already in recovery mode and are not requiring help.

The persons' who are committed to delivering and responding to trauma are often the people being able to offer a caring human connection. This process often benefits both the “cared for” and the “carer”.



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Widespread interest from carer/treaters has also offered respective observer/responders as do-gooders to be seen as positive humans, attending and offering support in an uncharacteristic incident.



Human acknowledgement and reinforcement appears to be a positive catalyst connecting helpers and affected people to a union that surpasses other types of health care interventions. Immediate (coalface) care offers both givers and receivers a bonding experience that is cemented/glued by the critical incident. While Trauma help is generally offered unconditionally, perhaps the carers are receiving hidden positive emotional feel-good feelings.

*Peter Horton  
Psychologist*



## Brain teaser Answers

### Question One

I am 23 years old. My children are 2, 3 and 5.

### Question Two

Many Hands Make Light Work

### Question Three

Make mashed potatoes!!

