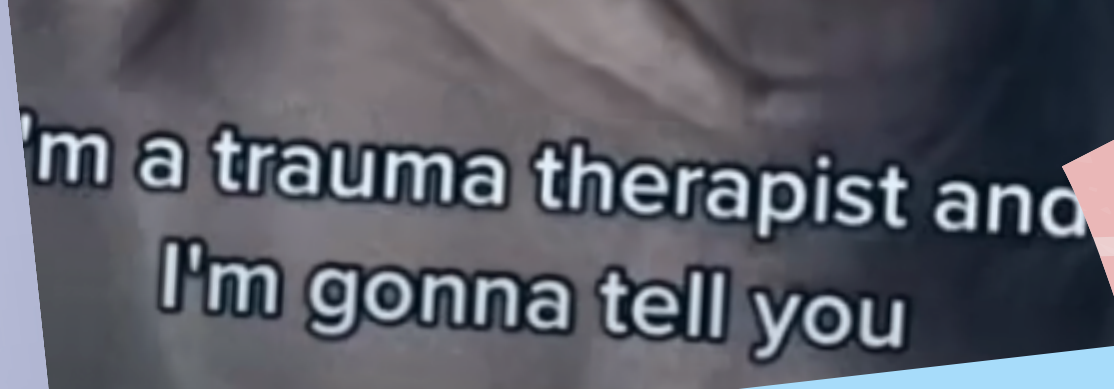


it took me a long time to understand this concept



TRAUMA
PSEUDOSCIENCE
& SOCIAL
MEDIA



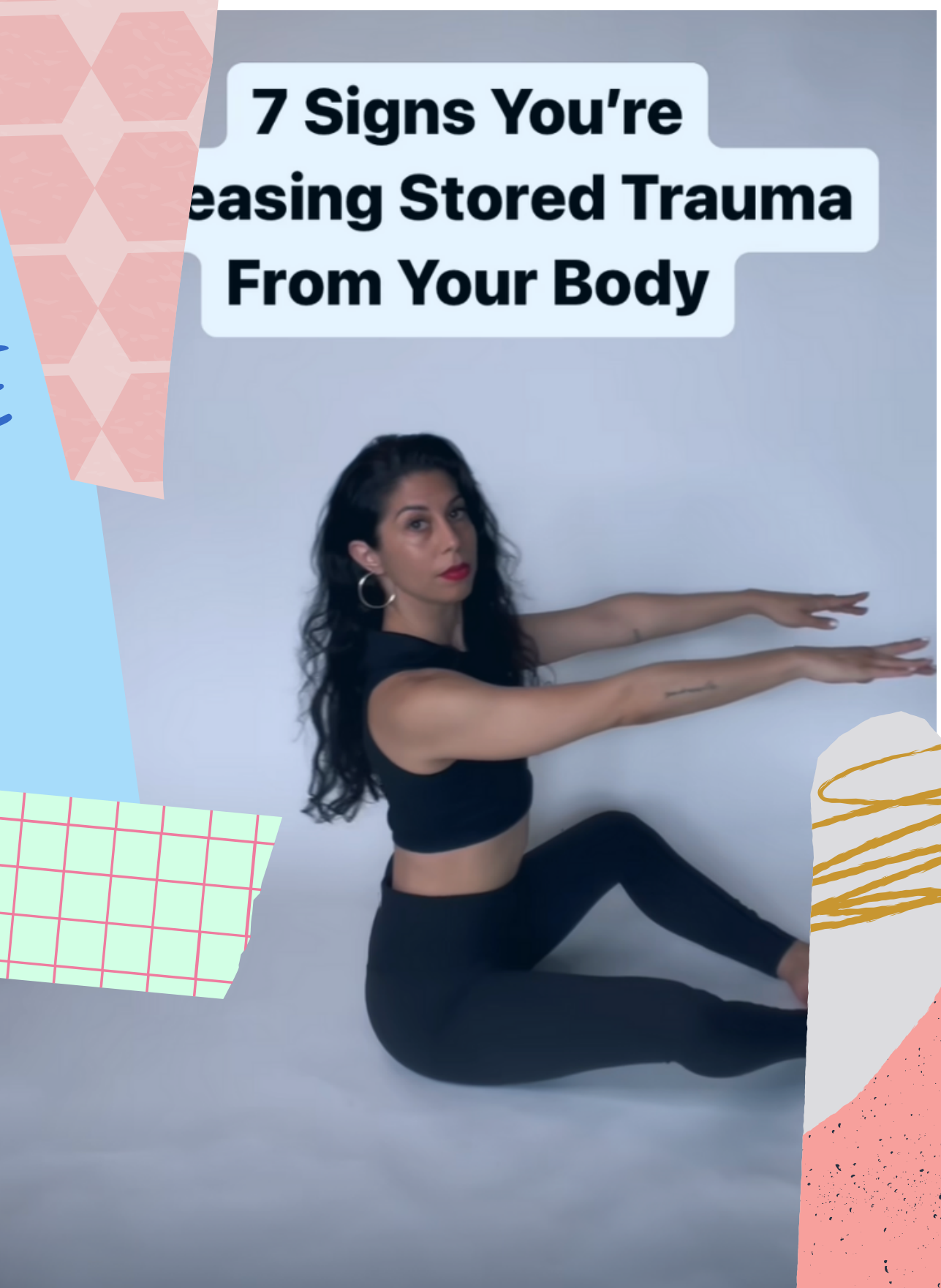
Overexplaining is a trauma response



Trauma
Reenactment



7 Signs You're
Releasing Stored Trauma
From Your Body





WHO AM I?

Carrie Poppy

Independent journalist
Cohost, "Oh No, Ross and Carrie"

Writing a book about trauma

- Over 1,000 original documents
- Hundreds of scientific studies
- Dozens of trauma-informed events
- Undercover trauma therapy from three therapists
- Original research going back to late 1800s

PSEUDOSCIENCE

A decorative graphic on the right side of the slide. It features a large, dark blue, irregular shape that resembles a torn piece of paper or a stylized mountain range. The top edge of this shape is jagged and uneven. Above the blue shape, there is a white rectangular area with diagonal blue lines, also appearing to be torn or layered. To the right of this white area is a solid blue triangle pointing towards the top right. At the bottom of the blue shape, there are several yellow, triangular peaks of varying heights, resembling a mountain range or a stylized skyline.

"A system of theories and methods that has some resemblance to a genuine science but that cannot be considered such. Examples include astrology, numerology, and esoteric magic. Various criteria for distinguishing pseudosciences from true sciences have been proposed, one of the most influential being that of falsifiability."

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

THE CHANGING DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

The "traumatic neuroses of war"

1941

"Anything that causes harm to the psyche"

1967

"A psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience."

1980

1941: Kardiner, The Traumatic Neuroses of War.

1967: Keiser, "Freud's Concept of Trauma and a Specific Ego Function" (J of the Am Psychoanalytic Association)

1980: DSM-III, Definition of PTSD

THE CHANGING DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

"Overwhelming
life experiences."

1987

An event involving "actual
or threatened death or
serious injury," and a
response of response
involved "intense fear,
helplessness, or horror."

1994

!
"Actual or threatened
death, serious injury, or
sexual violence," with
some constraints.

2013

1987: van der Kolk, Psychological Trauma
1994: DSM-IV
2013: DSM-V

THE CHANGING DEFINITION OF TRAUMA

"Trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body. This imprint has ongoing consequences for how the human organism manages to survive in the present."

2014

"everyday trauma... describe[s] stressful events that happen suddenly and linger as thoughts and memories as well as traumatic experiences that continue day after day."

2021

"the type of emotional or physical pain that often goes unseen, yet actually changes our brain biology and psychology... As with COVID, you can't see trauma itself, you just see it at work - - silently but maliciously."

2021

2014: van der Kolk, "The Body Keeps the Score"
2021 (yellow): Shors, "Everyday Trauma"
2021 (blue): Conti, "Trauma: the Invisible Epidemic"

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Science education

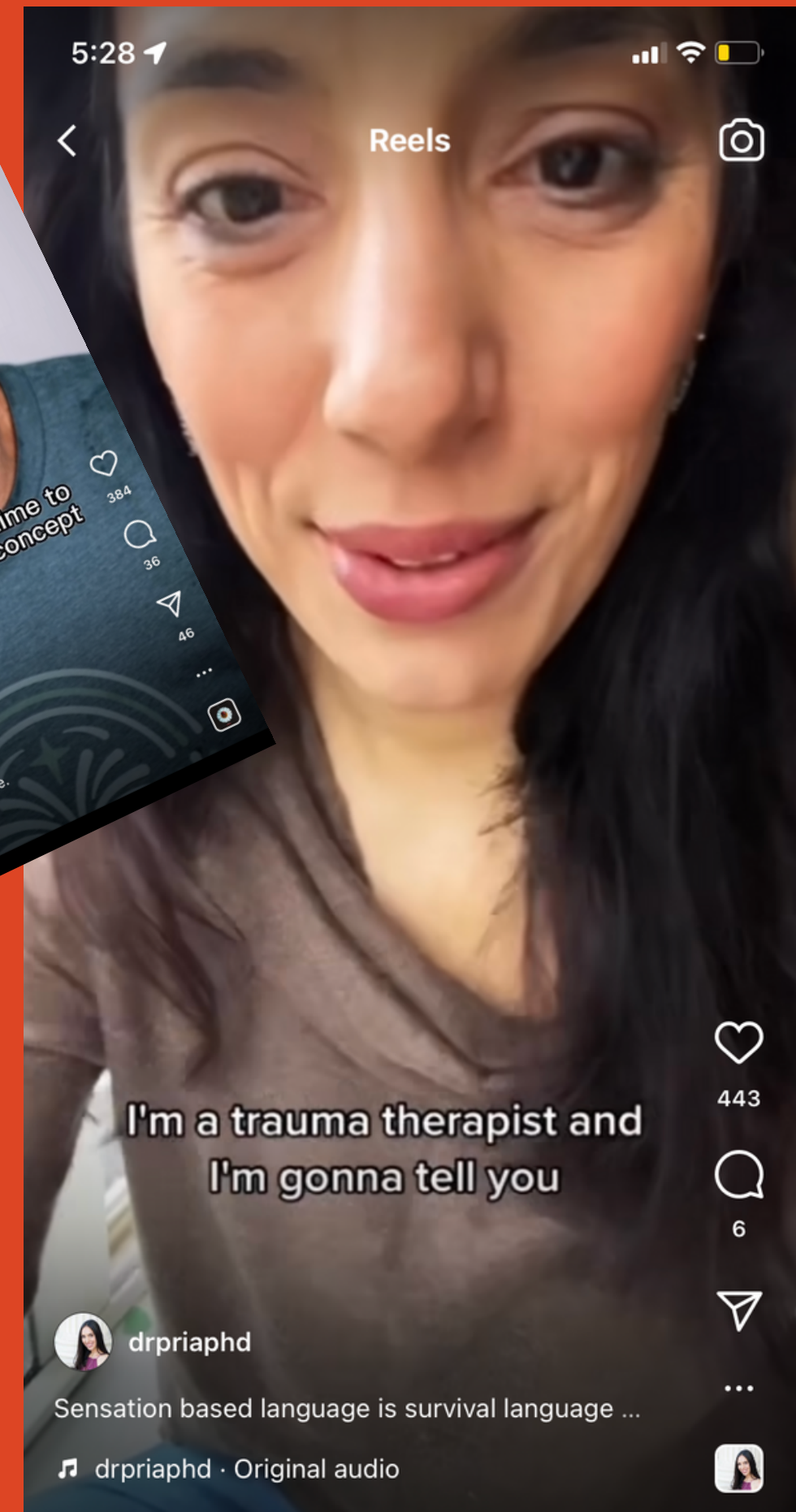
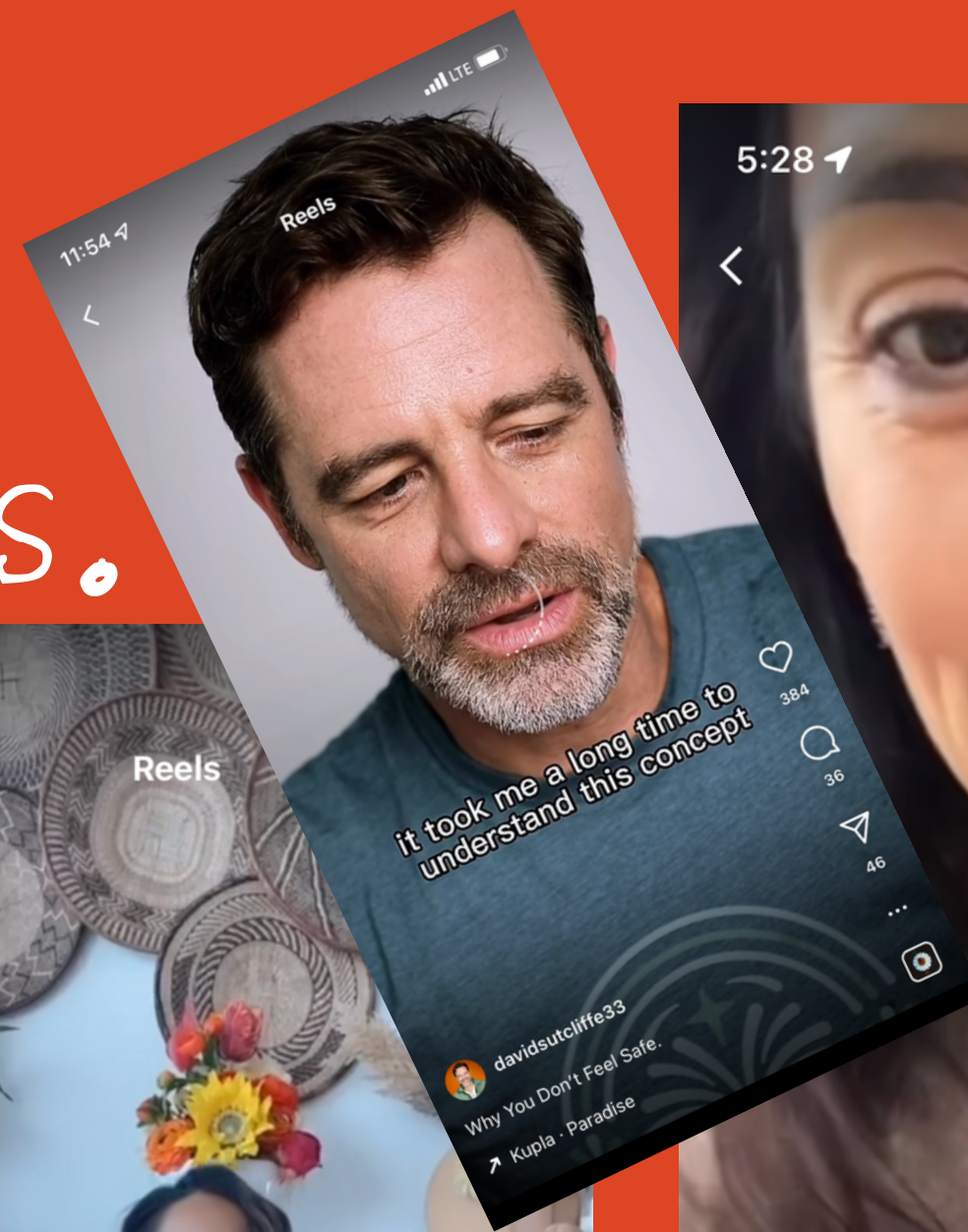
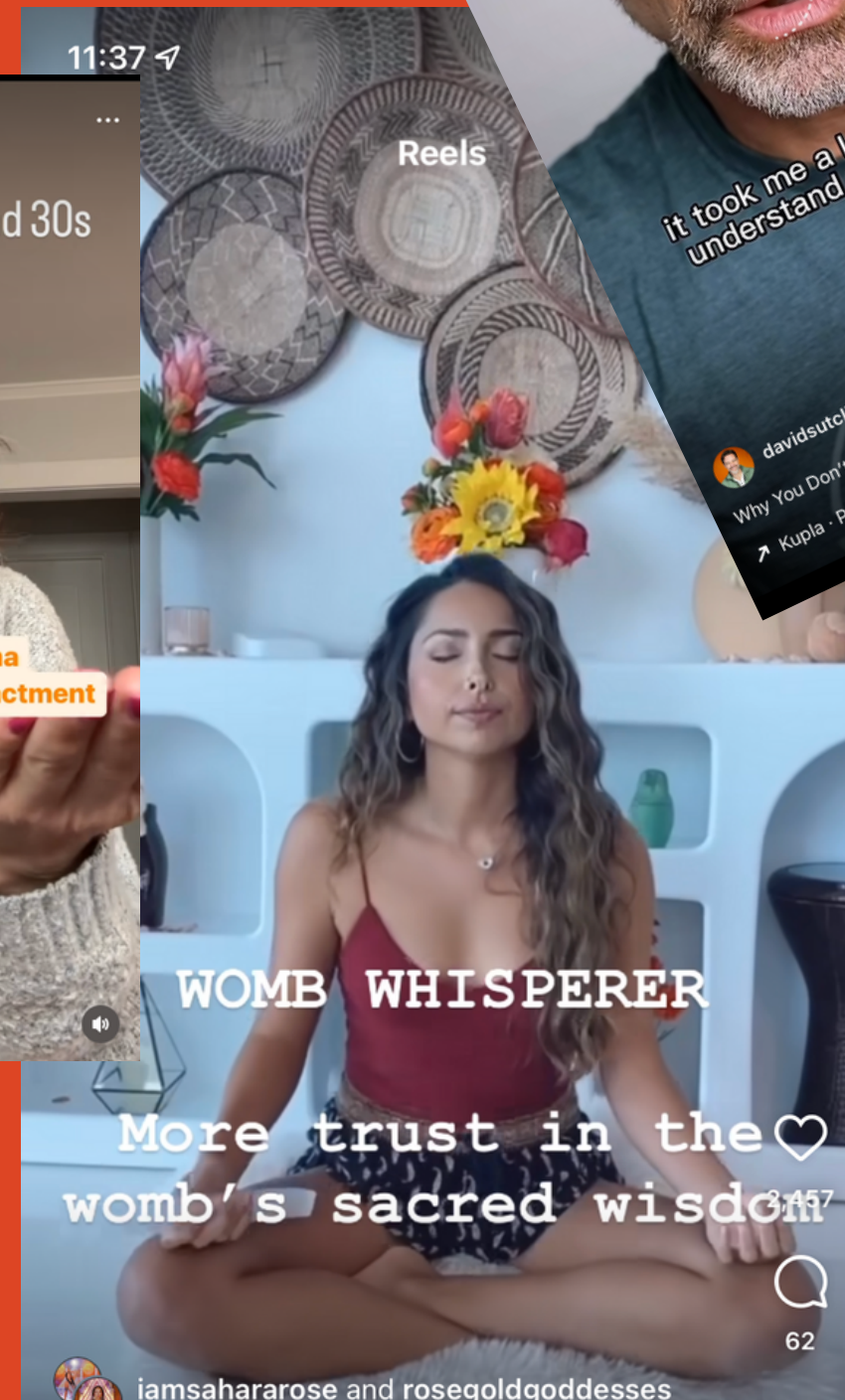
Sociopolitical
factors

Changes in social
media and
publishing

I WILL SHOW YOU REAL
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS
FROM POPULAR ACCOUNTS.



But no need to go
bother these specific
people. They are
examples of a
problematic, much
larger trend.



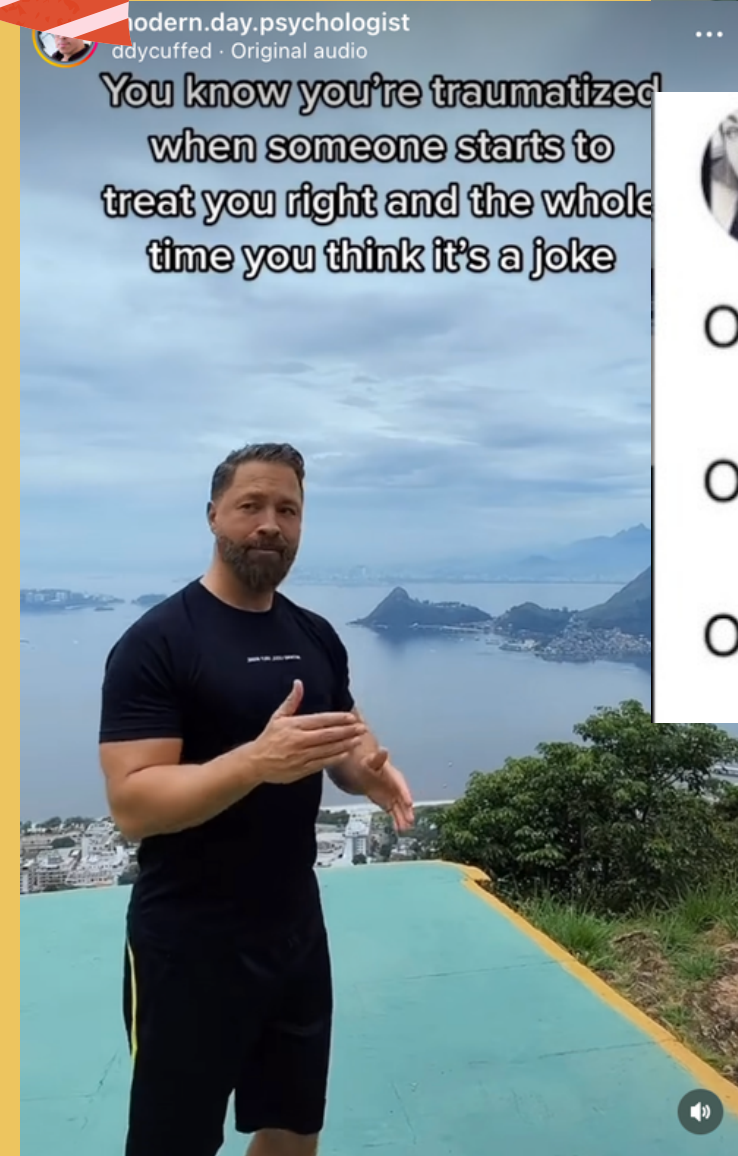
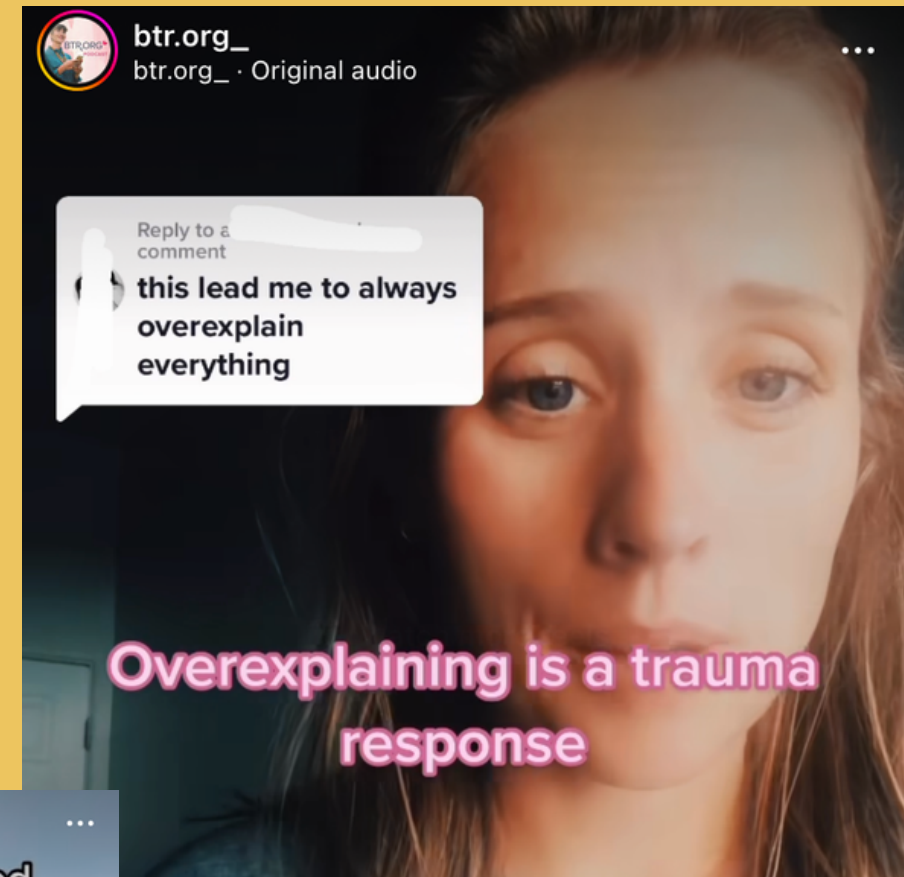
THE TRAUMA RESPONSE

THE CLAIM:

MANY EVERYDAY BEHAVIORS ARE ACTUALLY SYMPTOMS OF PRIOR TRAUMA, WHETHER YOU THINK YOU WERE TRAUMATIZED OR NOT.

BEHAVIORS INCLUDE:

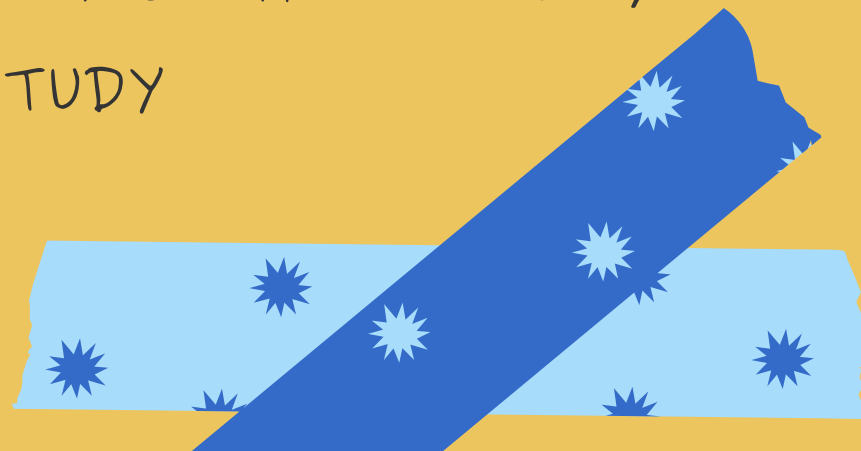
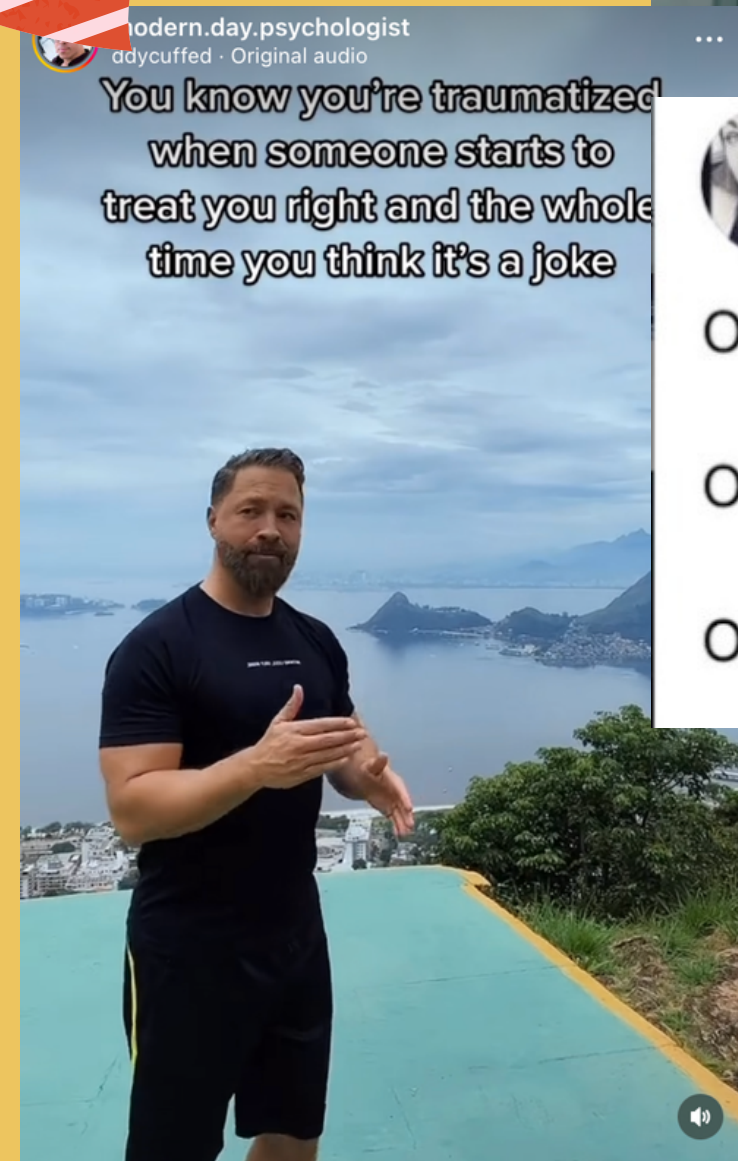
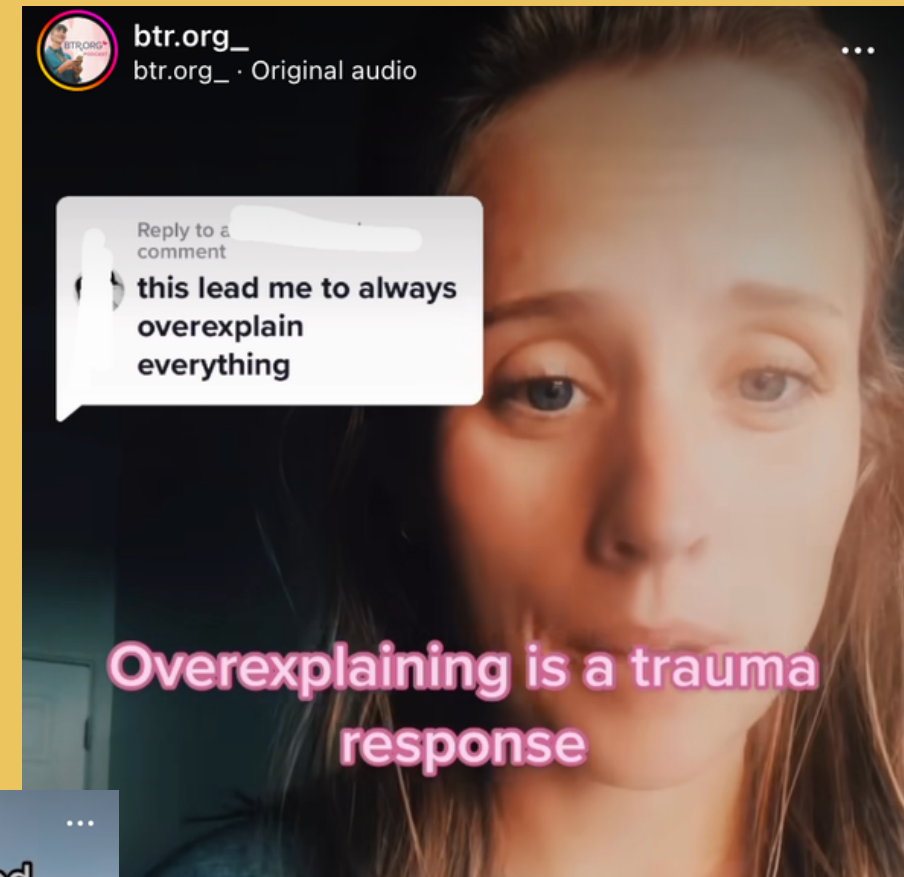
OVEREXPLAINING, IMPULSIVITY, PERSUING IN RELATIONSHIPS, WITHDRAWING IN RELATIONSHIPS, POOR GROOMING, FAWNING, DEFENSIVENESS, INAPPROPRIATE ANGER, INAPPROPRIATE SADNESS, AND MORE.



THE TRAUMA RESPONSE

WHERE THE IDEA PROBABLY CAME FROM:

- PAVLOV, BOWLBY, HERMAN, FREUD, AND MANY OTHERS.
- VETERANS WHO WANT TO GO BACK
- CASE STUDIES; ESPECIALLY FREUD, JANET, VAN DER KOLK
- CULT STUDIES FIELD
- A FEW PROPER STUDIES THAT HAVE BEEN HIGHLY CRITICIZED FOR POOR METHODOLOGY (AND GO AGAINST THE REST OF THE SCIENCE)
- CONFUSION ABOUT ACES STUDY

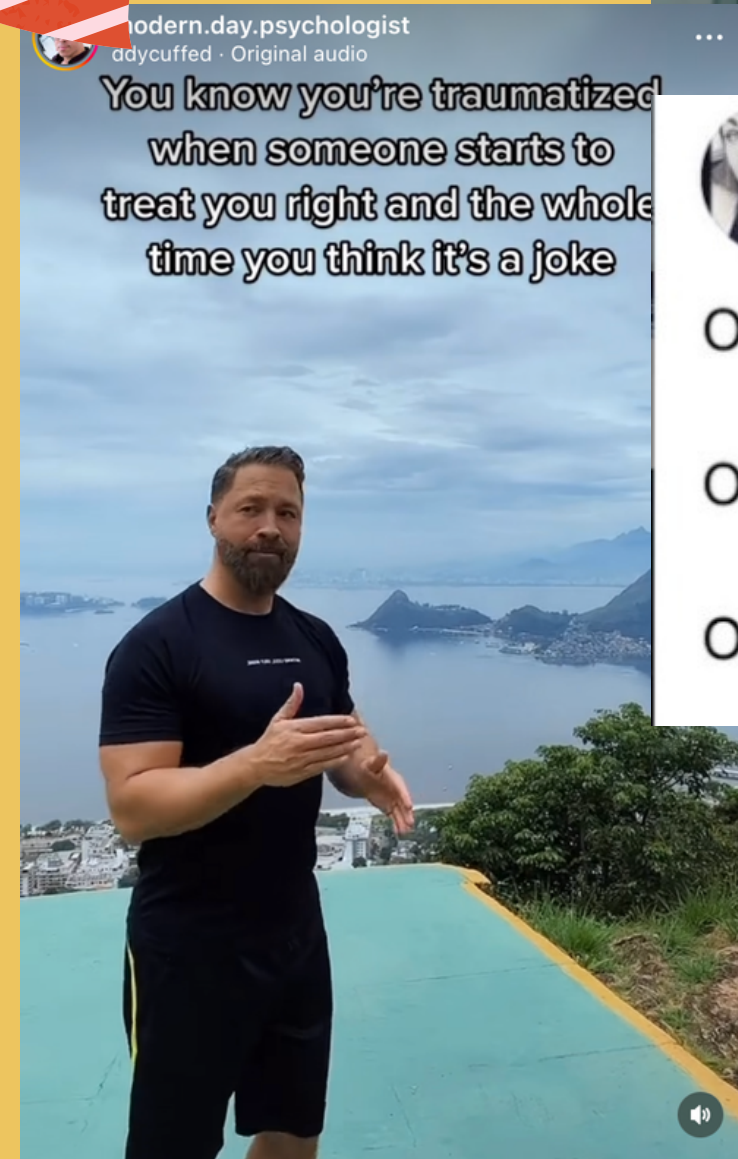
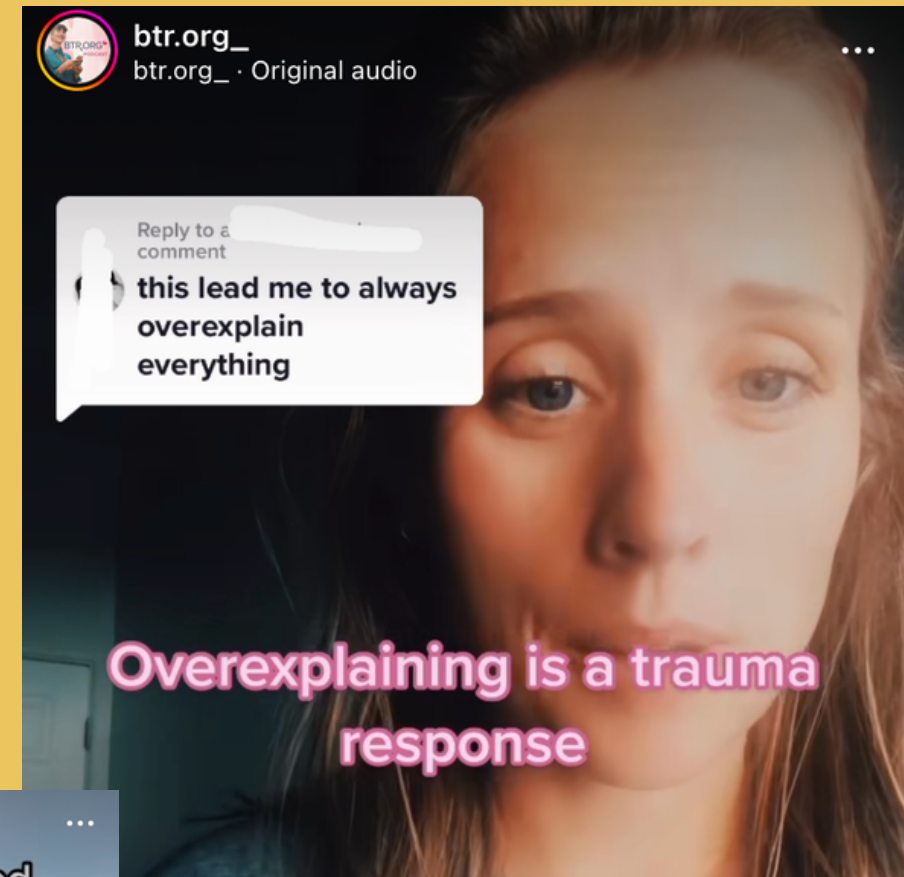


THE TRAUMA RESPONSE

PROBLEM 1: ONCE ANYTHING CAN BE TRAUMA, ANYTHING CAN BE A TRAUMA RESPONSE.

PROBLEM 2: YOUR CURRENT MOOD DRAMATICALLY ALTERS YOUR MEMORIES. FALSE MEMORIES ARE NORMATIVE.

PROBLEM 3: PEOPLE BEGIN TO FEEL HAUNTED/POSSESSED BY THEIR BEHAVIORS.

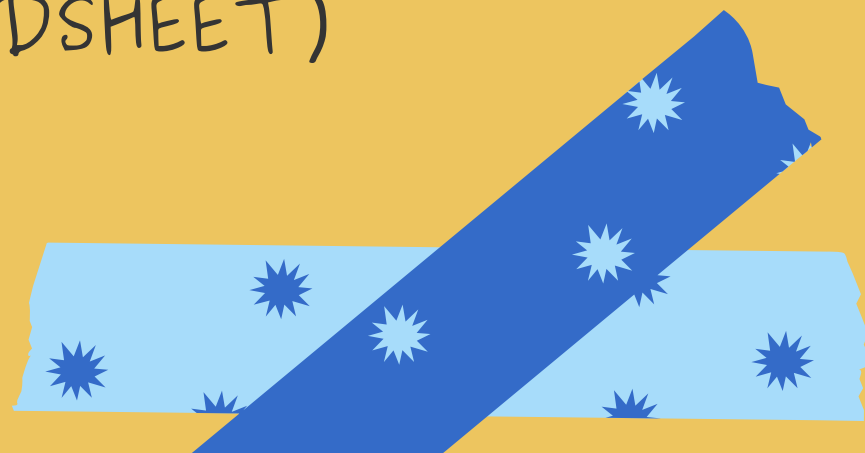


THE TRAUMA SYMPTOM

THE CLAIM:

MANY EVERYDAY PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS ARE ACTUALLY SYMPTOMS OF PRIOR TRAUMA.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: HEADACHES, CHRONIC PAIN, POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS, OVARIAN CYSTS, AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE, INATTENTION, NUMBING, DETACHMENT, AND AT LEAST 519 MORE (POPPY SPREADSHEET)



THE TRAUMA SYMPTOM

WHERE THIS PROBABLY CAME FROM:

- ESTABLISHED CORRELATION BETWEEN BODY PAIN AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING
- ESTABLISHED CORRELATION BETWEEN LONG-TERM PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND CHRONIC PAIN.
- CONFUSION ABOUT ACES STUDY
- RETROSPECTIVE BIAS
- CONFIRMATION BIAS
- SELECTIVE INFO ABOUT HPA AXIS

7 Signs You're Releasing Stored Trauma From Your Body

HOW TO TEST IF YOU
HAVE STORED TRAUMA
IN YOUR BODY

if you can't bring your
knee all the way into your
ribs,

you have stored trauma in
your body

(do this version on your
side if your pregnant or
have a belly)



theworkoutwitch_
what does the ✨CRUNCH✨ mean
theworkoutwitch_ audio

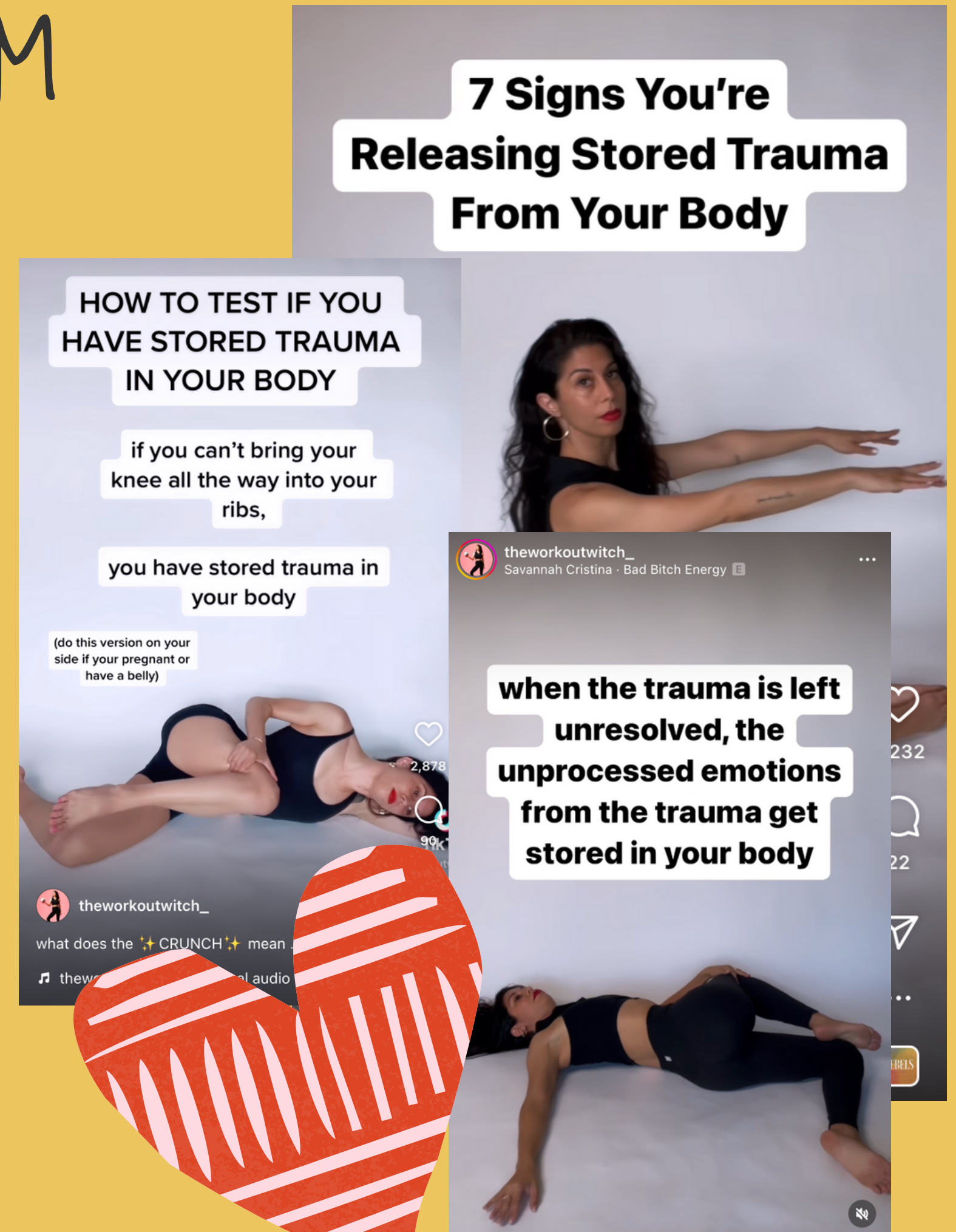
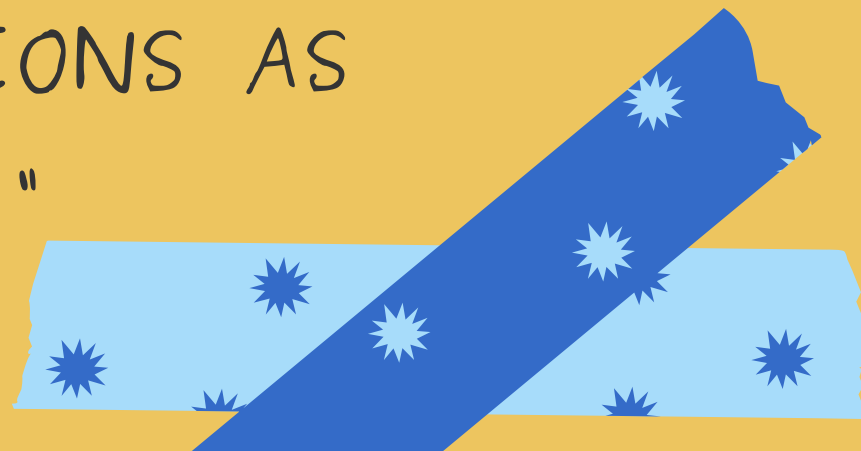


when the trauma is left
unresolved, the
unprocessed emotions
from the trauma get
stored in your body



THE TRAUMA SYMPTOM

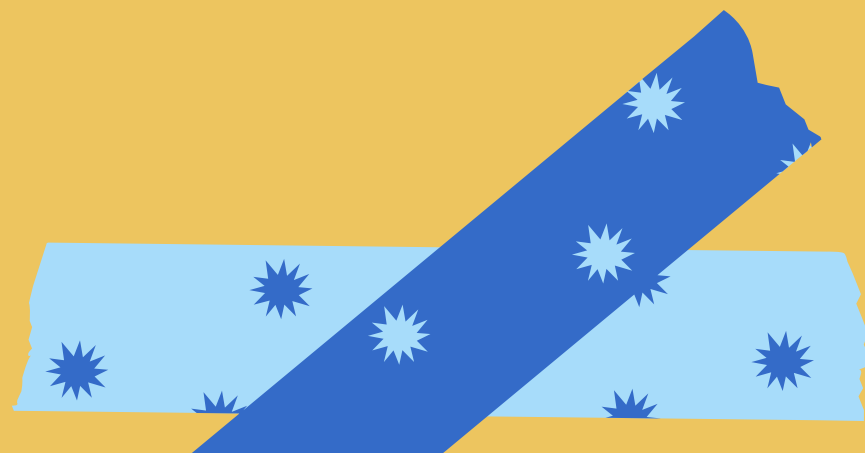
- PROBLEM 1: ACTUAL PROBLEM MOST LIKELY GOES UNTREATED (AND THERE ARE COUNTLESS POSSIBILITIES HERE).
- PROBLEM 2: THERAPISTS UNINTENTIONALLY "PUSHING" FOR TRAUMATIC INTERPRETATIONS.
- PROBLEM 3: OVERLOOKS ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION
- PROBLEM 4: PRIMES CLIENTS TO SEE MEDICAL OPINIONS AS "GASLIGHTING."



THE TRAUMA MIRROR

THE CLAIM:

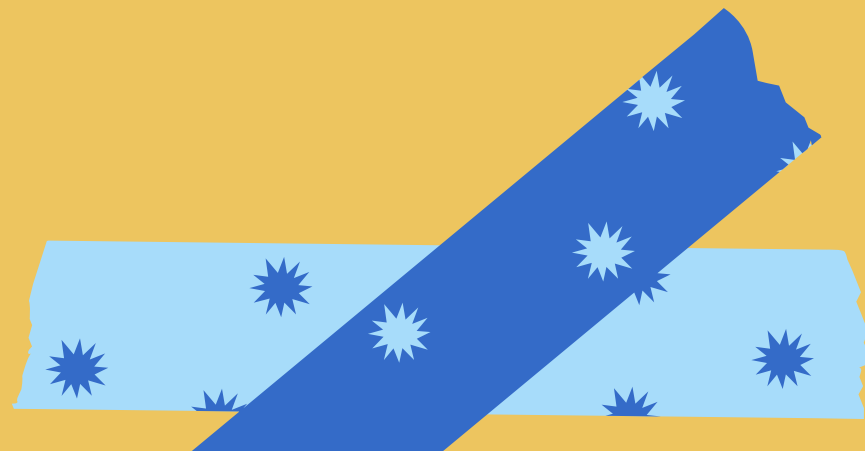
TRAUMA (ESPECIALLY REPRESSED
TRAUMA) COVERTLY CAUSES US TO
REPEAT UNWANTED BEHAVIORS.



THE TRAUMA MIRROR

WHERE IT PROBABLY CAME FROM:

- PRIOR BEHAVIOR IS NEARLY ALWAYS A STRONG PREDICTOR OF FUTURE BEHAVIOR
- SOLDIERS WANTING TO GO BACK TO WAR EXPLAINED AWAY AS TRAUMA RE-ENACTORS.
- CASE STUDIES (JANET, FREUD, VAN DER KOLK)
- CULT STUDIES



THE TRAUMA MIRROR

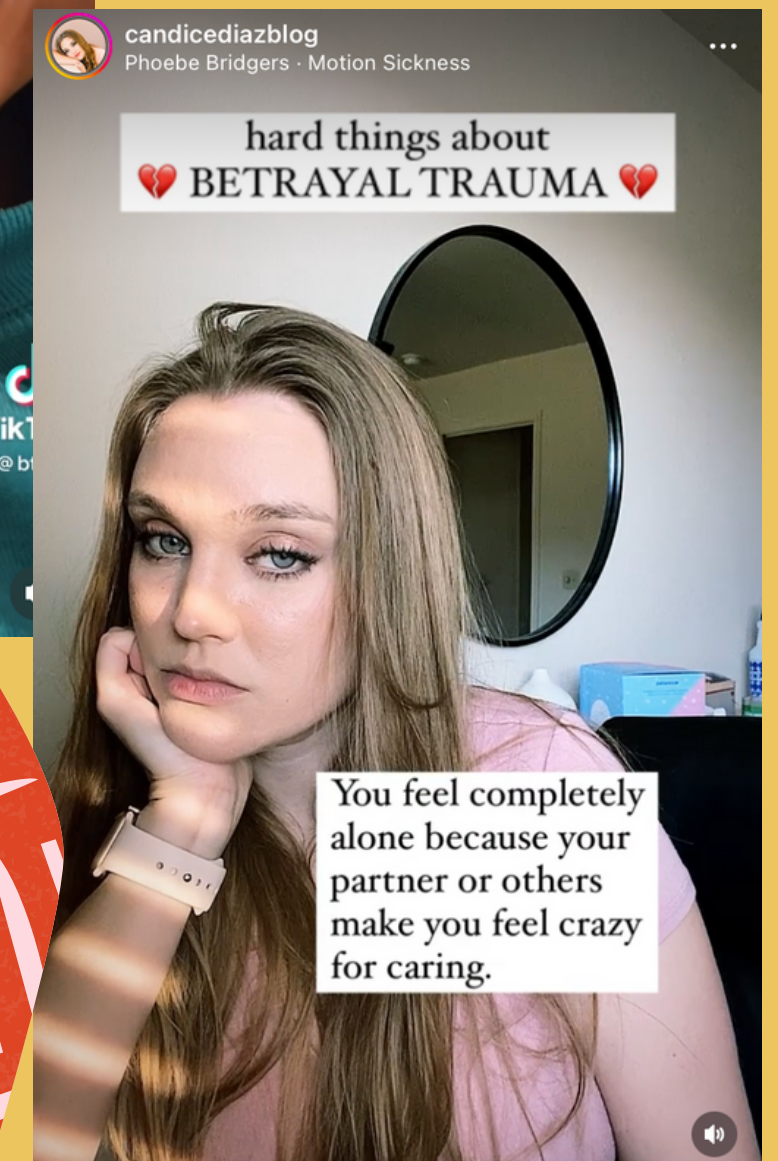
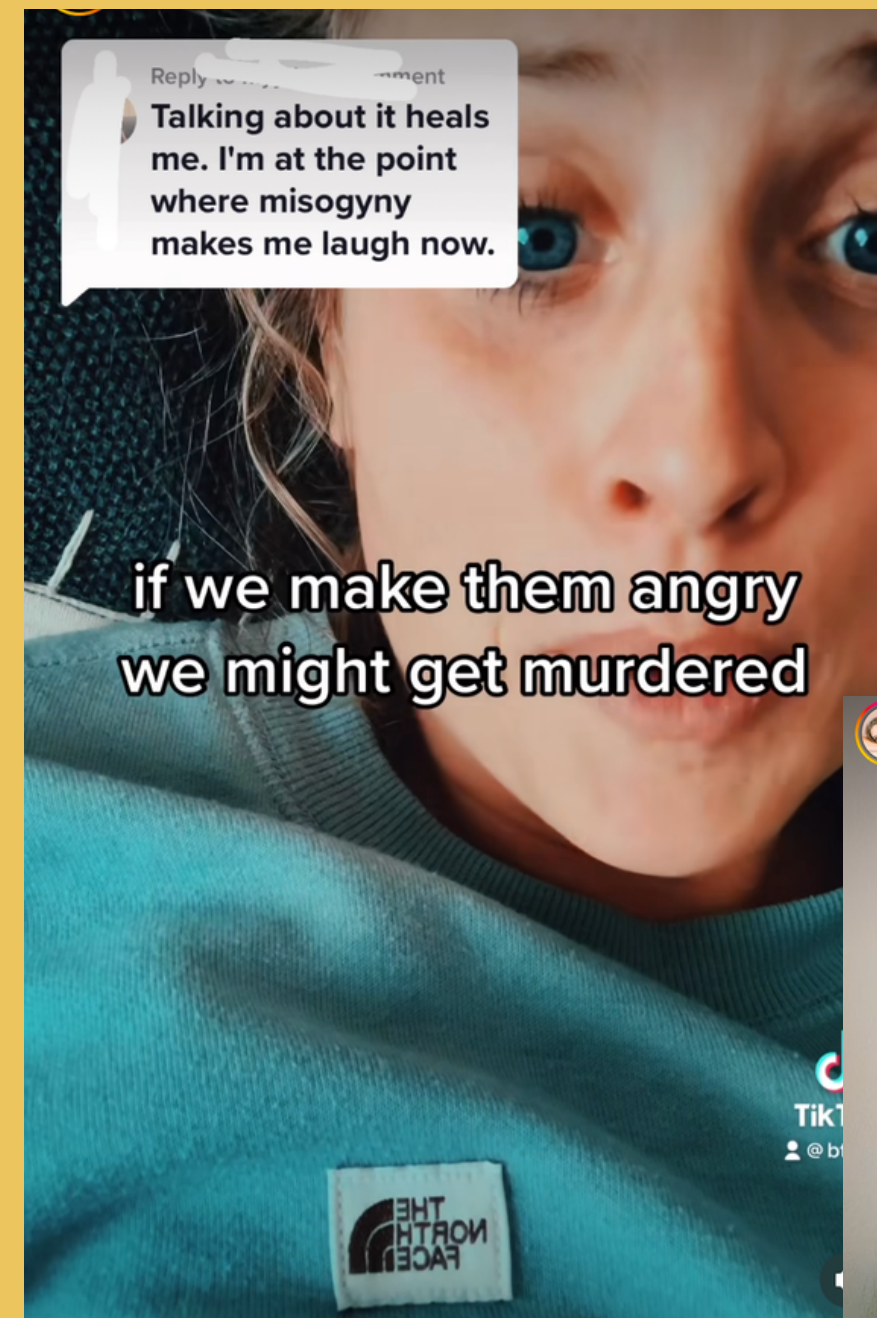
THE PROBLEM:

- ALMOST ENTIRELY BASED ON CASE STUDIES
- VERY HARD TO TEST
- NEARLY ANY STORY CAN BE TOLD IN THIS FASHION.
- REINFORCES SEEING LIFE THROUGH TRAUMS LENS UNNECESSARILY



BETRAYAL TRAUMA

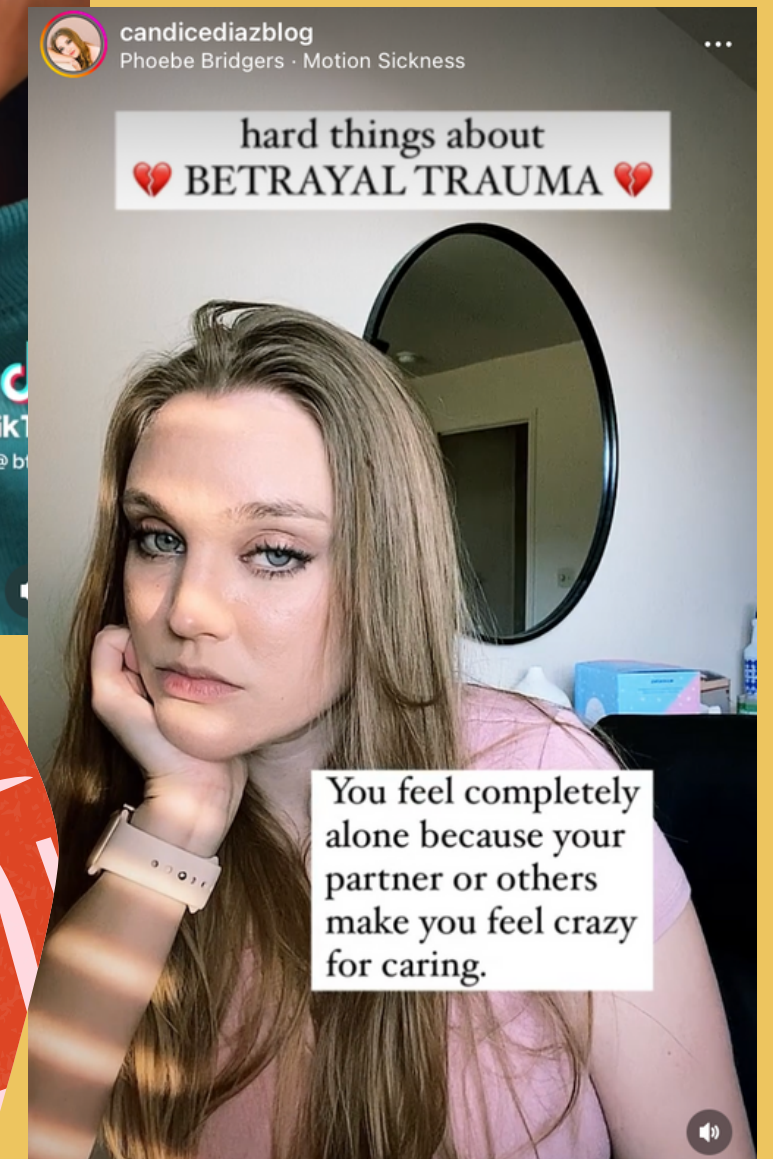
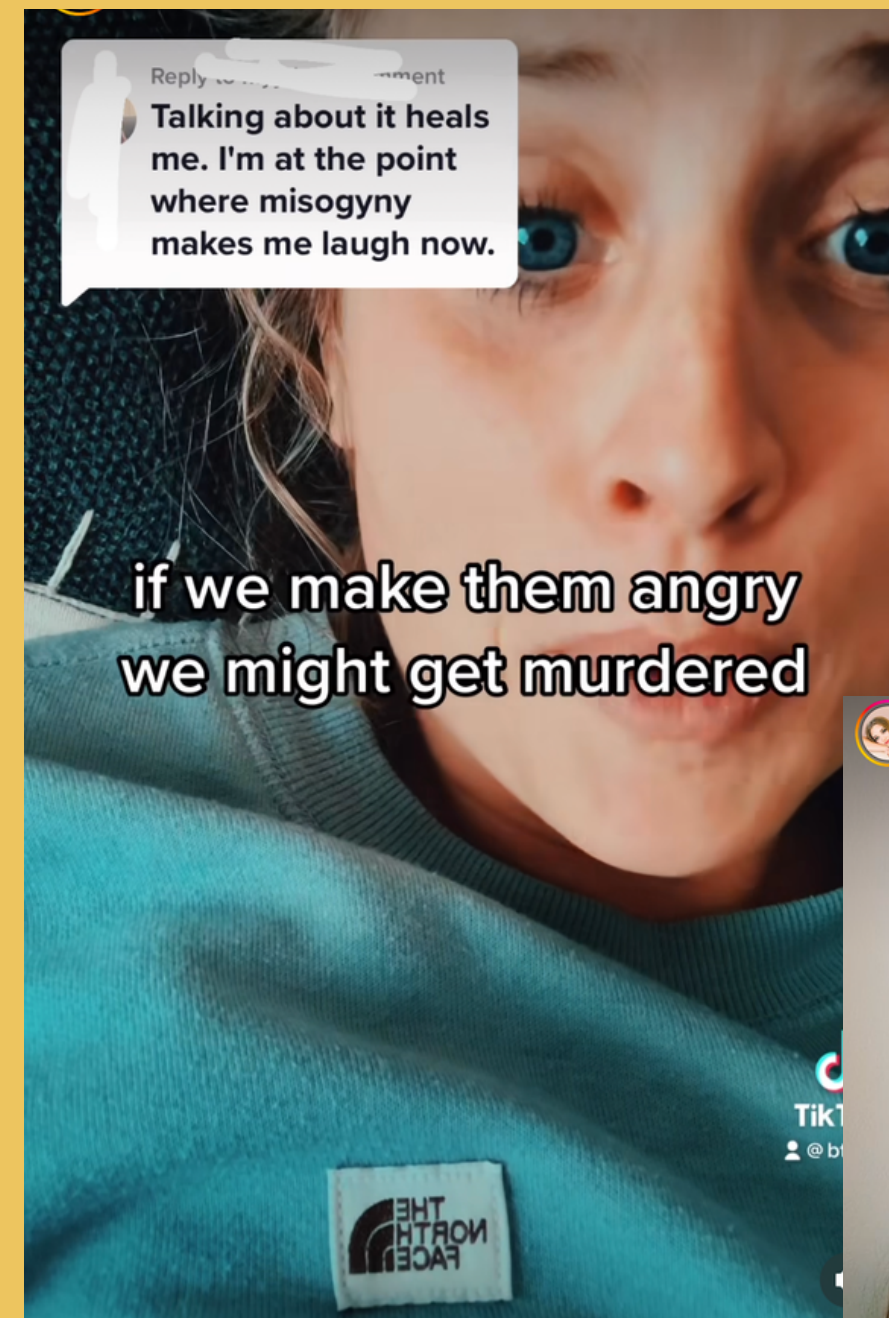
- The claim: Being betrayed by someone on whom you depend is the worst kind of trauma, which can cause feelings of insanity, social isolation, and total amnesia for the abuse.
- Often accuse loved ones (particularly exes and parents) of "undiagnosed narcissism" after learning of it in "the community."
- Share increasingly paranoid warnings and rants
- Often boldly anti-forgiveness.



BETRAYAL TRAUMA

Where it came from:

- 1980s, increased awareness of sex within the family, including sexual abuse of minor children.
- Huge jump in false memories spurred in therapy, 80s and 90s.
- **The term** comes from Jennifer Freyd and Pamela Birrell
- Tend to disbelieve in false memory and see false memory claims as an attempt to discredit the accounts of women.
- Some Influences: Lundy Bancroft, Robert Jay Lifton, Bessel van der Kolk
- Heavy use of DARVO.

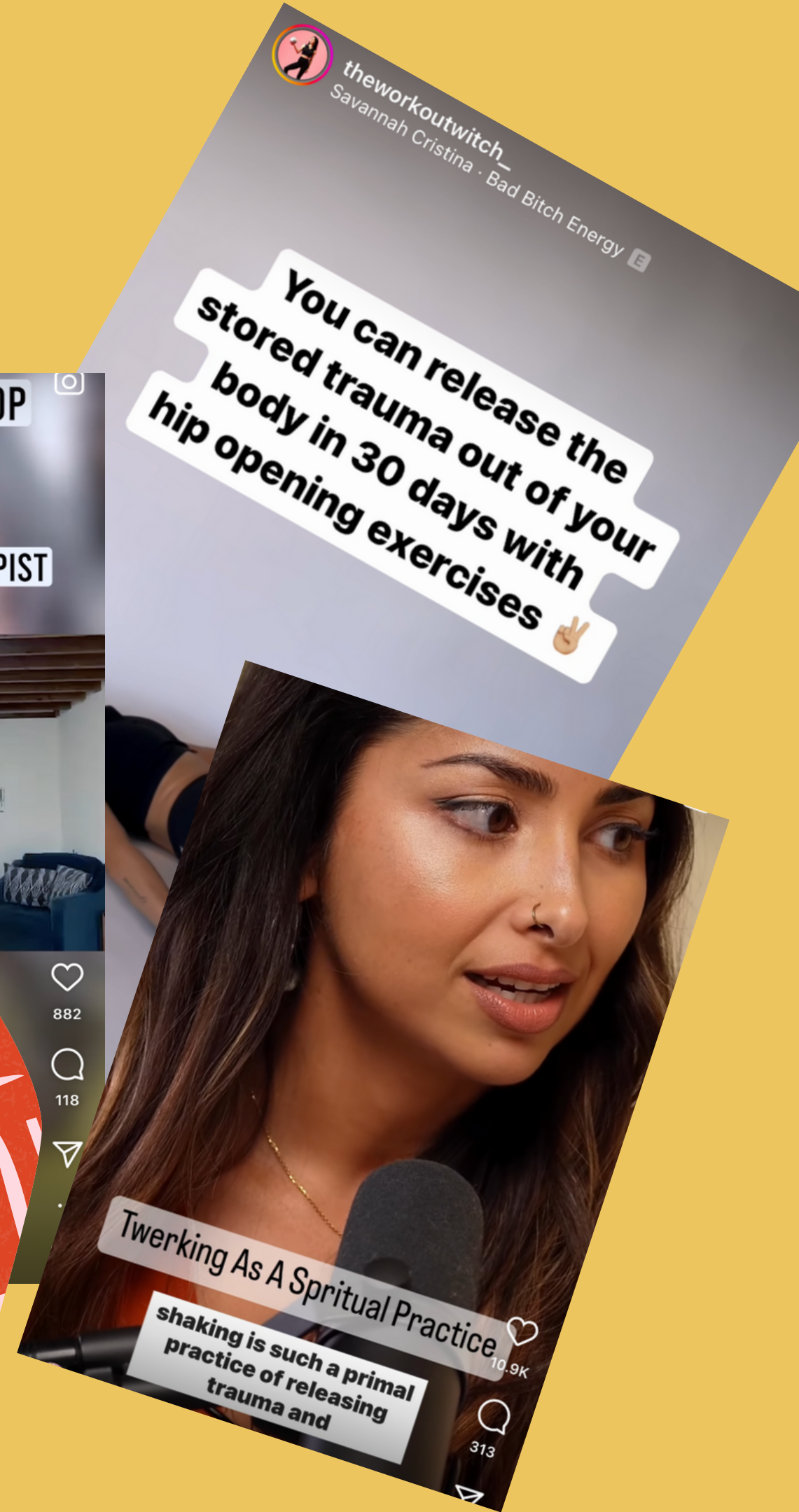


TRAUMA TREATMENT

THE CLAIM:

I CAN TREAT (OR HEAL) YOUR TRAUMA.

- SCIENCE BASED: COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT), COGNITIVE PROCESSING THERAPY, COGNITIVE THERAPY, PROLONGED EXPOSURE THERAPY
- MODERATE SUPPORT: EMDR, NARRATIVE EXPOSURE THERAPY, BRIEF ECLECTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY ("TALKING TO SOMEONE"), PSYCHEDELICS
- INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT: RELAXATION, INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS, FAMILY CONSTELLATION THERAPY, SOMATIC REEXPERIENCING, AND MANY MORE.

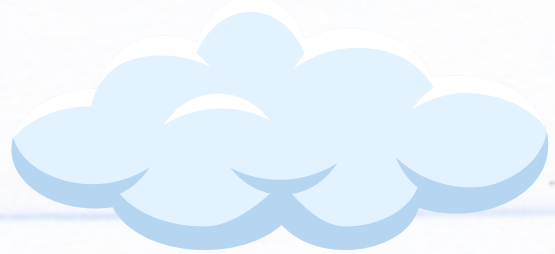




BUT FIRST



**YOU NEED DIFFERENTIAL
DIAGNOSIS
MISDIAGNOSING TRAUMA
IS DANGEROUS**



HOW DO I RESPOND IF I SEE THIS STUFF ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

- Be selective (don't spread your energy too thin)
- Be polite (assume they are sincere)
- Be thorough (articulate your concern clearly)
- Ask for sources

The old rules still apply for people you know:
Comment < DM < Email < Text < Phone call



WHY DOES BESSEL VAN DER KOLK KEEP COMING UP?
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM?

Stay tuned for my book!

Are you a big-time
publisher?

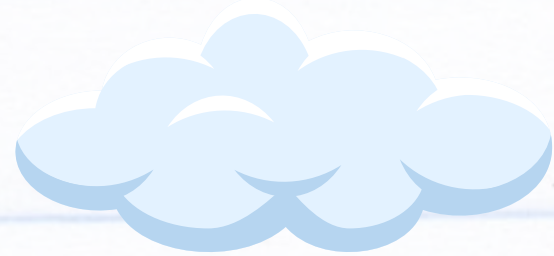
Email me!



ALMOST- CLOSING THOUGHTS

**It is not harmless to assume
you had trauma.**

**Everyday trauma is simply a
new term for human
suffering.**



**People who claim to end
human suffering are
making faith claims.**

OH AND ALSO

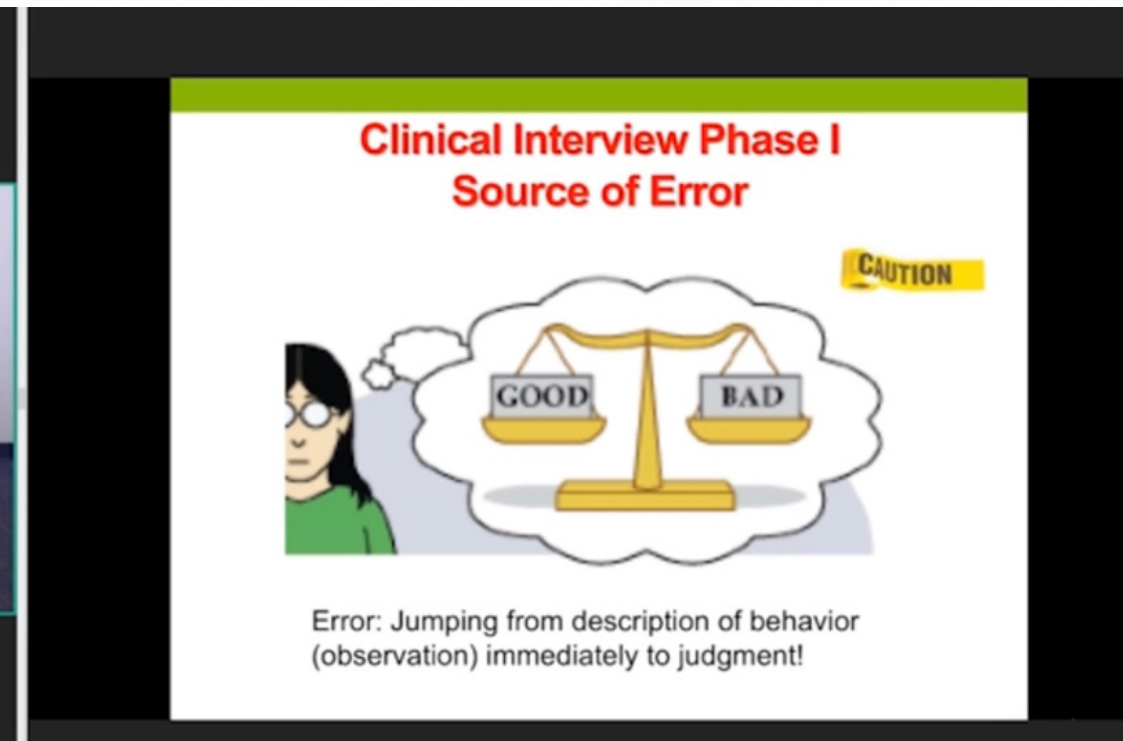
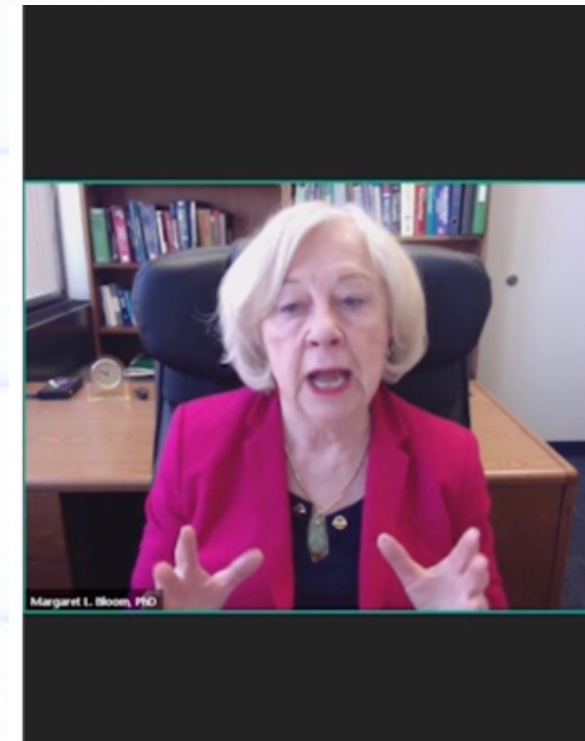
The vast majority of people who experience a Type 1 traumatic event recover without any kind of therapy.

If you think you have PTSD from a specific, terrifying event,* and you are experiencing Intrusive thoughts, panic, and startle response, exposure methods are still best.

*which you have always remembered

If the "everyday trauma" idea resonates with you, you may simply be suffering. Talk to your mental health pro about differential diagnosis. They should not be put off by the idea.

FEELING LOST?



Diagnosis serves one basic purpose: to discover and organize information into a diagnostic schema that may lead to more effective methods of helping the client (Shea, 1991). As a part of counseling, diagnosis is an ongoing process that generates working hypotheses for problem identification and treatment, never a static event. It is essential that diagnosis be understood and taught as a process and as an integral part of effective counseling.

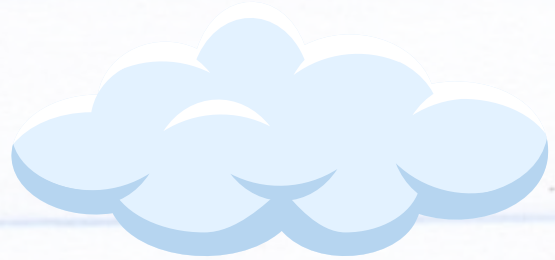
Margaret Bloom, PhD

Mental health differential diagnosis expert

THE SCIENCE SAYS



**You are stronger and more
resilient than you know.**



you



OH GOOD!

She really did it!

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The End of Trauma (Bonnano)

Science and Pseudoscience In Social Work Practice (Thyer, Pignotti)

Remembering Trauma (McNally)

The Memory Illusion (Shaw)

Medically Unexplained Symptoms (Baloh)

The Myth of Repressed Memory (Loftus)

My Lie (Maran)

Creating Hysteria (Acocella)

Freud: The Making of an Illusion (Crews)

The Memory Wars (Crews)

Sybil Exposed (Nathan)

What We Don't Talk About When We Talk About #MeToo (Wypijewski)



OH GOOD!
She really did It!

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE
(PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH)

CRIMINOLOGICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY LAB
(FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH)

GREY FACTION
(ACTIVISM AGAINST PSEUDOSCIENCE IN THERAPY)

ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL AND COGNITIVE THERAPIES
(THERAPIST SEARCH)

Thank you, Dr. C.A. Meyersburg (Harvard), for informed advice on finding a science-based therapist!

Select Sources

Trauma Re-enactment

Social media accounts featured:

Ali Fenwick (@modern.day.psychologist)

Betrayal Trauma Recovery (@btr.org)

Jane Hart (Facebook)

van der Kolk:

Psychological Trauma (1987)

"The Compulsion to Repeat the Trauma" (Psychiatric Clinics of N America, 1989)

The Body Keeps the Score (2014)

Herman:

Trauma and Recovery (1992)

ACES study:

"An Analysis of Retrospective and Repeat Prospective Reports of Adverse Childhood Experiences from the South African Birth to Twenty Plus Cohort" (Naicker, et al. PlosOne, 2017)

29th Annual International Trauma Conference (Brochure, 2018)

Janina Fisher, Trauma Research Foundation Seminar (Poppy Notes, 2022)

Thank you, Dr. Skip Pope (Harvard-McLean),
for a thorough primer on ACES study and retrospective bias!

Select Sources

Trauma Symptoms

Account featured:
[@theworkoutwitch](#)

HPA Axis and depression:

"The HPA Axis in Major Depression"
(Pariante, et al. Trends In Neurosciences, 2008)

Pain and depression:

"Chronic Pain and Depression In the Quality of Life of Women with Migraine"
(Stuginski-Barbosa, 2012)

HPA Axis and chronic stress:

"Regulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical stress response"
(Herman et al, Comparative Physiology, 2016)

Pain and stress:

"Chronic Pain and Chronic Stress: Two Sides of the Same Coin?"
(Abdallah, Chronic Stress, 2017)

Mysterious symptoms:

"It's Time to View Severe Medically Unexplained Symptoms as Red-Flag Symptoms of Depression and Anxiety"
(Smith, J of Am Med Assoc., 2020)

Stress versus Trauma:

"Labels Matter: Is It Stress or is It Trauma?" (Richter-Levin + Sandi, Nature, 2021)

Thank you, Dr. Shelley Carson (Harvard),
for extensive analysis of HPA Axis dysregulation and stress or mood disturbance!

Select Sources

Betrayal Trauma

Robert Jay Lifton:

"Vietnam: Betrayal and Self-Betrayal" (Society, 1969)

Jennifer Freyd:

"Betrayal Trauma: Traumatic Amnesia
as an Adaptive Response to Childhood Abuse" (J of Ethics & Behavior, 1994)

Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse (1996)

Blind to Betrayal (2013)

DARVO:

"Violations of Power" (Freyd, Feminism & Psychology, 1997)

Blind to Betrayal (Freyd, 2013)

"How to Spot a Pattern of Denials In the #MeToo Movement" (CBC Radio, 2018)

"Oregon Psychology Professor Talks Psychology of Sexual Harassment" (The Stanford Daily, 2018)

Lundy Bancroft:

Why Does He Do That? (2003)

Dissociative amnesia:

"Debunking Myths about Trauma and Memory" (McNally, Canadian J of Psychiatry, 2005)

Remembering Trauma (McNally, 2003)

Bessel van der Kolk et al:

"Clinical Significance of a Proposed Developmental Trauma Disorder Diagnosis:
Results of an International Survey of Clinicians" (Focus on Adolescent Mental Health, 2012)

In Media:

Health.com: "Betrayal Trauma Can Have Lasting Mental Health Effects" (Gillespie, 2022)

VeryWellMind: "What Is Betrayal Trauma?" (Gupta, 2022)

Wikipedia: "Betrayal Trauma" (open-source, 2023)

Thank you, Dr. Richard McNally (Harvard), and Dr. Elizabeth Loftus (University of California - Irvine),
for many insights into trauma and memory!

Select Sources

Trauma Treatment

APA on Evidence-Based Trauma Treatments:
"Summary of Recommendations of the
APA Guideline Development Panel for the Treatment of PTSD"
(American Psychological Association, 2021)

Therapy Success:
"Why Ineffective Psychotherapies Appear to Work"
(Perspectives on Psychological Science, Ritschel et al, 2014)

Pseudoscience in Trauma Therapy:
Science and Pseudoscience In Social Work Practice
(Thyer, Pignotti, 2015)

Thank you, Dr. Cynthia Meyersburg (Harvard),
for extensive insight into pseudoscientific therapies
and tools used in trauma treatments.



**THANK
YOU!**

Find me:

Twitter: @CarriePoppyYes

Podcast: "Oh No, Ross and Carrie" (hi, Ross!)

Tip line: TipsForCarrie@gmail