

## What is childhood trauma?

- Childhood trauma can be defined as an adverse childhood experience that involves potential abuse of any form, neglect or adversity that negatively impacts a child [\[1\]](#).
- Having an adverse childhood experience increases the likelihood of consuming harmful substances, having chronic illnesses like pulmonary or cardiac disease [\[2\]](#).
- Childhood trauma can have a huge impact on the individual in almost all arenas and therefore it is important to address them [\[3\]](#).

## Why is it important to overcome childhood trauma?

- Experiencing a traumatic event in childhood can affect their current ability to form healthy relationships and attachments [\[4\]](#).
- Traumatic events trigger their stress responses and we may continually have those responses, which affects their day to day functioning [\[5\]](#).
- They may constantly feel threatened and uncomfortable even in safe environments. This may affect the quality of their life and will also bring down their productivity [\[6\]](#).
- Additionally, their physiological functions like sleep and digestion may get compromised due to constant stress responses or triggers of the trauma. This may result in various problems like eating disorders or insomnia [\[7\]](#).

## How to overcome childhood trauma?

1. Recognizing the trauma- The first action towards any issue is to recognize the problem. Very often, people with adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) do not recognize the symptoms of trauma they are showing. Research indicates that people who have experienced trauma, are unlikely to spontaneously disclose their traumatic experience making it difficult for the mental health practitioner to understand the

symptoms. Recognizing trauma and the symptoms one is showing is therefore important [\[8,9\]](#).

2. Acceptance- Accepting the reality that certain individuals have hurt you and that has led to intentional or unintentional trauma is important [\[10\]](#).
3. Being kind to oneself- Guilt and criticising oneself is very common in those who have experienced trauma. Blaming oneself for the events that happened is also seen. Being kind and less self-critical is crucial [\[11\]](#).
4. Looking after one's health- Having a healthy body helps in coping with stress. Building a daily routine, eating healthy and practising meditation or exercise builds up one's health [\[12\]](#).
5. Taking down bad habits- Having experienced a traumatic event might cause an individual to consume substances or eat junk food or compromise on one's sleep. Substituting bad habits with good one's like eating healthy, attending group sessions or cultivating reading habits should be looked into [\[13\]](#).
6. Sharing your experiences- Sharing is a very important and powerful tool when used properly. Sharing one's experiences is an important part of healing [\[14\]](#).
7. Reclaiming authority- You are not your trauma. Trauma is just a part of your experience. It does not define you [\[15\]](#).
8. Reaching out for help- Memories of trauma can be a very isolating experience. Reach out to your friends and family and do not isolate yourself [\[16\]](#).
9. Focusing on the growth- Healing is a process and although it may disrupt some of your days, you will learn to process it and overcome it in a much healthier way. Focus on the healthy relationships you have, the achievements you have made so far and your personal strengths [\[17\]](#).

10. Seeking out professional help- Sometimes you need the help of a professional to process the trauma and overcome it. Collate resources, reach out to a specialist who can help you or reach out to a support group<sup>[18]</sup>.