



EPISODE #1

Why Every Teacher Needs to Know About Trauma

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JULIA ROSE POLK: You're listening to the Trauma Camp for Teachers podcast... Episode #1.

Welcome to the Trauma Camp for Teachers podcast, where educators like you get the guidance and support they need to manage their classrooms with confidence, clarity and compassion. I'm your host, trauma therapist and trainer, Julia Rose Polk. Now, let's get started.

Hey you... Julia Rose here. So, I've got a riddle for you today... And it's super corny, but what-the-heck-EVER... we do whatever it takes to get an important point across, so, here it is... what can drive you utterly insane, can be unpredictable and often unseemly, has the potential to live inside all human beings at any given time, and is completely, utterly invisible to the untrained eye? Any guesses? Okay, I'm gonna tell ya... It's probably not gonna surprise you... it's trauma.

And today, I'm going to break down why trauma is **ESSENTIAL** for every teacher - in every classroom - to know about.

But before we dive in, let me tell you that this episode is sponsored by my free masterclass, The top 10 Truths Every teacher needs to know about trauma. So if you've struggled with classroom management, or have ever wondered how to respond to your struggling students, or if you are not actively building

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emotional connection and trust with your students every single day, you know that doing these things are easier when you really understand how trauma and stress affect the brain, right? Everything in your classroom is easier when you understand this, when you have somebody that is saying, “Hey, this is what’s going on right there...” and eventually, helping you know what to do in those super tough situations. So if you want to start building your trauma-informed teaching foundation right now, inside your classroom, and inside yourself, I’m your person. And I’ve got a free masterclass that will show you step by step how to get going. So go to www.traumacamp.com/masterclass — simple as that — www.traumacamp.com/masterclass, and I’ll show you how to get started so that you can be growing your awareness and skills, and get a head start on your trauma-informed teaching journey today.

All right, ya’ll, let’s go ahead and jump into today’s episode.

Now, Trauma is literally the Greek word for Wound. Except, as we understand it today is not just physical wounds that can be traumatic. In fact, most traumatic experiences are psychologically and emotionally wounding.

And here’s why this is important for teachers: Nearly HALF of the children in the United States have experienced one or more psychologically traumatic events in their lives. So, that - for YOU as a teacher - means potentially half your class could be affected by this invisible and unpredictable internal experience.

So, let me tell you a little story that I think demonstrates a really common perspective out there... I once was meeting with a School Counselor who ran the school counseling program for several schools in her district. And I was chatting with her, telling her about Trauma Camp and my work with teachers... and I eventually asked her what supports she had for her teachers and students around trauma. And she kind of turned her head, and gave me one of those don’t-be-ridiculous looks, and she said: Oh, we don’t have those kinds of issues at our schools. And I kid you not... My jaw dropped right there... at the lunch table... although, I tried to pick it up super quick. But I was stunned. *What did she think trauma was? Who exactly did she think it affected? How did she know that*

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students in her schools hadn't been traumatized? What did this mean for the students and teachers she served in terms of the support they were getting?

Now, I'll be honest... I went directly into judgement. As you could probably hear in my tone. And that's on me... And I imagine that a lot of you can relate... it's really easy to jump right into judgment when we feel threatened in some way. And - while I wasn't totally aware of it at the time - this felt threatening to me because I am so aware of what's at stake when professionals don't know about this stuff. And I felt threatened personally, because I know what it's like to be a traumatized student walking around feeling like no one cared about or understood me.

But I pulled myself together after that brief jaw-dropping comment, because I remembered the reality of things today, and the truth is... many people hold this belief. Most people don't know about trauma. And if they do, their idea is of extreme poverty or abject violence like rape or school shootings, and that it's an outlier to the norm. And trauma does include those more extreme experiences, for sure. In fact, these things happen regularly... for a lot of people.

Yet trauma can also be caused by things that are way more normalized or typical, and that EVERY community deals with... addiction, mental health issues, domestic violence, family dysfunction, hostile marriages, or financial instability... I mean... these can touch every neighborhood and every community.

And when we don't acknowledge that, students suffer the highest cost, because they're not getting the recognition and support they need. And to be honest... teachers are right behind them, because they're teaching against the trauma, and that's when sparks fly and you get serious disruptions or disputes.

Because the thing about trauma that is so helpful for teachers to learn about, is that it has a HUGE IMPACT on both social behavior AND academic performance. Things teachers CHRONICALLY struggle with. The problem is... teachers often aren't taught that trauma or stress may play a significant role in those behavioral or academic issues. So, whether you've got students acting



OUT or acting IN... or whether your career mission is to impact and alter the achievement gap... Trauma and it's impact on brain, body and behavior... are things YOU DEFINITELY need to know about.

Now, trauma has been getting tons of airtime over the last decade. You'll hear all these increasingly popular catch-phrases... trauma-informed, trauma-sensitive, trauma-responsive, healing centered engagement. Right? These are terms I use often, and many folks are seeking out this information and these trainings.

Yet the truth is... soooo many folks out there - especially teachers - still need tons of support around not just getting TRAINED on this stuff, but with ongoing implementation of what they're learning... and really knowing how to confidently work with their students who've experienced trauma or stress or chaos. AND TEACHERS who also might also need support in understanding and processing their own experiences of trauma in their own lives, or vicarious trauma from their students.

SO, that's why every teacher needs to know about trauma. And to be honest - that's exactly why I've launched this podcast. So you - no matter where you are, whether you've got the support of your school or district, or whether you are the sole individual who is spearheading these efforts in your workplace - this podcast is for YOU. To get that ongoing support and guidance you need, every single week, in your ear, whenever you need it. To help you make sense of what you're seeing and experiencing, and to give you actionable ways to help yourself and your students.

So, to make this episode actionable for you, and to make sure my mini-trainings and supports come directly to you each and every week... i want you to pause what you're doing right now - unless you're driving, if you're driving keep focusing on the road... but if you're not driving, I want you to pause what you're doing and take 2 seconds to hit the "Subscribe" button for this podcast. That will make sure that the nuggets of actionable and digestible bits of expertise that I have to offer will be sent directly to you each and every week, no

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So, I hoped you enjoyed this episode, where we took a close look at why every single teacher needs to know about trauma. And I hope you found it valuable to you and your work with your students.

And in our NEXT EPISODE, I'm going to walk you through the 6-stages that every teacher goes through in their journey of becoming trauma-informed. You don't want to miss this, because this is gonna be your guidebook in terms of how to bring about change within yourself, with your students, and within your school community. So, I'll see you in the next episode... Bye for now!