

# Trauma-informed Teaching

# Teaching + Learning Lab

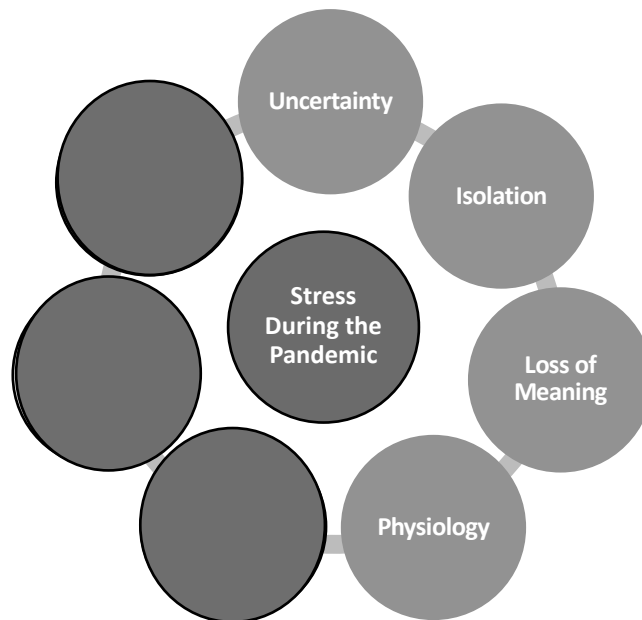
Mays Imad, PhD :: [mimad@pima.edu](mailto:mimad@pima.edu) :: [@Irningsanctuary](https://twitter.com/Irningsanctuary)

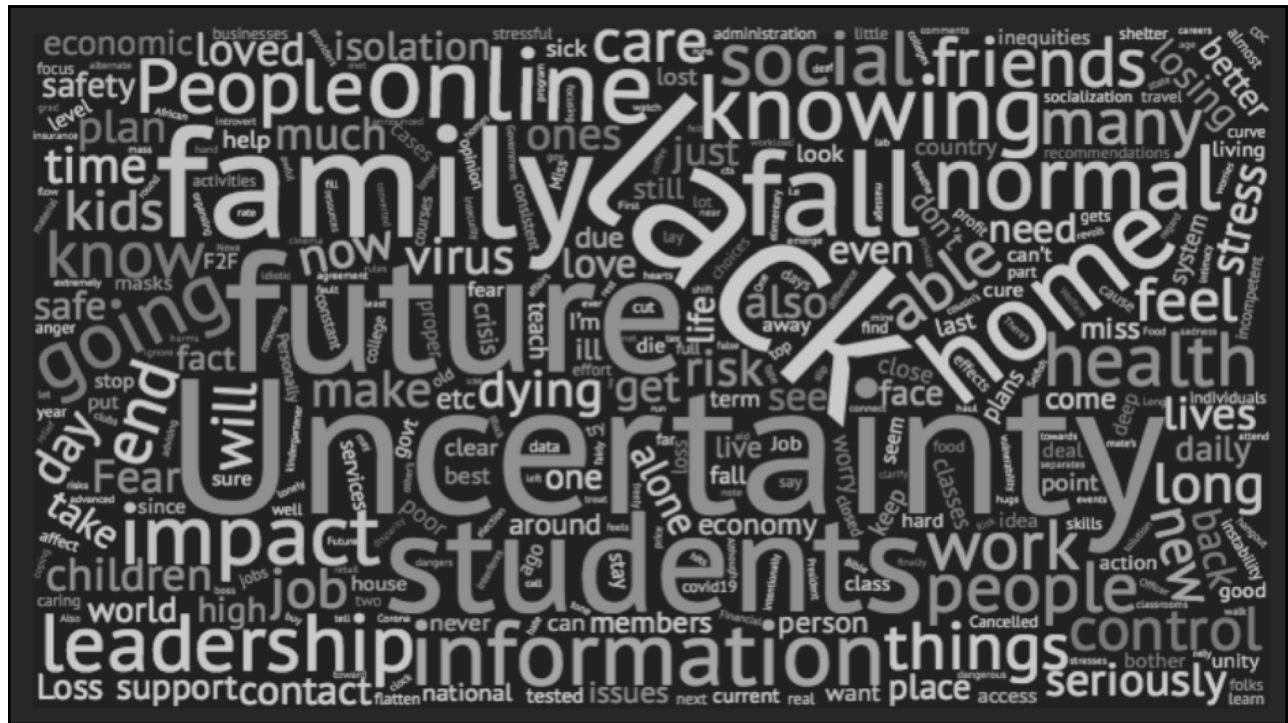
## Today, we will:

1. Reflect back on the last year.
2. Examine the impact of toxic stress on our ability to engage and learn.
3. Consider how we will move forward and support ourselves, students, and colleagues.



<https://www.menti.com/akupt8brfj>





MIND, BRAIN, AND EDUCATION

# We Feel, Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education

Mary Helen Immordino-Yang<sup>1</sup> and Antonio Damasio<sup>2</sup>



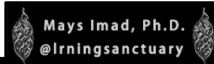
REVIEW ARTICLE OPEN

## Learning and memory under stress: implications for the classroom

Susanne Vogel<sup>1</sup> and Lars Schwabe<sup>1</sup>

Exams, tight deadlines and interpersonal conflicts are just a few examples of the many events that may result in high levels of stress in both students and teachers. Research over the past two decades identified stress and the hormones and neurotransmitters released during and after a stressful event as major modulators of human learning and memory processes, with critical implications for educational contexts. While stress around the time of learning is thought to enhance memory formation, thus leading to robust memories, stress markedly impairs memory retrieval, bearing, for instance, the risk of underachieving at exams. Recent evidence further indicates that stress may hamper the updating of memories in the light of new information and induce a shift from a flexible, 'cognitive' form of learning towards rather rigid, 'habit'-like behaviour. Together, these stress-induced changes may explain some of the difficulties of learning and remembering under stress in the classroom. Taking these insights from psychology and neuroscience into account could bear the potential to facilitate processes of education for both students and teachers.

*npj Science of Learning* (2016) 1, 16011; doi:10.1038/npjscilearn.2016.11; published online 29 June 2016



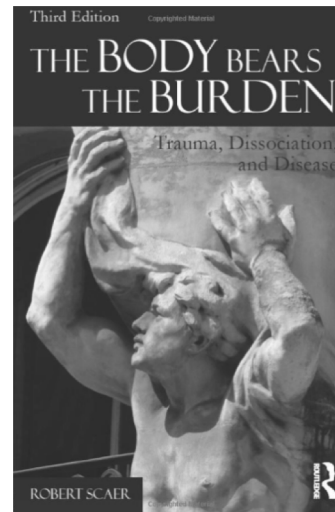
It's not typical stress.  
It's traumatic stress.





## What is Trauma?

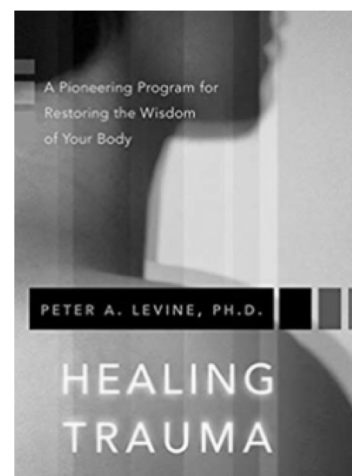
“Any **negative** life event that occurs in a position of relative **helplessness.**”



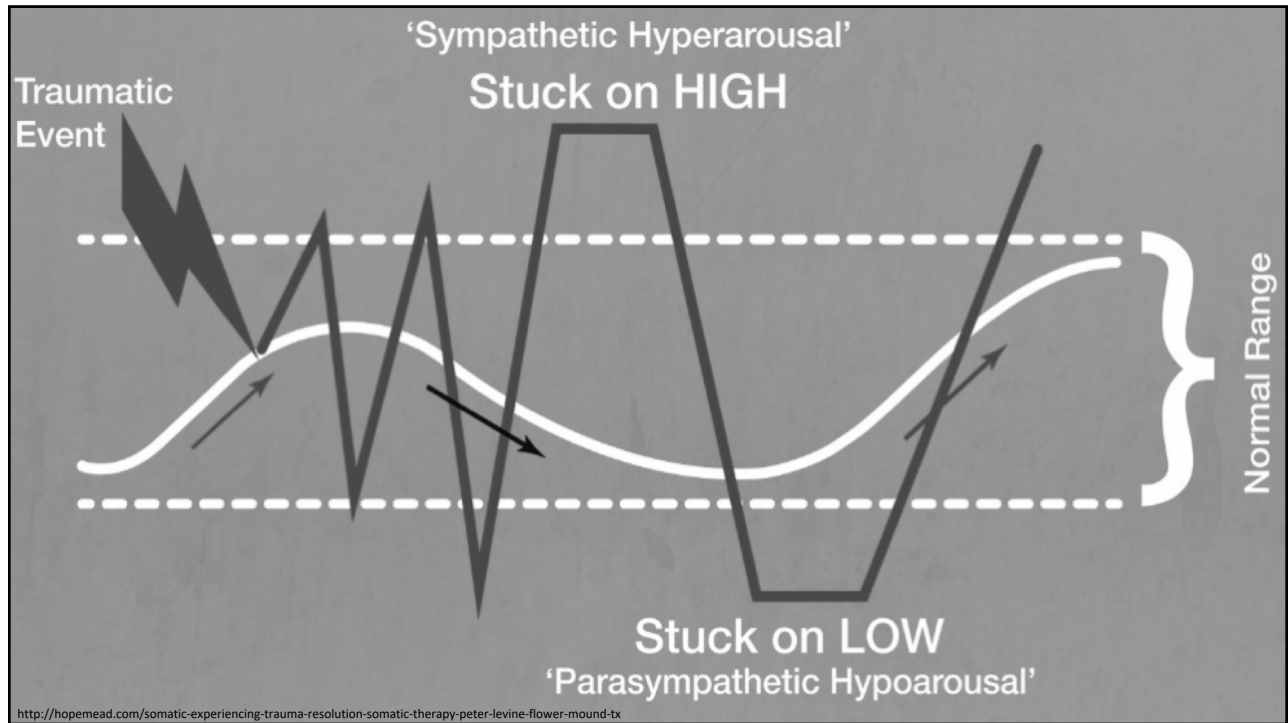
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## What is Trauma?

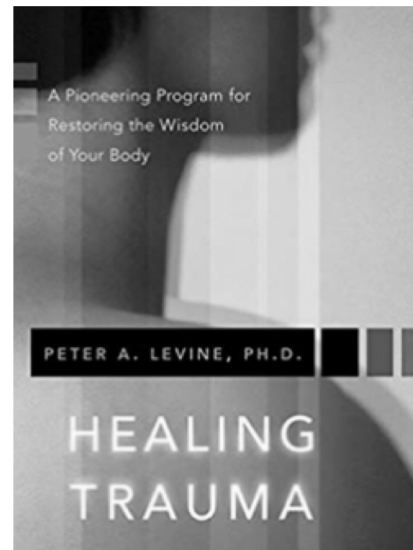
“It’s about being frightened or overwhelmed **beyond our capacity to rebound.**”



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# Our Sense of Resilience is Challenged



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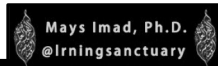
## “Amygdala Hijack”

Hyperactive amygdala →

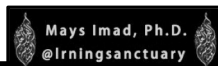
Stress Hormones →

Fight or Flight or Freeze Response →

**Impairs Our Ability to Pay Attention,  
Make Decisions, Learn, & Remember**



We don't just “get over it” and go on as business as usual—we need an intervention.



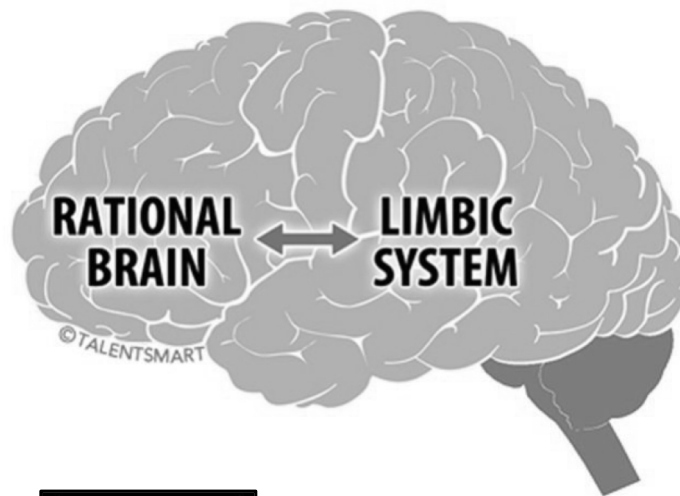
Trauma-Informed Teaching requires having an awareness of our students' past and present experiences and the effects of those experiences on students' well-being and their ability to engage with the materials and learn. We must be able to recognize trauma in ourselves and our students. We need to be intentional to promote safe environments that cultivates connectedness, empowerment, and recovery.

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## Calming the Nervous System



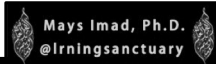
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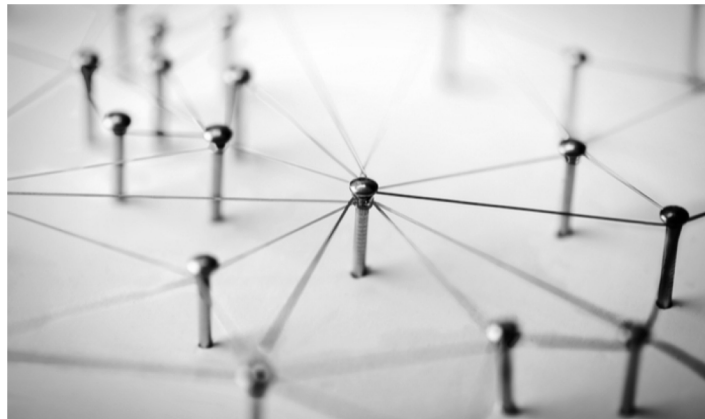
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**Trauma shatters our assumptions  
about the benevolence of the world,  
the meaningfulness of the world, and  
our sense of self and self worth.**

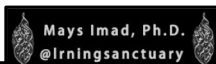
**Trauma is Relational**



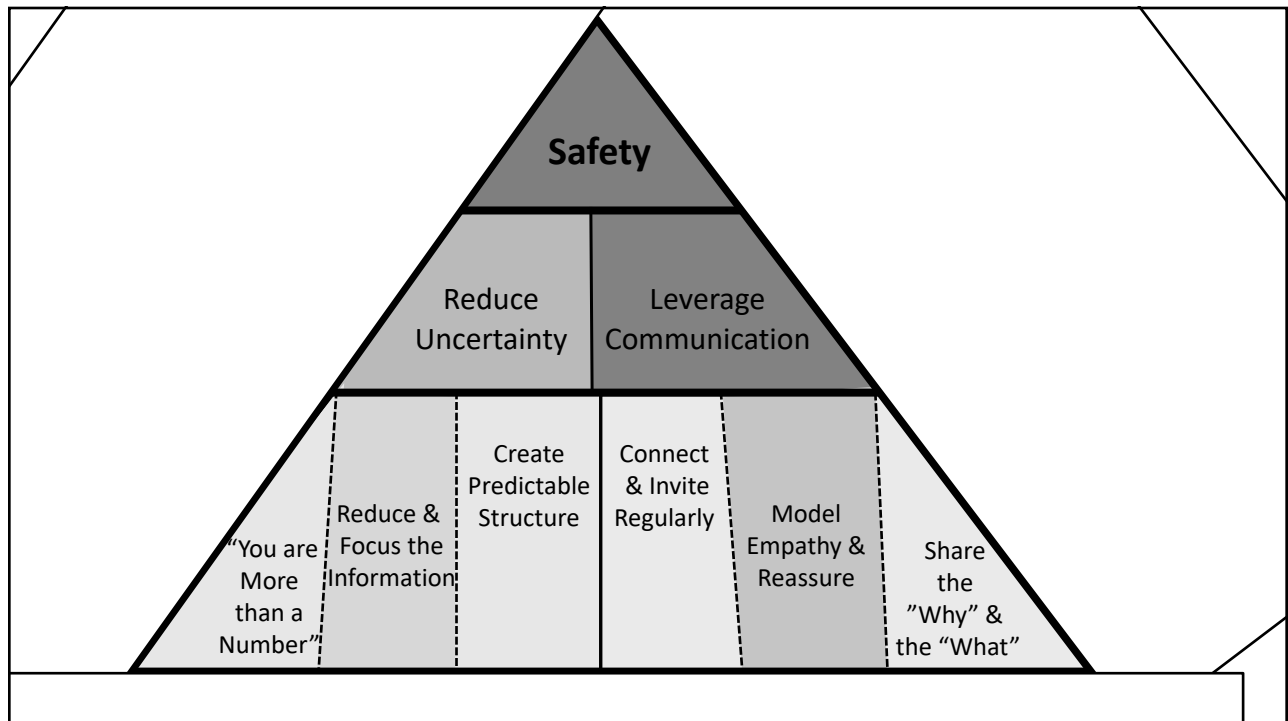
**Healing Through Relationships**

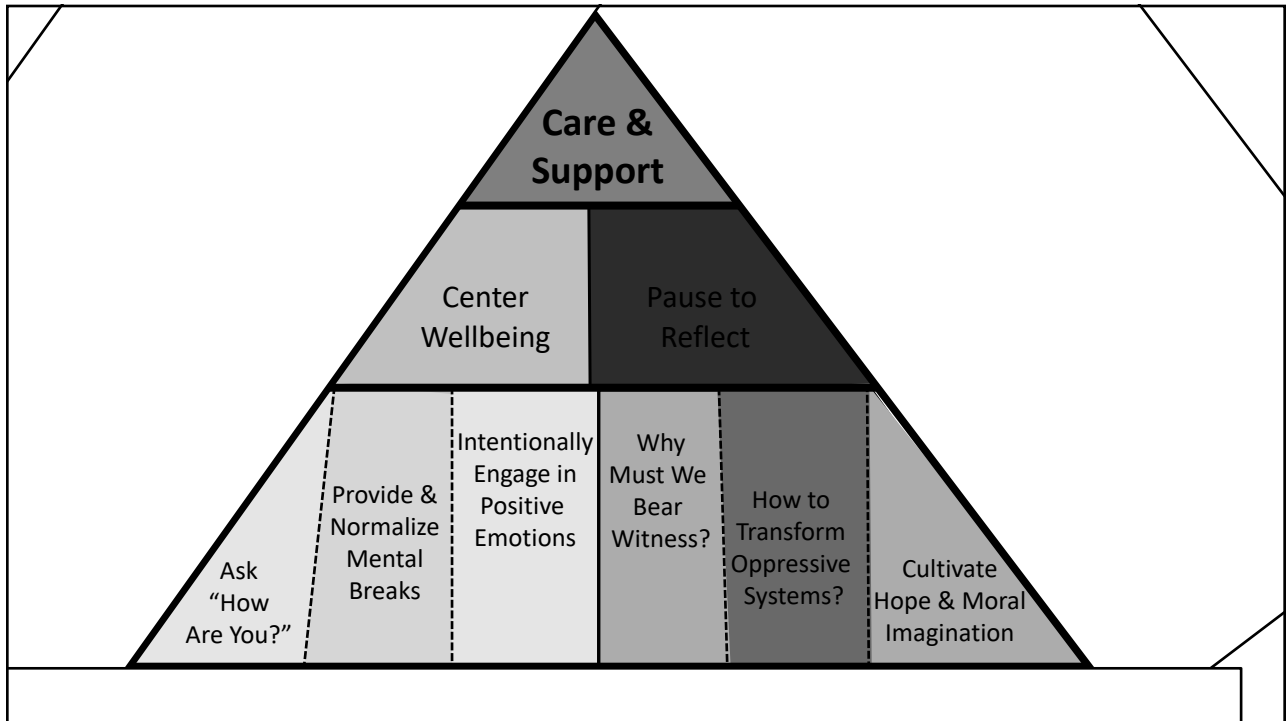
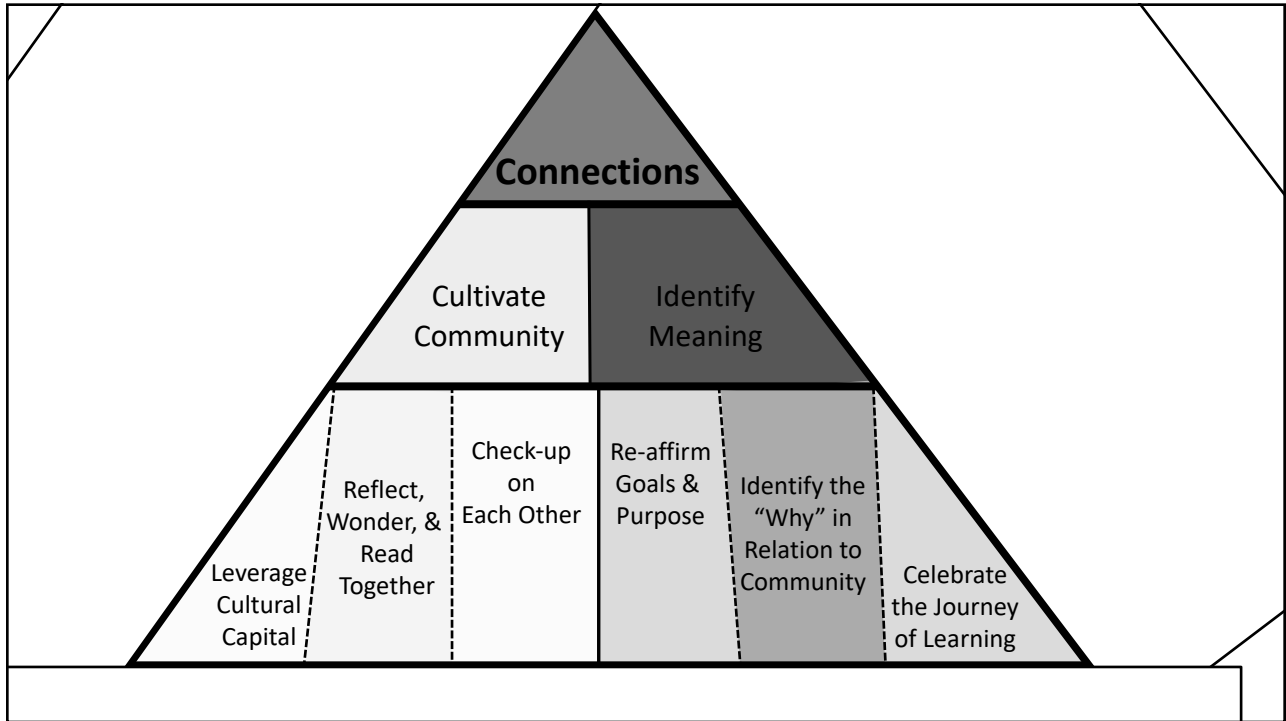


**Interdependent Relationships with  
the Earth & its Inhabitants**



Three preconditions for every student to thrive in life: feeling safe, experiencing meaningful connections, and having support & resources.





“I live a hope despite my knowing better”



James Baldwin

