

Developing Culturally Responsive, Trauma Informed Services & Responses

Olga Trujillo, JD

Director, Education & Social Change

Caminar Latino

Latinos United for Peace and Equity Initiative

Exploring the Impact of Trauma and How its Important to Your Services

- Examine my experience of violence and trauma
 - Show pictures
 - Describe experience
 - No graphic descriptions of violence
- Explore the bias, privilege & cultural implications
- Explore how trauma can impact your work with survivors
- Examine what you can do to create culturally responsive & trauma informed

the sum of my parts: a survivor's story of dissociative identity disorder

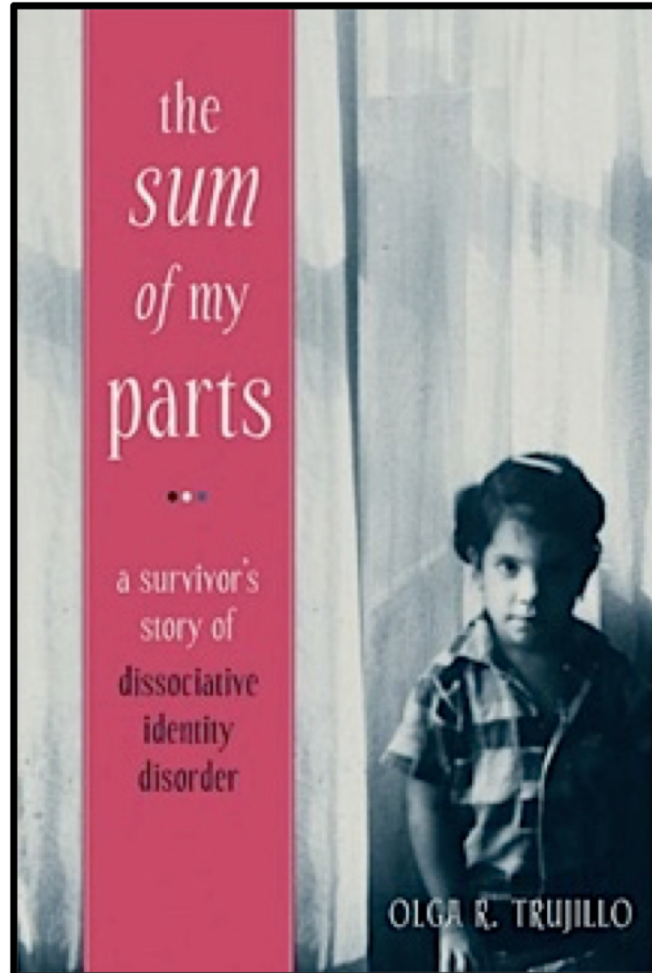




Image 1: *Olga as a baby on a bed with her two older brothers*



Image 2: *Olga when she was 3 years old, smiling, sitting in a chair in the living room*



Image 3: *Olga when she was 7, smiling, sitting in her living room*



Image 4: Olga when she was 8, smiling



Image 5: Olga when she was 12 – has a bit of a blank stare



Image 6: *Olga sitting with a blank stare –She is 16 wearing a prom dress with her date in his white tuxedo*

Question 1

- What do you think my experience and the impact of trauma, means for me as a witness?
 - Will I show any emotion?
 - Will I show too much emotion?
 - Will people believe me?
 - Will I remember what we talked about?

Question 2

- What do you think my experience as a Latina, Lesbian, gender non-conforming with trauma and dissociation means for me in your community?
- Will I feel welcome in your program or agency response?
- Why or Why not?

Trauma and Dissociation

- Learn about the impact of trauma and dissociation
 - Incorporate survivors in your learning – don't just rely on clinicians...

What We See & Experience

- Flat demeanor or spacey look
- Not paying attention
- Overreacting to seemingly benign situations
- Minimizing the abuse
- Talking all over the place
- Scattered (non-linear) thinking
- Unable to remember key facts
- “Uncooperative”
- Not following-through

Diagnoses Arising from Trauma

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Nightmares
 - Night sweats
 - Startle Response
 - Hypervigilance
 - Flashbacks
- Dissociative Disorders
 - Losing time
- Numb
- Spacey
- Anxiety and Panic Disorders
- Phobias – such as Agoraphobia & Claustrophobia

Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)

- Have you heard of it?
- Have you ever worked with someone that has it?

What is DID?

- A person with DID feels as if she has within her two or more entities, each with its own way of thinking and remembering about herself and her life.
- These entities previously were often called “personalities,” even though the term did not accurately reflect the common definition of the word.

DID (continued)

- Other terms often used by therapists and survivors to describe these entities are: “alternate personalities,” “alters,” “parts,” “states of consciousness,” “ego states,” and “identities.”
- It is important to keep in mind that although these alternate states may feel or appear to be very different, they are all manifestations of a single, whole person.

What this means for your work

Impact of Privilege & Bias

- Be aware of privilege and bias
- Understand the realities of survivors' lives
- Will be an issue for the survivor and her family – whether you see it or not
- Partner with survivors to address strategies to help:
 - How will the system see the survivor
 - What is the survivor's experience with the police, immigration, child welfare
 - Develop plans for how to address these with the survivor

Impact of Trauma on Your Work

- It is important to be able to identify when trauma may be an issue so that we can partner with survivors to craft strategies to help them:
 - Stay safe
 - Keep moving forward with what they want and need
 - Avoid triggers
 - Develop plans for when triggers arise

Got Emotional Support Animals?





No Really – Got Emotional Support Animals?

Partner with Survivors

Strategize with Survivors to Ensure Emotional Safety

- Build Trust
- Help Survivors Understand What to Expect
- Learn about “triggers”
 - She may not know all (or any) of them
 - Make a list that she can keep

Strategize with Survivors to Ensure Emotional Safety (continued)

- Anticipate “triggers”
 - What helps?
 - What can you do?
 - What does she do when this happens?
 - Plan for them.

Law Enforcement

- Look for Signs
- Trauma Informed Interviewing
- Adapt Credibility Assessment

Prosecutors

Incorporate a Trauma Informed Legal Advocacy Approach

- Look for Trauma
- Adapt Credibility Assessment
- Plan for Trauma in Court
- Prepare survivors and witnesses for court
 - Make sure they know what to expect
- Normalize trauma for court – so judges know what they are seeing

Judges

- Require trauma informed legal advocacy
- Learn about trauma
- Develop a trauma informed credibility assessment
- Allow Experts
- Allow accommodations for participation
- Bring in trauma trainings for attorneys, advocates and all who work in courts

All of You

- Make meaningful connections
- Adapt and accept
- Accommodate
- Hope
- Remember – Kindness really does matter

Resources

- ***Representing Domestic Violence Survivors who are Experiencing Trauma and Other Mental Health Challenges: A Handbook for Attorneys***, Co-authored by Mary Malefyt Seighman, Erika Sussman, and Olga Trujillo (National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health, January 2012).
- ***Preparing Survivors for Court*** (National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (May 2013))

Questions? Comments?



Olga Trujillo, J.D.
Director of Education & Social Change
Caminar Latino
Latinos United for Peace & Equity Initiative
otrujillo@caminarlatino.org