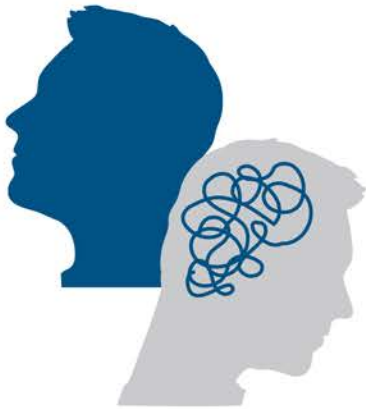




WHAT IS TRAUMA?

A Concise Look At Psychological Injury Sustained Through Widowhood



"Suddenly there's no place to stand. It's as if the world has broken its promise, revealing itself to be capable of devastating chaos and cruelty", explains Belleruth Naparstek, psychotherapist and author of **Invisible Heroes: Survivors of Trauma and How They Heal**. "The trauma carves a painful dividing line in the survivor's personal narrative, a line that splices our life in two: there's the person we were before, and the person we've become since. Profoundly undermined, we are lonely, fearful, disoriented, and unnerved by the certainty that we are not who we thought we were, and indeed the world is no longer amenable to past interpretation."

Trauma is "a metaphor for life-events that tear at the psychological skin that protects us, leaving us emotionally wounded," describes Dr. Stephen Joseph, psychologist and author of **What Doesn't Kill Us: The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth**. "When we experience trauma, our bodies go into shock and our minds are overwhelmed. Imagine a Christmas snow globe. Shake it and the snow flurries; over time, it settles. How long the snow remains unsettled depends on how vigorously the globe was shaken in the first place. So it is with the trauma that shakes up our mental world."



"Trauma is the most avoided, ignored, denied, misunderstood, and untreated cause of human suffering," says Dr. Peter Levine, psychologist and author of **Healing Trauma**. "People often ask me to define trauma. After thirty years, this is still a challenge. What I do know is that we become traumatized when our ability to respond to a perceived threat is in some way overwhelmed."

Additional Resources About Trauma & Widowhood

SCAN ME



NAVIGATING TRAUMA
IN WIDOWHOOD

SCAN ME



THE WIDOWED
RESILIENCE SCALE