



# Pulling Away From the Darkness of Trauma

Trauma gets a pretty bad rap these days. As knowledge of trauma comes into the public consciousness more and more (which is a good thing) so does the understanding that trauma can cause terrible, lasting pain.

Symptoms such as flashbacks, emotional reactivity, and substance-use are all becoming more and more recognized for what they are – an impact of trauma.

And while this emergence of understanding has allowed for far better care of trauma survivors, there has been a downside. In our society, there has been a consistent under-emphasis on the positive aspects of experiencing and healing one's own trauma. Like any experience, trauma comes not just with cons, but also some pros. And it's good to acknowledge these, because otherwise the experiencer of a trauma may be tempted to identify as a permanent victim. So, the purpose of this article is to balance the scales.

## **The Benefits of Trauma:**

**1. Enhanced Compassion for others**

Experiencing an event like a car crash, abusive relationship, or the unexpected death of a loved one, is a truly harrowing experience. When you go through this, emotions arise that are far, far outside the average. Feelings like ultimate horror, profound emotional shut-down, extreme dissociation, or all-consuming rage are common.

When you pass through such an emotional aperture, it leaves you different on the other end. All of a sudden, you have undeniably come face-to-face with the farthest depths of life's cruelty, malevolence, and suffering. And with this, you just can't judge another person who has been through something similar, with indifference, misunderstanding, or contempt. You'll know, fundamentally, that this person has seen hell - just like you have- and so the only appropriate response to them becomes understanding, kindness, and compassion. Forever-after your capacity to feel and understand the pain of this world is increased.

**2. After healing, you'll sweat the small stuff less**

One of the toughest aspects of experiencing trauma, is it can leave the body frozen in a fight, flight, or freeze state. People experience this as constant anxiety, hair-trigger anger, or depressive episodes. Once someone has gone through the healing work to release that body activation however, it becomes far, far easier, to be unflappable in the face of the little things in life. Compared to the extreme states of trauma, the annoying uncle at thanksgiving, or long line at the bank... are nothingburgers.

### 3. Self-knowledge, and personal depth

Healing trauma is tough. Like...really tough. One of the features of it, is that you have to temporarily relive that trauma in a therapy session, in order to do some kind of intervention on that particular event.

Getting to the other side of that though, grants a vast new appreciation of your own personal capability. How so, you ask?

Traumas happen to us. We don't feel like a hero having lived through them. Healing our trauma on the other hand, is a personal choice. It's an act of such profound bravery to face the worst of life's miseries, that you just can't avoid experiencing an expansion of self. And when others gaze at you, they will see the kind of depth that can only come from truly facing-down such pain and terror.

### 4. Lightness and humor

People who survive and heal their trauma understand fun and humor in a different way. Why? Because just like not sweating the small-stuff – when you conquer the toughest experiences life has to offer, then life in-general becomes less fearful. And when life is less fearful, it's far easier to play, laugh, and enjoy the sillier things.

### 5. Massively increased confidence

When you live-through and heal your trauma – a point gets proven. You learn, fundamentally, that no matter what happens (unless you die), you can recover from catastrophe. In a single phrase:

*If I can heal this, then I can heal that.*

This knowledge forever-after lives in the background of your consciousness and provides a security blanket for life's tribulations. Partner dies? You'll heal that. Bear eats your leg? You'll heal that too. And, in addition to the knowledge that you'll ultimately be ok, your identity also changes. When you've truly faced your trauma, you can only come to one conclusion:

*That you are an absolute badass.*

Who else but a badass-warrior would choose to relive a rape, a car crash, or a devastating loss - all for the sake of healing and inner-peace? In sum, all this manifests as a glow of inner-confidence that you will notice... and others will too.

### 6. Giving back to others

As a rule – healed people do service for others. Whether or not you are in a helping role, when you show up in your life confident, peaceful, and glowing– others will want what you have. And you'll then be in a position to lead by example and show them the way.

I've seen time and time-again when my clients change and heal, so do their workplaces, their families, and their intimate relationships. People live in interconnected systems, and the ripple-effects of your personal healing can be profound.

So there you have it. Trauma, while awful, is not all bad. For anyone willing to rise to challenge and confront the depths of pain, there are vast inner-rewards waiting. Believe you can get there, grit your teeth, put in the work, and you'll come out better for it.

Dedicated to your success,  
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