



Naming Vicarious Trauma

How do we identify it and why we need to deal with it.

Incorporating the vocabulary of the nervous system and understanding how to practice body awareness can quickly decrease stress responses. Ultimately this becomes a valuable tool in preventing stress. Attending to body awareness becomes similar to the experience of assessing the non-verbal equine; simply by becoming efficient at reading the overall physical presentation of the horse.

The concept of vicarious trauma evolved in clinical literature when post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was shown in symptoms related to emergency responders. PTSD occurs when traumatic stress responses cannot be healthily felt and can remain unresolved, unexpressed or buried. Vicarious trauma occurs after traumatic events are witnessed occurring to other beings. This can happen to an eye witness, through seeing photographs, videos and news reports of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abusive horrors or injuries. As well as through listening to stories.

Vicarious trauma related and somatic symptoms, can manifest as:

- anxiety and depression
- emotional numbness
- dissociation



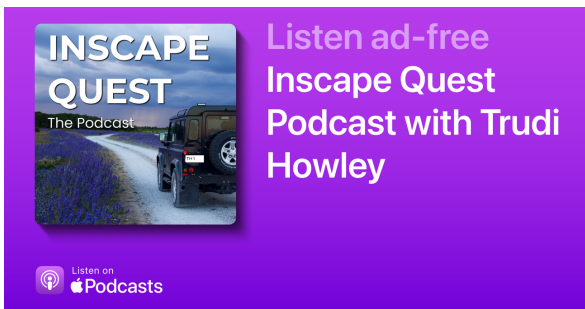
- anger
- frustration
- digestive problems
- black & white thinking
- heart racing
- headaches
- Syndrome pains
- Fatigue
- Substance use
- insomnia

Vicarious Transformation is continuous and purposeful. It leads to a heightened connection with others and a deeper sense of meaning and hope.

“A research team found that the act of not discussing a traumatic event or confiding it to another person could be more damaging than the actual event.”

-Brene Brown

If we make a conscious effort to understand what is going on with ourselves individually and collectively, we can make an impact for positive growth and change.



Jane Karol Psy..D

@ bearspotfarm_dressage

Trudi Howley M.S., SEP, LPC

@inscapequest

PS Please listen to Horsepower with Heart Ep.2: Dressage Dynamics &

Navigating Vicarious Trauma for Collective Transformation

<https://apple.co/3IwKZkP>

* **Horse Painting** by Bryce Widom