

Hope Fest Prescott

Trauma, Hope, and the Four Pillars of NeuroFaith®



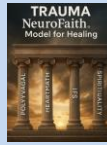
Introduction

Trauma is the silent epidemic of our age. It tears through our families, our churches, and our communities. It is not only the soldier blown up in Iraq, or the driver injured in a car accident, or the woman assaulted in a dark alley. Trauma is more insidious.

It slips like the enemy into our lungs and hides in our souls. It is the unseen weight crushing our children, the shame that whispers, "you are worthless," at midnight, the poison that rewires the nervous system and drains life from the body.

You do not have to remember the trauma for it to remember you. Trauma is the enemy's graffiti on God's masterpiece, you. It does not only break bones. It breaks identities.

Here is the truth. Trauma is merciless. It follows us into every relationship, every prayer, and every breath, until God breaks its grip.



The Science of Trauma (ACE Study)

- Prevalence: nearly two-thirds of Americans have at least one ACE.
- Burden: about 1 in 5 have four or more ACEs.
- Suicide: with 4+ ACEs, risk of attempting suicide is 12× higher. With 6+ ACEs, risk is about 30× higher.
- Depression and anxiety: one ACE raises depression risk by about 50%. With 4+ ACEs, risk of depression and anxiety increases up to sevenfold.
- Addiction: those with 4+ ACEs are 7 to 10 times more likely to fall into alcohol or drug dependence.
- Physical disease: trauma is associated with 2–3× higher risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and autoimmune illness, even without risky behaviors.

When someone says, “just get over it,” they miss the reality that trauma is not only in your head. It is in your brain, your body, and your immune system. Trauma steals health. Trauma steals life.

The Consequences of Unresolved Trauma

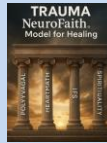
- Broken marriages and fractured families.
- Churches full of people who smile on Sunday while bleeding inside.
- Numbing with alcohol, pornography, work, or food.
- Shame hardening into identity rather than remaining a feeling.
- Trauma does not only break the past. It steals the future.

The Deeper Consequences of Trauma

Not all trauma is the same. We often think of shock trauma—the big events, the car wreck, the combat blast, the assault in the night. Those can break us open in a moment. But often just as devastating, and sometimes more so, is developmental trauma—what Tim Fletcher calls the slow drip of pain in our earliest years. Neglect, abandonment, criticism, abuse, chaotic homes, emotional absence.

Shock trauma can be life-altering, but developmental trauma wires itself into the very architecture of the brain. It leaves its fingerprints on how we see ourselves, how we perceive reality, and how we connect with others.

Every developmental trauma creates a negative core belief. Those negative core beliefs become etched into the default mode network of the brain—the system that quietly runs in the background, filtering every thought, every relationship, every experience.



These beliefs are devastatingly consistent:

- I am not lovable.
- I am not valuable.
- I do not matter.

When those core wounds become the lens through which we see the world, life itself becomes confirmation bias. Every slight, every rejection, every failure feels like evidence that the wound is true. Trauma does not only wound the past, it rewrites the script of the future.

Pivot to Hope

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

Trauma steals, but Christ restores. Trauma destroys, but Christ redeems. Trauma enslaves, but Christ sets captives free.

The Four Pillars of NeuroFaith®

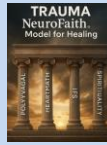
Here are the Four Pillars of NeuroFaith®, where neuroscience and faith meet to bring deep healing:

Polyvagal-Informed Therapy

- God designed our autonomic nervous system to keep us safe (sympathetic for fight/flight, parasympathetic for rest/restore).
- Trauma hijacks that system, trapping us in survival modes.
- Instead of safety, we live in hypervigilance or collapse.
- Polyvagal theory helps us understand how trauma 'soars' on this God-given system, unbalancing what He created for protection.
- Healing restores the sense of safety that lets us re-engage with life, others, and God.

HeartMath / Neurocardiology

- The heart is more than a pump — it has 40,000 sensory neurites that form neural networks, storing wisdom, judgment, and even memory.
- Science shows the heart communicates with the brain, shaping emotion, decision-making, and resilience.
- Heart-brain coherence (a balanced rhythm between heart and brain) produces peace in the body, clarity in the mind, and safety in relationships.



- As we regulate heart rate variability, we not only calm the nervous system but radiate peace to others.
- Scripture affirms this: “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” (Proverbs 4:23).

Internal Family Systems (IFS)

- Trauma fragments the soul into 'parts':
- Exiles – carry pain and shame.
- Managers – control to keep pain hidden.
- Firefighters – rush to numb pain with addictions or distractions.
- Inner critic – shames and condemns.
- IFS provides a map to make sense of these defenses.
- At the core, it’s about returning to the true Self, which in Christian terms is aligned with the Holy Spirit.
- The “Eight C’s” of IFS (calm, clarity, curiosity, compassion, confidence, courage, creativity, connectedness) resonate with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23.
- Healing is not erasing parts, but redeeming them under Christ’s Lordship.

Spirituality & Faith in Christ

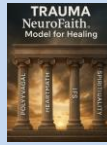
- Science can explain wounds, but only Christ redeems them.
- Developmental trauma etches negative core beliefs into the default mode network (I’m not lovable, I’m not valuable, I don’t matter).
- These become filters shaping every perception and relationship — a destructive confirmation bias.
- Scripture rewrites the truth:
- “I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jeremiah 31:3) → You are lovable.
- “You are worth more than many sparrows” (Luke 12:6–7) → You are valuable.
- “See what great love the Father has lavished on us... that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1) → You matter.
- Faith is the anchor: science shows neuroplasticity, but God provides the new story.
- “If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Closing With Hope & Offering

Now, some of you may be wondering, 'Where do I start?' That is why we wrote the NeuroFaith® books—not to make money, but to give this hope away.

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You do not have to pay for them. They are not monetized. They are free for you. You can go to my website, JeffreyHansenPhD.com, and download the whole series at no cost. It is my gift, because God gave me a gift I cannot keep to myself.

So take them, share them, and let them be a tool for healing in your families, your churches, and your lives.

Final Punchline

Trauma may write its scars on our bodies, but Christ rewrites our story. Trauma may have stolen years, but Christ restores eternity. We are not defined by our wounds—we are defined by His victory.