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**The "Trauma Coping Inventory" and  
The "Trauma Coping Resource Inventory"**

by

**Michael R. Tramonte, Ed.D., NCSP  
Associate Professor in Education  
Rivier College  
Nashua, New Hampshire 03060  
(603) 897-8487 (Direct)  
(603) 888-1311 #8487 (Switchboard)  
e-mail ([mtramonte@rivier.edu](mailto:mtramonte@rivier.edu))  
fax-(603) 897-8887**

and

**Adjunct Instructor in Psychology  
Middlesex Community College  
Bedford, Massachusetts 01730**

and

**Retired School Psychologist  
Lowell Public Schools  
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

### **Abstract**

**In many instances, actual or threatened traumatic events trigger strong reactions for those individuals experiencing them, witnessing them, or learning about a loved one or friend who experienced an unexpected trauma. In addition, those who help traumatized persons can sometimes develop secondary traumatization. This workshop presenter constructed two inventories to help those individuals who have been traumatized and those who help them. He integrated his professional experiences with information from the literature to create the inventories that can be used as self-inventories or as inventories as part of an interview. The first inventory includes how a person is coping cognitively, emotionally, interpersonally, physically, behaviorally, and spiritually. The second involves how a traumatized person is using and might use practical, physical, psychological, interpersonal, and/or spiritual, coping resources. The purpose of these inventories is to assist the traumatized person and/or the mental health professional to introspect and to determine coping strengths and weaknesses. Six professional references are cited.**

### **➤ COPING WITH TRAUMATIC LOSS - THE TRAUMA COPING INVENTORY**

In reacting to a traumatic experience as a survivor or as a co-victim, how did you cope? Or, if you were not a survivor or co-victim but helped others, how did you cope (i.e., any secondary traumatization)? Read each of the following characteristics and put a check mark under “Yes” if it applied to you and “No” if it did not. The information is cited from Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) and from Rando (1988). The workshop presenter also added some of the characteristics to the partial and overlapping list. This workshop presenter selected and organized the information into the following question format:

#### **▪ HOW DID YOU COPE COGNITIVELY?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ Changed assumptions about the self & world	_____	_____
○ Distrustful	_____	_____
○ Loss Of Safety	_____	_____
○ Lessened power or control	_____	_____
○ Loss Of Independence	_____	_____
○ Decreased self-esteem	_____	_____
○ Blocked intimacy feelings	_____	_____
○ Impaired concentration	_____	_____
○ Impaired decision-making ability	_____	_____
○ Self-blame	_____	_____
○ Flashbacks	_____	_____
○ Nightmares	_____	_____
○ Dissociation (“spacey” feeling)	_____	_____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<input type="radio"/> Lowered self-efficacy	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Confusion	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Worry	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Fear of reoccurrence of the trauma	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Other	_____	_____

• **HOW DID YOU COPE EMOTIONALLY?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<input type="radio"/> Internalized the stress (i.e., depression)	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Externalized the stress (i.e. aggression)	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Fear and anxiety	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Guilt	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Blame	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Anger	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Sadness	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Loss of faith	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Illegitimate, legitimate and/or survivor guilt	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Separation pain, sorrow, and longing	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Disorganization	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Depression and despair	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Diminished self-concern	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Obsession with the trauma	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Sense of vulnerability	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Searching for meaning	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Identification	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Grief spasms	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Shock	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Terror	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Irritability	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Emotional numbing	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Helplessness	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Loss of interest in familiar activities	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Avoidance	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Other	_____	_____

▪ **HOW DID YOU COPE SOCIALLY (INTERPERSONALLY)?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ Restlessness	_____	_____
○ Little or no interest in usual activities	_____	_____
○ Lack of energy and motivation	_____	_____
○ Bored or impatient with others	_____	_____
○ Withdrawal from others	_____	_____
○ Decreased satisfaction	_____	_____
○ Preoccupied with one's grief	_____	_____
○ Fearful about being alone	_____	_____
○ Related to others to avoid thinking of the deceased	_____	_____
○ Distrustful of others	_____	_____
○ Increased relational conflict	_____	_____
○ Reduced relational intimacy	_____	_____
○ Alienation	_____	_____
○ Impaired work performance	_____	_____
○ Impaired school performance	_____	_____
○ Blaming others	_____	_____
○ Other	_____	_____

▪ **HOW DID YOU COPE PHYSICALLY?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ Fought, fled, or froze	_____	_____
○ Fatigue, exhaustion	_____	_____
○ Apathy	_____	_____
○ Lethargy	_____	_____
○ Sleep difficulties	_____	_____
○ Tearfulness and crying	_____	_____
○ Weight loss or weight gain	_____	_____
○ Teeth grinding	_____	_____
○ Nail-biting	_____	_____
○ Feeling that something was stuck in your throat	_____	_____
○ Heart palpitations, trembling, shaking	_____	_____
○ Shortness of breath	_____	_____
○ Dizziness	_____	_____
○ Unsteady feelings	_____	_____
○ Chest pain, pressure, or discomfort	_____	_____
○ Headaches	_____	_____
○ Startle response	_____	_____
○ Hyperarousal	_____	_____
○ Nightmares	_____	_____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ Exaggerated startle response	_____	_____
○ Reduced immune response	_____	_____
○ Vulnerability to illness	_____	_____
○ Other	_____	_____

▪ **HOW DID YOU COPE BEHAVIORALLY?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ Avoidance	_____	_____
○ Social Withdrawal	_____	_____
○ Decreased intimacy and lowered trust in others	_____	_____
○ Aggression	_____	_____
○ Substance abuse	_____	_____
○ Regression	_____	_____
○ Dysfunctional behavior	_____	_____
○ Eating less or more	_____	_____
○ Sleep problems	_____	_____
○ Other	_____	_____

▪ **HOW DID YOU COPE SPIRITUALLY?**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
○ With no spiritual support	_____	_____
○ God had nothing to do with it	_____	_____
○ Lost faith in religion	_____	_____
○ Angry at God or other deity or religion founder	_____	_____
○ Blamed God or other deity or religion founder	_____	_____
○ God will be with me no matter what happens	_____	_____
○ With Psalm 23, "The Lord Is My Shepard"	_____	_____
○ With "The Serenity Prayer"	_____	_____
○ God never allows anything to happen that is more than I can handle	_____	_____
○ God loves me. He has given me this "cross to bear for him"	_____	_____
○ God works in a mysterious way. The trauma is a blessing in disguise	_____	_____
○ The trauma was given to me as a punishment for something I did	_____	_____

➤ **INNER AND OUTER COPING RESOURCES (STRATEGIES) -  
THE TRAUMA COPING RESOURCES' INVENTORY**

In reacting to a traumatic experience as a survivor or as a co-victim, how did you use resources to cope? Or if you were not a survivor or co-victim but helped others, how did you use strategies to cope? Read each of the following resources and respond in two ways: (1) First, insert a check mark under “**Yes**” if the resource were a support for you, and “**No**” if it were not and continue until the six categories are completed; and (2) then, return to the beginning, and put a check mark under “**Future**” next to each specific resource(s) that you hope to use in the future. The information is cited from Rothschild (2000), Drescher & Foy (1995), and the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (retrieved February 2003). Also, the workshop presenter added some strategies to the partial and overlapping list and selected and organized the information into the following format:

	<u><b>Yes</b></u>	<u><b>No</b></u>	<u><b>Future</b></u>
○ <b>Functional/practical resources</b>			
shelter	_____	_____	_____
food/nourishment	_____	_____	_____
water	_____	_____	_____
clothing	_____	_____	_____
sleep	_____	_____	_____
communication with loved ones	_____	_____	_____
○ <b>Physical resources</b>			
health	_____	_____	_____
physical strength and agility	_____	_____	_____
exercise	_____	_____	_____
body awareness	_____	_____	_____
somatic memory	_____	_____	_____
body psychotherapy	_____	_____	_____
medication	_____	_____	_____
○ <b>Psychological resources</b>			
high, intelligence	_____	_____	_____
sense of humor	_____	_____	_____
curiosity	_____	_____	_____
creativity	_____	_____	_____
resiliency	_____	_____	_____
relief at surviving the tragedy	_____	_____	_____
greater self-worth	_____	_____	_____
changes in viewing the future	_____	_____	_____
feelings of ‘growing’ from the experience	_____	_____	_____
dual awareness	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Future</u>
“telling your story”	_____	_____	_____
calming images (attentive oasis activities such as a new hobby)	_____	_____	_____
concrete anchors such as a person, animal, safe place, object, or activity	_____	_____	_____
verbal psychotherapy	_____	_____	_____
debriefings	_____	_____	_____
active coping style	_____	_____	_____
mental health	_____	_____	_____
good self-regulation of emotion	_____	_____	_____
appealing and sociable	_____	_____	_____
positive self-efficacy	_____	_____	_____
positive self-confidence	_____	_____	_____
positive self-esteem	_____	_____	_____
internal locus of control	_____	_____	_____
task-oriented	_____	_____	_____
<b>○ Interpersonal (social) resources</b>			
spouse or partner	_____	_____	_____
living with family member	_____	_____	_____
extended family relations/guidance	_____	_____	_____
connections with other family members			
friends, pets	_____	_____	_____
recollections of significant people from the client’s past	_____	_____	_____
making contact with love ones	_____	_____	_____
access to positive role models	_____	_____	_____
connection with pro-social institutions	_____	_____	_____
altruism (helping and comforting others)	_____	_____	_____
participating in cultural beliefs and rituals	_____	_____	_____
<b>○ Spiritual resources</b>			
belief in a higher power	_____	_____	_____
following a religious figure	_____	_____	_____
adherence to religious practice	_____	_____	_____
regaining a sense of faith, hope, purpose and meaning	_____	_____	_____
spiritual autobiographies	_____	_____	_____
meditation	_____	_____	_____
prayer	_____	_____	_____
guided imagery	_____	_____	_____
yoga	_____	_____	_____
involvement in religious rituals	_____	_____	_____
mind-body disciplines	_____	_____	_____





## **REFERENCES**

- The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine Web site (retrieved February 26, 2003). Coping with trauma. <http://www.acoem.org>
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