How the Loss of a loved one can cause psychological trauma and what occurs during this experience

By: Kaitlyn Burnham
The lasting effects of the trauma

Some lasting effects of trauma include:

I. Depression
II. PTSD
III. Substance Abuse
IV. Anxiety
The Symptoms

Some symptoms of trauma include:

I. Difficulty Sleeping
II. Feeling helpless, guilty, or fearful
III. Feelings of confusion
IV. Behavior changes
V. Mood Swings
Some responses to trauma include:

I. Disassociation
II. Exhaustion
III. Avoidance
IV. Anxiety
Some ways that trauma can affect a child are:

I. Impaired Physical Development
II. Long-term health problems
III. Learning Disabilities
IV. Increased involvement with child welfare.
V. Increased use of mental health and health services.
How one can provide help and comfort during this time

How to provide comfort to those who have experienced this kind of trauma:

I. Let them know that you are there if they ever need someone to turn to.
II. Ask them how they are but don’t push them to answer.
III. Provide a feeling of normalcy and treat them how you normally do.
IV. Help them cope with their feelings instead of allowing them to bury them.
Study on how Trauma can affect a child

- There are many things that children may experience due to trauma such as: increases in suspensions, lower grades and learning disabilities.
  - “Trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders (SAMHSA).”
  - “The signs of traumatic stress may be different in each child. Young children may react differently than older children (SAMHSA).”
Study on Symptoms and Responses

• Most of the time people who experience the trauma of losing a loved one in the aspect of being the one surviving said trauma, they may develop PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder).
  o “Among individuals who survive a trauma that resulted in the loss of a close friend or loved one, symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder can predict complicated grief—a sense of persistent sadness and an inability to cope—years after the trauma, according to research published by the American Psychological Association (APA 2021).”
Study on health being affected

• Health is affected by the trauma due to the amount of grief a person feels. PTSD of the loss gives the possibility of having thoughts of death and isolating oneself.
  - “The interviews included questions about the post-traumatic stress symptoms and complicated grief reactions (e.g., trouble accepting the death of their loved one, interference of grief in their daily life, troubling thoughts relating to death, avoidance of reminders of the loss and feelings of isolation or distance from others (APA 2021).”
Personal Experience with this kind of trauma

• Some personal Experience that I have had with this trauma is when my grandfather had passed away a few years back. We had always been very close, and he was the one grandparent who had helped me throughout the years. His death was life changing for me. I began to isolate myself from everyone and I wasn’t in a very good state of mind. It wasn’t until my mom had put me into therapy that I learned to cope with the emotions that I was feeling.

