

Table Activity

Myths & Misconceptions

The following statements are common myths and misconceptions about trauma and PTSD. Choose a group leader to read them off, and discuss these with your group. Have you heard people say these things before? How could you respond to help others better understand trauma?

- 1) Traumatic events always lead to PTSD.
- 2) Trauma is a one-off horrific event that changes you forever.
- 3) PTSD is only for military veterans or first responders.
- 4) PTSD is a sign of weakness or that someone is “broken.”
- 5) People with PTSD are dangerous.
- 6) PTSD can’t be treated.
- 7) Talking about trauma can make it worse.
- 8) People with PTSD can’t function normally.
- 9) Everyone with PTSD experiences the same symptoms.
- 10) You should avoid “triggers” or situations that remind you of your trauma.
- 11) You should “get over it” or “move on” from your trauma.
- 12) Children don’t get PTSD.
- 13) Children won’t remember trauma that happened when they were very young.
- 14) Trauma has to happen to you directly.
- 15) Trauma changes your brain forever.
- 16) Trauma can cause ADHD and autism. (Note: False! However, children who have ADHD and/or autism, as well as other physical or neurodevelopmental concerns, may be more likely to experience trauma).

Discussion Questions

- 1) What are some things you learned today about trauma? Did anything challenge what you previously believed?
- 2) What are some examples of community trauma you see?
- 3) There are many ways that trauma impacts a person, emotionally and physically - what are examples?
- 4) What are some things you can do to support others around you who have experienced trauma?

- 5) Social support and community are critical to helping people recover from trauma. What can LUMC do to provide a supportive environment? What would it look like to provide trauma-informed care in our congregation?
- 6) This year, western NC was hit hard by Hurricane Helene. Thinking about this and other disasters/community-wide traumatic events, what are things LUMC can do to help?
- 7) What are some ways we can reduce stigma around trauma and mental health concerns?
- 8) How can our faith community better address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in our children and youth programming?