



HOMELESSTRAINING  
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# THE LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO HOMELESSNESS



*Compassionate solutions to  
problematic behaviors*

## Do you want?

- ✓ Fewer problems
- ✓ Fewer police calls
- ✓ More confidence
- ✓ To serve everyone

### STEP 1

## Go one layer deeper

a) Trauma

b) \_\_\_\_\_

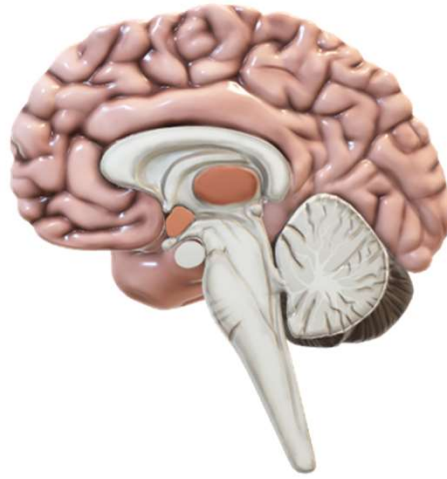
## TRAUMA

Homeless individuals and those in crisis, tend to have experienced a lot of \_\_\_\_\_.

Homeless individuals have experienced far more sexual violence, \_\_\_\_\_ violence, and trauma than the general population.

## Looking at the brain...

Trauma changes the brain.



The **prefrontal cortex**, the part in the front of your brain, is responsible for:

- Decision making
- \_\_\_\_\_ thought
- Mood regulation

The prefrontal cortex is responsible for calm, slow, deep thinking.

The **amygdala**, the acorn-shaped part near the brain stem, is responsible for:

- Fight or flight
- \_\_\_\_\_ memories

The amygdala is responsible for helping you respond to danger.

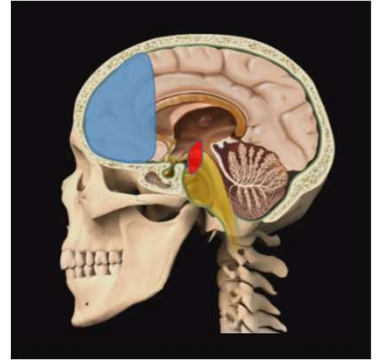
The amygdala also has no capacity for language. It thinks in terms of **action** or **emotion**.

## Effects of Trauma

Trauma changes the brain in two ways:

- Damages prefrontal cortex
- Amygdala becomes \_\_\_\_\_

It's important to know that the amygdala suppresses the prefrontal cortex.



## Consequences of Trauma

Individuals who have experienced a lot of trauma often:

- **Misperceive threat stimuli (overreact)**  
Level 1 (nuisance), Level 5 (problem), or Level 10 (could kill me!)...to be safe, just treat everything as a Level 10!
- **Difficulty “self-regulating emotion”**  
They have a harder time with the monologue that would calm them down (“The stewardess is still passing out peanuts...the plane is probably not going to crash...”)
- \_\_\_\_\_  
They act impulsive in situations where impulsivity is not a good thing.

## TIME

Time is different for those experiencing homelessness (and others in crisis).

We all have different **time horizons**.



**Time Horizon** – How far into the future you think about the world.

For people who are not in crisis, their time horizon is typically how long they expect to live. The time horizon for a person experiencing homelessness is about 24 hours.

## Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Whenever basic needs (food, shelter, protection) are threatened, the brain \_\_\_\_\_ the time horizon to make sure those needs are met.

## Problems with Short Time Horizon

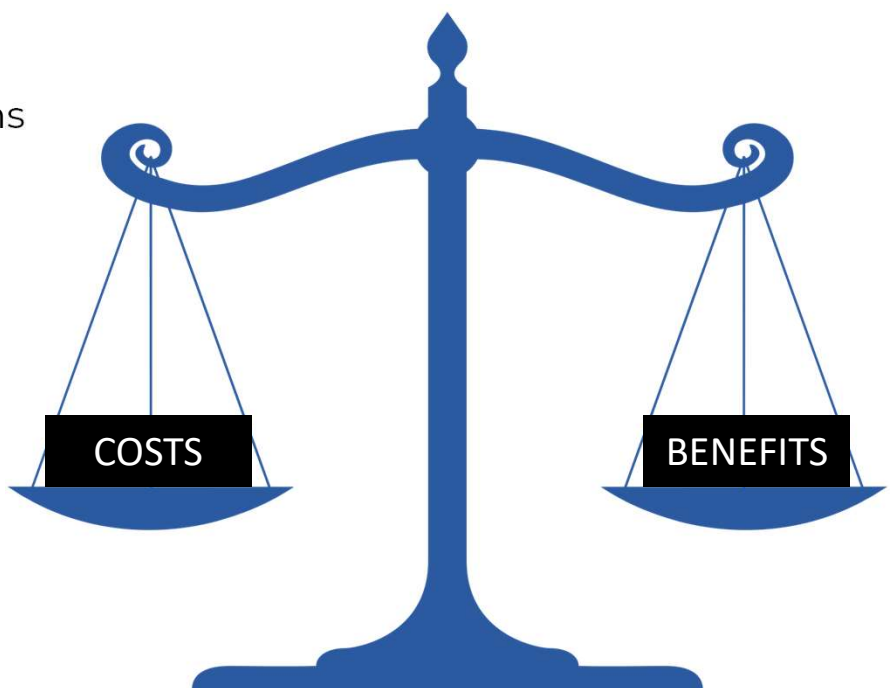
1. Difficulty planning \_\_\_\_\_ time horizon  
*Things you can't do in 24 hours...get a job, resolve a legal issue, get a degree, get an appointment with a psychiatrist, etc.*
2. Any punishment that lasts beyond the time horizon has no additional deterrence effect

## PUNISHMENT

Punishment is based on the idea that the person being punished will do a very rational cost/benefit \_\_\_\_\_.

If the benefits of breaking the rule is great enough, they will break the rule even if there is a consequence.

If the costs (punishment) are too great and outweighs the benefit, they will not break the rules.



## **When punishment DOESN'T work –**

- a) Mental illness
- b) \_\_\_\_\_ abuse
- c) Trauma
- d) Short time horizon
- e) Others...

### **STEP 2**

## **Learn why people follow rules**

*or not!*

## **NEUROCHEMISTRY**



There are 3 good chemicals you want in your customer's brain:

- Serotonin
- Dopamin
- Oxytocin

These chemicals:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ aggression
- 2) Lower impulsivity
- 3) Increase empathy

## Ways to increase serotonin, dopamin, and oxytocin in a person's brain:

- ✓ Handshakes
- ✓ Eye contact
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Predictable ritual
- ✓ Social standing

There is one chemical you DO NOT want in your customer's brain: **Cortisol**

Cortisol increases aggression.

It takes the body \_\_\_\_\_ hours to flush all the cortisol out of your system.



### STEP 3

## Practice Small Changes

### HOW TO STAND

How you stand affects how people react to you.



## The proper way to stand:

- Turn your body \_\_\_\_\_ degrees
  - Imagine 3 people talking
  - Where your shoulders are pointing is where your emotional energy is projecting
- Use for every conversation (not just the tense ones)

## Want to see our full Homeless Training Academy?

The screenshot displays the 'Homeless Library Academy' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for home, login, settings, help, and user profile. Below the header is a search bar and a 'Categories' dropdown. The main content area features a grid of 18 training modules, each with a thumbnail image and a title. The modules are arranged in three rows of six. The titles of the modules are: 'How to Enroll in the Homelessness Training', 'Librarian's Guide to Homelessness (Core Training)', 'Body Odor: The Dreaded Conversation (1 hour)', 'COVID: How to Deal with Problem Behaviors Related to COVID-19', 'Burnout, Vicarious Trauma, & Compassion Fatigue (1 hour)', 'Homelessness 201: A Deeper Understanding (1 hour)', 'Ornery Teenagers: Compassionately and effectively managing their...', 'Unattended Children: How to talk to parents about their children's behavior', 'Getting Hit on by Customers: Women (and men) share their tools for stopping unwanted...', 'Dementia and Alzheimer's: Compassionately and effectively working with...', 'Advanced Body Language (1 hour)', 'Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault (In Libraries)', 'Traumatic Brain Injury: Invisible Cause of Homelessness (1 hour)', 'Fights: How to prevent and stop them (safely)', 'Police: How to reduce police calls and keep everyone safe in your organization', 'Prejudice: How to respond to prejudicial comments from customers', 'Jerks with Homes: How to Deal with Members of the Public Who are Being Jerks About...', and 'Burnout & Stress (Updated): Just in case 2021 is as bad as 2020'.

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(one trial per person per organization)

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your trial today!**