

What is trauma?

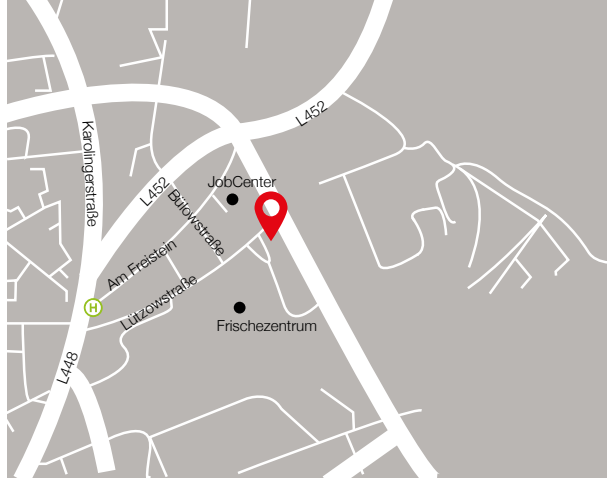
Trauma is a psychological injury. Such injury can be caused by one major or several smaller stressful events. In this situation one often experiences fear of death or a feeling of helplessness. War, violence, natural disasters or the loss of a beloved person can be traumatic and therefore, stressful.

Not everyone feels bad, traumatised or stressed after such events.

But yet things may change after a traumatic event:

- ▶ nightmares, restless sleep
- ▶ anxieties, nervousness
- ▶ constant tension
- ▶ avoiding certain situations or people
- ▶ concentration difficulties

These are normal reactions to the underlying event and happen automatically. You are not alone in this! Find assistance in coping with it!



Lore-Agnes-Haus

Lützowstraße 32, 45141 Essen

Ansprechpartnerin Svenja Reimann

Tel.: 02 01 / 31 05-3, Fax: 02 01 / 31 05-110

handinhand.lore-agnes-haus.de

www.lore-agnes-haus.de

loreshaushaus@awo-niederrhein.de

Arrival by public transport: Line 107 or 108, stop „Am Freistein „

The AWO Counseling Center has been a contact point for questions about sexuality, partnership, pregnancy conflicts and family planning since 1983. We support all people, regardless of their identity, origin and sexual orientation, in shaping their lives in a self-determined way.

As part of the project „Hand in Hand“, funded by Aktion Mensch, we offer trauma-centered counseling for refugee women*.



Beratungszentrum
Lore-Agnes-Haus



Information for people exposed to extreme stresses



Where to find help.

Some people, who have experienced a trauma, think they have gone mad, but this is not true.

These are normal reactions to an extremely stressful and traumatic event!

Sometimes the changes disappear after some weeks, sometimes they only appear after some time E.g. when finding rest and relaxation following a flight. Sometimes these changes last a long time and even get worse. In these cases it is a good idea to seek help. Help can be found at therapists or special counseling centres. Waiting lists can be long, but it is worth waiting. Support can be found here:

Development and trauma aid for refugee children, teenagers and their families:

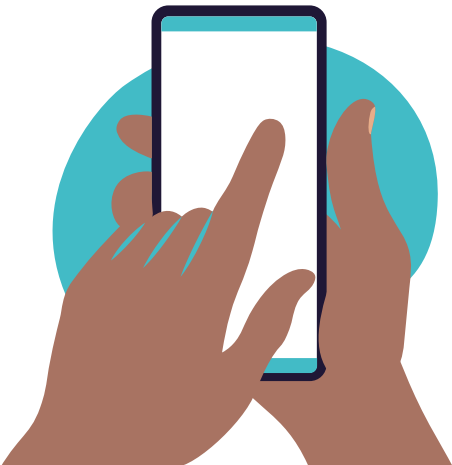
www.eth-traumahilfe.de/

Psychosocial counseling centres for refugees and victims of torture:

www.baff-zentren.org/psychosoziale-zentren/

Psychotherapy practices:

www.psychotherapiesuche.de/



What may help in the meantime:

Not everything in life is under our control. Housing and residence status, for example, cannot be changed easily. Smaller things concerning everyday life can help to feel better and gain back control over one's life. Knowing your strengths will be a boost to your self – confidence.

Some tips and ideas:

Regular exercise and sport:

Sport reduces the level of stress hormones! What kind of exercise do you prefer? How about a brisk walk, jogging or dancing?!

Carrying small tasks individually:

Small successes are a boost to one's self – confidence! Practice by E.g. setting your next doctor's appointment independently.

Contact with other people:

Interchange and contact with others is important. Whom do you trust most? With whom do you like spending time? Is there someone you can meet or phone/skype regularly?

Setting the focus on resources/strengths:

Which activities do you like? How can you integrate them into everyday life? Writing a list with things that helped you in the past, when you were not feeling good, can help. What gave you new courage and strength? How about a chat with a trusted person, a walk or being creative (painting, singing, making music)?!

It is also important **to eat healthy** as well as **to drink and sleep enough.**

What are flashbacks?

External triggers in everyday life can make you think about the traumatic event. These vivid memories are called **flashbacks**. It feels like re – experiencing the traumatic event, even though you are perfectly safe at the moment. It is possible to learn how to cope with flashbacks.

Where to find further information?

Stress management and self – care:

www.be-here-now.eu/

Information and exercises in different languages:

www.refugee-trauma.help/

Treat yourself right!
Comfort and calm yourself,
be gentle and speak lovingly
to yourself!

