



## Trauma

### What is trauma?

Trauma is characterized by the experience of shocking or dangerous events that threaten your safety and/or harm you physically or emotionally. The response to trauma involves an exceptional level of fear, dread, panic and or helplessness.

### How is domestic and sexual violence a trauma?

**Domestic violence involves a pattern of coercive and controlling behavior that is used against you to obtain power and control over you and your life.** The life-threatening struggle to stay safe in a dangerous situation seriously affects how you feel about yourself as well as how you relate to others. Accordingly, the wide range of abusive behavior can make you fearful, powerless, and hopeless.

Traumatic events can often create a lasting impact in your emotions, your thoughts, and your body's stress response and how your body feels. Each person is impacted differently by their experiences with trauma.

People who experience or witness traumatic events may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Following the trauma, most people will have reactions that may include feeling shocked, upset, angry, nervous, afraid, and even guilty. Where these feelings continue and even increase, you may be suffering from PTSD.

### **Further symptoms may include but are not limited to:**

- Anxiety
- Trouble sleeping
- Nightmares,
- Anger
- Depression
- Changes in mood or appetite
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Flashbacks
- Numbness
- Stress
- Feeling sick
- Shame or guilt
- Social isolation
- Hyper-vigilance
- Feeling overwhelmed

**Remember, trauma and abuse are never your fault.** Shamsaha is here to guide you to get the help you deserve in order to heal. Recovering and healing from traumatic experiences is possible and happens often.