

Trauma Chat Episode 10

Disclaimer: This is a verbatim transcript which may contain spelling errors.

[00:00:00] **Laura Reagan:** [00:00:00] Trauma Chat episode 10.

[00:00:03] Hi, it's me Laura. Welcome back to Trauma Chat. Today, I'm going to talk about the window of tolerance. The window of tolerance is the name for a concept that was developed by Dr. Daniel Siegel, and I mentioned him last time. Daniel Siegel is a psychiatrist who's a clinical professor and a teacher to so many people through his work, his books, his trainings, his website, his talks, he speaks to anyone and everyone who will listen about childhood trauma and attachment. The window of tolerance is, is like a zone. When we say window, we're referring to this as a zone, [00:01:00] a zone in which you can tolerate your thoughts, and feelings, and body sensations, and you can function.

[00:01:09] So when you're in your window of tolerance, you may be upset, you may be stressed, anxious, angry, but you're still able to be in relationship with the people in your life. You're still able to do what you normally do during your time, whether you're working during the day, taking care of children. If you're a student, you're able to do that, and function, but when outside of our window of tolerance, either above our window of tolerance, we're in the hyperarousal zone, or if we're below our window of tolerance, we're in the hypoarousal zone.

[00:01:54] These hyper and hypo arousal states relate [00:02:00] to the trauma responses that I talked about earlier in this series, hyperarousal could be feeling panicky, out of control, enraged, overwhelmed, wanting to fight, or wanting to run away. And it's not like you think that you are in a different state, it's just an automatic reaction.

[00:02:29] So those things that I just mentioned, panic attacks, racing thoughts, can't sit still. Those are examples of hyperarousal. Hypoarousal is the other side of that going down into closer to a shutdown state. So hypoarousal is feeling spacey, zoned out, [00:03:00] numb, frozen can't stay awake, bodies trying to shut down, here, but not here, that's hypoarousal.

[00:03:20] So hyperarousal corresponds with fight and flight. Hypoarousal corresponds with the trauma reactions of freeze, submit that I mentioned in episode four. So I've found a great graphic on the National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine Website. That acronym is, I don't know how it's pronounced, but it's NICABM.

[00:03:52] There is an infographic about the window of tolerance, and I'm going to link to [00:04:00] that in this episode's show notes, because I think it's, and people tell me this a lot, that it can be really helpful to see an image to help you understand the window of tolerance concept. And the reason why understanding about the window of tolerance is valuable is that if you can sense when you are within your window of tolerance or when you were out of your window of tolerance, then you will have more of a, an ability to become aware of your trauma and attachment symptoms. And ultimately the more you can become aware of them, then you have the opportunity to address them and heal whatever needs to be healed. If you don't even know it's happening, then you've got less to work with.

[00:04:57] That's all for now. I hope you found this [00:05:00] brief episode on the window of tolerance to be useful. And next time I'll be talking about Polyvagal Theory. Thanks so much for listening.

[00:05:10] I really appreciate you. And if you like the show, I would be so grateful if you would go to iTunes and leave a rating and review, I'll put a link in the show notes to make it easy for you to go over there and leave a rating and review.

[00:05:27] Thanks! Talk to you soon.