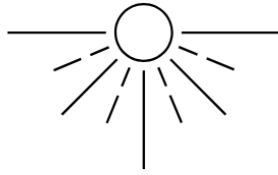


THE HOLISTIC COUNSELOR PODCAST



A LEARNING & REFLECTION GUIDE

Understanding ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences

READ / LISTEN / REFLECT

Diana S. Rice

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FROM THE MIC TO THE COMMUNITY

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Begin where you are.

The experiences we have growing up can shape us in important ways. So can the people, relationships, and opportunities that support us. Both belong in a conversation about childhood adversity.

Listen alongside this guide

Conversations from The Holistic Counselor Podcast to explore with these pages.

EPISODE 4

Childhood adversity and complex trauma

Explore the connection between childhood adversity and mental health.

[Listen or read the transcript](#)

EPISODE 79

Learning and family support with Meiby Nodarse

Hear about trauma-informed support for children and families.

[Listen or read the transcript](#)

IN THESE PAGES

Understanding the topic / Make room for your questions / Keep learning. Find support.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Understanding the topic

What counts as childhood adversity?

These are potentially traumatic experiences before age 18, such as abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence. Research also considers conditions that can undermine safety and stability.

A score has limits

A count of these experiences does not capture every kind of harm, its intensity, your strengths, or the people who helped you. It is not a diagnosis and cannot predict one person's future. You do not need to calculate or share a score to use this guide.

Protection matters too

Safe, stable relationships and supportive environments can help prevent adversity and support well-being. Prevention includes community resources and practical support for families, not simply asking a child to become more resilient.

Research and perspective

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention research links childhood adversity with higher risks across groups of people. A group-level risk is not a personal destiny. Protective factors and access to care belong in the conversation.

Does an ACE score tell me what will happen to me?

An ACE score does not determine a person's future or capture the full context of a life. These studies describe patterns across groups. Supportive relationships, current circumstances, strengths, and access to care also matter. Your present needs can guide a conversation about support without calculating a score.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Make room for your questions

Choose a question that feels useful today. A few notes in your own words can be enough. Your reflections stay with you; this website does not collect them.

Type in the spaces below, or print and write by hand.

Who or what offered me support while growing up?

What do I want more of in my life now: safety, steadiness, connection, or something else?

What support might help a child or family in my community?

Questions for a conversation

How will you use information about my childhood?

Can we focus on current needs before discussing difficult memories?

What family or community resources could help?

Name one supportive relationship or resource you would like to strengthen. Leave out any details you do not want to revisit.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Keep learning. Find support.

Sources and further reading

Editorial revision: October 13, 2026. The linked authorities provide current rules, services, and evidence.

[1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Preventing adverse childhood experiences](#)

[2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Risk and protective factors](#)

Wherever you are reading from, your culture, language, beliefs, access needs, and daily circumstances belong in the conversation. Professional titles and services vary between countries. Sources and directories identify their own regions; a local health service or professional regulator can explain the options where you live.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

These guides offer general education for adults. They do not provide personal therapy, diagnosis, medical advice, or a professional relationship with Diana. A qualified professional who can practice where you live can help you apply information to your circumstances. Changes to prescribed care belong in a conversation with your treating professional.

[Read the full educational disclaimer](#)

FROM THE MIC TO THE COMMUNITY

Keep exploring.



Read, listen, and return
at your own pace.

Scan for this guide and its episode links.

theholisticcounselor.com/resources

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IF YOU NEED URGENT SUPPORT

If you need urgent emotional support in the U.S. or its territories, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers phone, text, and chat support. For immediate danger or a medical emergency, use your local emergency number (911 in the U.S.). Elsewhere, contact a crisis service in your country. The podcast and its messages are not monitored for urgent care.

988lifeline.org/chat/

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