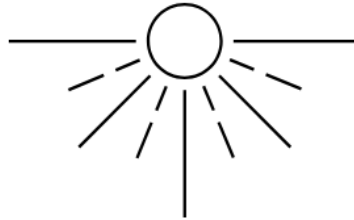




THE HOLISTIC COUNSELOR PODCAST



From the Mic to the Community

What is cPTSD?

Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Understand complex trauma symptoms without turning a guide into a diagnosis.



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LEARN · REFLECT · FIND SUPPORT

[THEHOLISTICCOUNSELOR.COM/RESOURCE](https://theholisticcounselor.com/resource)

A little clarity.

Understand the topic. Find words for your questions.

Maybe you recognize the feeling of always being on guard, or find it hard to trust people even when you want connection. A name can open a helpful conversation. It cannot tell your whole story.

1 What the term means

Complex post-traumatic stress disorder includes symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and other lasting problems. These can include trouble managing emotions, a deeply negative view of oneself, and problems in relationships. It can follow repeated or prolonged trauma. A history of trauma alone does not mean someone has this condition.

2 Why professionals may use different words

The World Health Organization lists it as a diagnosis in the ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision). It is not listed on its own in the DSM-5-TR (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision). These are two systems clinicians use to name mental health conditions.

3 Support begins with your needs

An assessment can explore symptoms, current safety, strengths, and other possible explanations. You should not have to prove your pain with a trauma score or disclose every detail to begin asking for care.

Research & perspective

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs explains that the two trauma diagnoses overlap, but the manuals group them differently. Care should follow a qualified assessment, not a social media checklist.

General education for adults. This is not therapy, diagnosis, or an individual treatment plan. Sources and helpful links are on page 4.

Let's pause and reflect.

Your answers can stay private. Take this at your own pace.

Choose one question or explore all three. Skip anything that feels like too much. You do not need to revisit painful details to use this guide.

1 Which present-day difficulties would I like support with?

2 What helps me feel more settled or connected?

3 What would I need a therapist to understand about pacing?

Optional faith reflection

Is there a trusted person who can hold both my faith and my questions with care?

One next step

Ask a licensed clinician about an assessment. You can describe current problems without starting with detailed accounts of the past.

If reflection brings up too much, pause. Reach out to someone you trust or a qualified professional. You do not have to do all of this today.

Continue the conversation.

Bring your questions. Learn more. Reach for support.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A PROFESSIONAL

- ☐ What training do you have in complex trauma?
- ☐ How do you assess post-traumatic stress disorder and related concerns?
- ☐ How will we plan for times when I feel overwhelmed?

Listen with curiosity

[Episode 4 - Diana discusses childhood adversity and complex trauma; use the source links for diagnostic distinctions.](#)

[Episode 118 - Lynn Kearney discusses Internal Family Systems, complex trauma, and faith.](#)

Selected conversations are starting points, not an exhaustive list or treatment recommendations. Guests share their own perspectives.

Sources & useful resources

[U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for post-traumatic stress disorder: Complex post-traumatic stress disorder](#)

Confirm services, credentials, location eligibility, and fees directly. Linked organizations operate independently.

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United States and territories: the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline supports people in emotional distress or a suicidal crisis. [Call 988](#) · [Text 988](#) · [Chat online](#)

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