

EXERCISE 6

Trauma Family Tree

- Step 1:** Start by mapping out your family tree, with you in the middle and noting partner/spouse, children, parents, grandparents, and extended family if appropriate and desired.
- Step 2:** Indicate the level of connection between you and each family member. A solid line indicates a connection. A double solid line indicates closeness in the relationship. A dashed line indicates a relationship that is now distant such as divorce, separation, or estrangement. A broken line indicates no relationship of any kind. See the key included on the following page for reference.
- Step 3:** Write down key facts that you are aware of about each person next to their name. Note things like age, occupation, mental health history, substance use history, abuse history, and fighting style.
- Step 4:** What trends do you see, if any, related to the key factors listed above? Is there a theme of helping professionals in the family? A string of divorces? A common fighting style of yelling or avoiding? Is there mental health present, like anxiety or depression, found in multiple generations? Abuse cycles from grandparent to parent to child? Estrangement in multiple relationships or generations within the family tree?
- Step 5:** Further notice what emotions and sensations arise for you as you look at your family tree. What emotions do you feel? What clarity can this exercise bring you at this stage in your life? What cycles or patterns do you wish to break in your generation or your children's generation?

FAMILY GENOGRAM DRAWING

