

## Brain Fog After Trauma

Today's podcast is about brain fog after trauma.

When a person dies, their surviving loved ones often go through something called "grief brain." Grief brain is that brain fog that happens after losing someone you love. It happens because the grief is fresh & new so you haven't had time to adapt to it. It also happens because you're trying to figure out how to adapt to this "new normal" of life without your deceased loved one, & that is difficult to do.

The brain likes certainty so it can predict what is going to happen. Going through your daily routine is comfortable. You know what is going to happen. Little surprises can create a bit of anxiety but seldom anything terrible. Bigger surprises such as the sudden death of a loved one, creates a great deal more anxiety. Suddenly the brain has to work much harder to figure out what is happening. It focuses on what is wrong & how to fix this situation. With resources focused on the situation, the brain has much less resources available to focus on other things.

This brain fog, or grief brain, after someone dies is a perfectly normal part of the grief process. Not that it feels normal at the time, but it is. It also doesn't last forever, thankfully!

Losing someone you love isn't the only situation that can cause such a brain fog. Trauma can cause it. Repeated trauma definitely can cause it.

Trauma damages the brain, it's a well known fact. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder & Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorders are in fact less mental illness & more brain injuries due to traumatic experience. Brain damage from trauma as well as the brain trying to adapt to life after trauma definitely create a brain fog. That fog can be one of the most frustrating parts of having C-PTSD or PTSD.

I've had symptoms of C-PTSD ever since I can remember, but they developed fully in 2012. One of the last symptoms to develop for me is this brain fog. And, it got worse after suffering brain damage from carbon monoxide poisoning. I've spend a lot of time frustrated with it, but I have learned some ways to cope.

**Naturally prayer is a constant.** I ask God to help me however I need, & He listens when I get frustrated about forgetting something or can't focus. He is so helpful! Even simply offering comfort is a huge help sometimes.

**I also try to accept it for what it is.** I wouldn't get mad at my body if I had cancer & became disabled because of it. How can I get mad at my brain for not working right after all it's been through?

**I firmly believe in hoping for the best while preparing for the worst.** I hope & pray things improve, but if they don't, I have ways to cope. Brain injury of any sort is very

unpredictable & also very unique to each person. You just don't know what the brain will do. Cope with your symptoms as best you can while hoping & praying they improve.

**Use technology.** I love Google Keep for notes & to do lists. I also love Google Calendar for helping me keep track of appointments & dates bills are due.

**Writing is very useful tool, too.** I don't mean writing books. I mean writing in general. Keeping a journal is helpful for documenting your life as well as coping with your emotions. Writing to do lists rather than using Keep like me can be helpful because the act of writing things down can help the brain to remember them easier.

**Spending time being creative is helpful, too.** Draw, paint, work with clay, cross stitch, take up woodworking.. whatever you decide to do isn't important. Making something with your own two hands is all that matters. It helps exercise the brain by making you think of how to make whatever you're trying to make & is incredibly rewarding when you see the fruits of your labor.

You can cope with brain fog!

Thank you for listening to my podcast!