

THAT
sassy.
THING

Vocabulary Handbook

Healing from Sexual Trauma

with **Neha Bhat**

THAT SASSY THING

Now that you've experienced this Masterclass, here's a handy guide that you can use to revisit some of the language used by the educator. We have simplified a few terms, concepts, and techniques you must have learned during your journey with this Masterclass. You'll also find some relevant reads to further your understanding of healing.

Explore your own sexual wellness journey with **That Sassy Thing**.

THAT SASSY THING



Box Breathing

Verb

A simple, efficient, and impactful relaxation technique, **box breathing** helps return one's breathing to its natural rhythm after a traumatic, triggering, or stressful experience. It additionally provides a lot of benefits such as clarity of mind, physical and muscular relaxation, and improved attention and concentration.

THAT SASSY THING



Conflict Style

Noun

We each have our unique ways of navigating conflicts or disagreements. This characteristic way of handling interpersonal conflicts is known as a **conflict style**. Our conflict styles may evolve, or change across people and situations. Many researchers have worked on establishing different theories of conflict management and styles.

THAT SASSY THING



Dissociation

Verb

In our everyday life, the mind tries to escape or run away from stressful situations. This coping mechanism which is known as **dissociation** is a rather normal and common response to stress-provoking incidents such as traumatic experiences. In the context of trauma therapy, **dissociation** can manifest in different ways and impact the survivor's healing journey.

Seeking professional help from a credible trauma-informed mental health practitioner (MHP) is highly advisable.



Emotional Knots

Noun

Unresolved issues from the past often result in emotional entanglements or wounds commonly known as **emotional knots**. These knots hinder healthy healing by interfering with your reactions in the present.

THAT SASSY THING



Emotional Safety & Regulation

Noun

Emotional safety refers to our ability to feel secure, especially in relationships, and to be able to authentically express our true emotions.

Emotional regulation, thus involves strengthening and recognizing all our emotions (including negative ones), and managing them effectively.

THAT SASSY THING



Grounding

Verb

Grounding is an important self-soothing technique or skill that helps in pulling away from painful flashbacks or intrusive thoughts and returning to the present moment at a given time, in the here and now. There are various ways of grounding oneself in an anxiety-provoking situation, a few of which have been briefly touched upon in Module 1.

THAT SASSY THING



Intergenerational Trauma

Noun

Oftentimes, especially in the case of Indian households, there occurs a transmission/passing on of the effects or consequences of trauma from the previous generations to the newer ones. If a parent has experienced abuse growing up, their behavioral responses to trauma may also be adapted by their child which may show up as they grow older. This vicious cycle is what is referred to as **intergenerational trauma**.

THAT SASSY THING



Oppressive Socialization

Noun

We live in a society that largely shapes our individual and collective conscience of identity, sexuality, and relationships. This cycle of socialization is what helps us understand societal expectations concerning say, gender roles, and the consequence of social oppression. Hence, **oppressive socialization** is the process by which people develop an idea of the oppressive socio-political/systemic forces that govern their perceptions of their own social identity and that of others, power structures, and relative access to opportunities. In the context of healing, this concept helps us understand different nuances of sexual trauma such as power dynamics in a relationship, age of consent, ability to navigate touch, freedom to express when touch has been uncomfortable, and so on.

THAT SASSY THING



Repression

Verb

It is a widely discussed and known coping mechanism that may occur as a conscious or unconscious blocking of a traumatic event or memories thereof from the conscious mind.

Repression often leads to disconnection from the feelings associated with the said event.

THAT SASSY THING



Sexual Shame

Noun

When we're feeling bad or wrong about our sexual needs, desires, preferences, fantasies, and pleasures due to societal conditioning or feelings of disconnect with ourselves as a result of trauma, what we're experiencing is termed **sexual shame**.



Shadow Work

Noun

Shadow work is a therapeutic modality that refers to working with an MHP to uncover and bring back repressed feelings, thoughts, memories, or parts of one's personality from the unconscious to the conscious mind.



Trauma Response

Noun

In a given situation of extreme distress, danger, or violation, we may elicit different forms of reactions (both psychological and physiological) that are known as **trauma responses**. You may refer to module 4 to unpack the different types of trauma responses in detail.

Suggested Readings

Module 2

Wired for Love by Dr. Stan Tatkin

Module 4

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathways to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem

Module 4

The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk

Module 4

Trauma and Recovery by Judith Lewis Herman

Additional Resources

Here's an extensive list of resources as compiled and shared by our educator and therapist, Neha Bhat.

[Click Here](#)

THAT
sassy.
THING