

Reflecting on My Journey: Trauma, Mental Health, and Growth in a Hostile Environment

Philomène Uwamaliya

Senior Lecturer & Field Lead - Mental Health Nursing
School of Nursing, Public and Allied Health

Liverpool John Moore University

P.Uwamaliya@lmu.ac.uk



Outline

- 1. Identity beyond survival:** Who I am and my story
- 2. Life before trauma:** Family, safety, and what was lost
- 3. 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda:** Trauma without time to grieve
- 4. Asylum, uncertainty, and survival mode:** Why grief was delayed
- 5. Motherhood and intergenerational trauma:** How unprocessed loss travels
- 6. Treatment and delayed grieving:** When mourning became possible
- 7. Growth, meaning, and professional purpose:** Healing through integration
- 8. Racism and re-traumatisation:** Trauma echoes in hostile environments
- 9. Key implications for mental health:** Why systems matter



1. Identity beyond survival: Who I am and my story

- ❖ Survivor of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.
- ❖ Seeking sanctuary: Refugee turned Citizen.
- ❖ Daughter, Mother, Grandmother, Registered Mental Health Nurse, and Academic.
- ❖ Advocate for the health and wellbeing of refugees and migrants.
- ❖ Volunteer.



2. Life before trauma: Family, safety, and what was lost



- ❖ Life before the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. violence
- ❖ Family, routine, cultural grounding
- ❖ Sense of safety and belonging

3. 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda: Trauma without time to grieve: Trauma without time to grieve



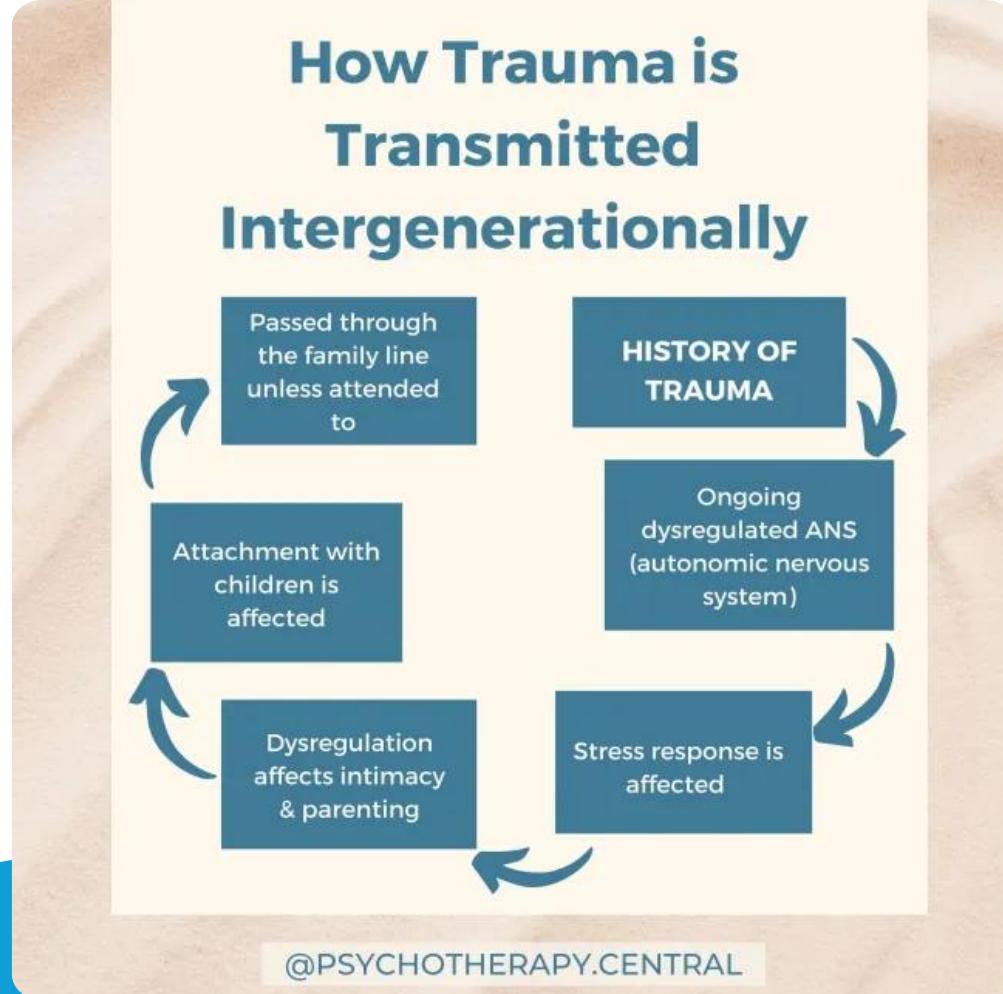
Trauma That Changed Everything

4. Asylum, uncertainty, and survival mode: Why grief was delayed

- ❖ Granted asylum
- ❖ Mother's application delayed 5 years
- ❖ Prolonged uncertainty
- ❖ Trauma does not pause at borders



5. Motherhood and intergenerational trauma



- ❖ Parenting with unresolved trauma
- ❖ Fear, overprotection, responsibility
- ❖ Trauma transmitted through what is unspoken

6. Treatment and delayed grieving: When mourning became possible

- ❖ Accessing mental health treatment
- ❖ Being believed and validated
- ❖ Safety to feel
- ❖ Delayed grief emerging



7. Growth, meaning, and professional purpose: Healing through integration

Post-traumatic growth

Integration of loss

Career in mental health nursing

Turning pain into purpose

8. Racism and re-traumatisation: Trauma echoes in hostile environments



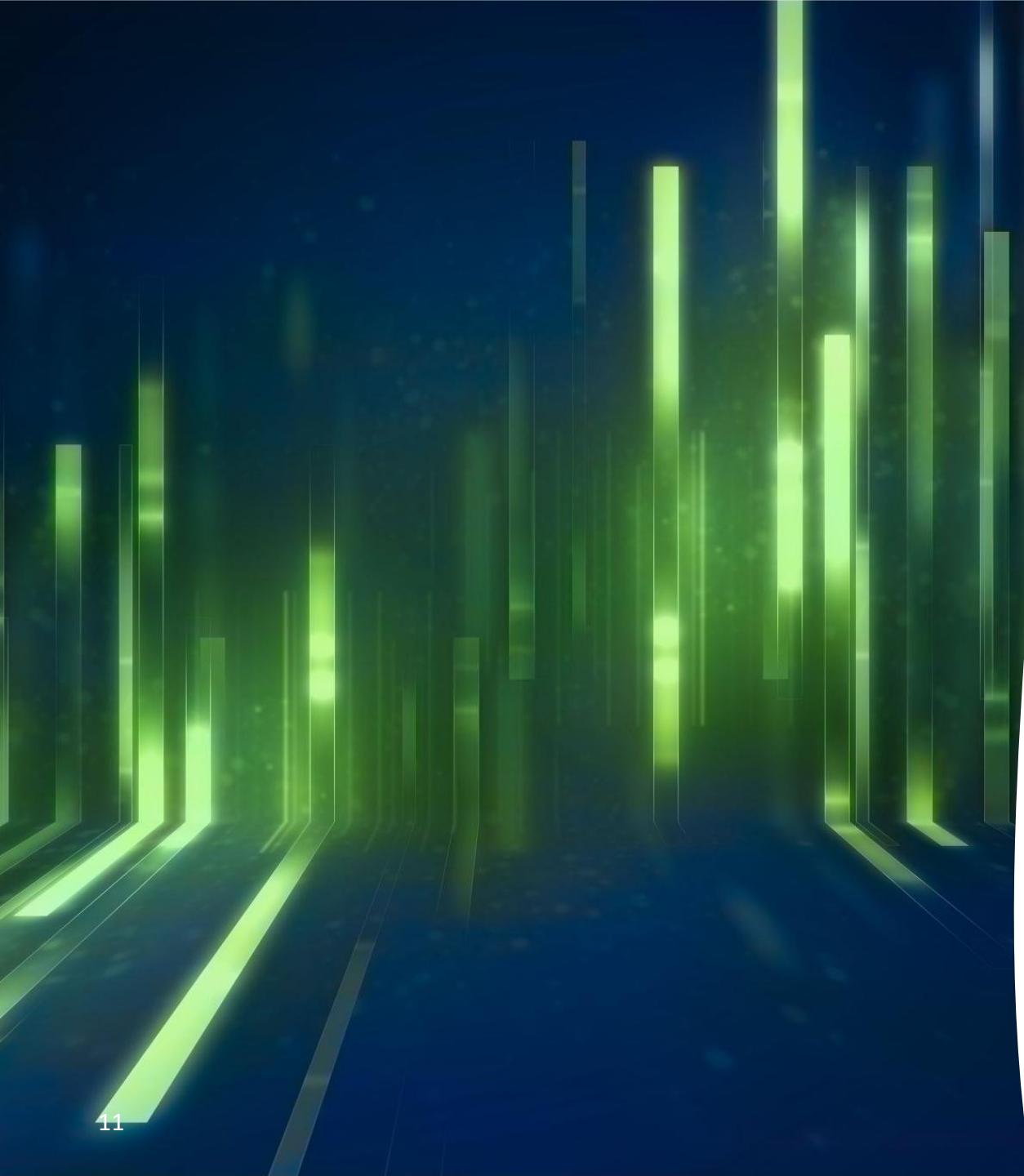
Racism as ongoing threat



Trauma reactivation



Relapse as grief breaking through



9. Key implications for mental health: Why systems matter

Delayed grief is valid and expected after genocide

Hostile systems delay healing

Trauma-informed care must recognise late-emerging grief

Mental health care is a human right

Trauma-informed systems are essential

Thank you for listening.

Further details about my work and ongoing contributions are available via the link below.

[Philomene Uwamaliya | Publications | LJMU profiles](#)

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