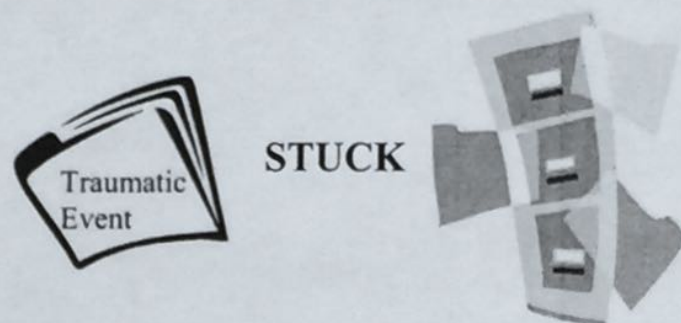


## Stuck Points—What Are They?

Throughout the rest of therapy we will be talking about stuck points and helping you to identify what yours are. Basically, stuck points are conflicting beliefs or strong negative beliefs that create unpleasant emotions and problematic or unhealthy behavior. Stuck points can be formed in a couple of different ways:

### 1. Stuck points may be conflicts between prior beliefs and beliefs after a traumatic experience.



#### Prior Belief

I am able to protect myself in dangerous situations.

#### Harmed During Military Service

I was harmed during my military service, and I am to blame.

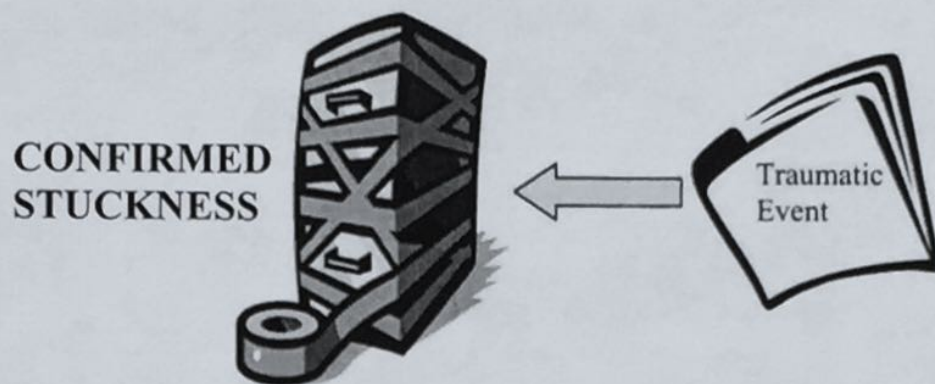
#### Results

- If you cannot change your previous beliefs to accept what happened to you (i.e., it is possible that I cannot protect myself in all situations), you may find yourself saying, “I deserved it because of my actions or inactions. I am responsible for what happened.”
- If you are questioning your role in the situation, you may be making sense of it by saying, “I misinterpreted what happened...I didn't make myself clear...I acted inappropriately...I must be crazy, or I must have done something to have caused it...”
- If you are stuck here, it may take some time until you are able to get your feelings out about the trauma.

#### Goal

- To help you change the prior belief to “You may *not* be able to protect yourself in all situations.” When you are able to do this, you are able to accept that it happened and move on from there.

2. Stuck points may also be formed if you have prior negative beliefs that seem to be confirmed or are reinforced by the event.



Prior Belief

Authority is not to be trusted.

Harmed During Military Service

I was harmed during my military service, and because of leadership.

Results

- If you see the trauma as further proof that authority (i.e., leadership) is not to be trusted, you believe this even more strongly.
- If you are stuck here, you may have strong emotional reactions that interfere with your ability to have successful relationships with authority. It may feel “safe” for you to assume all authority is untrustworthy, but this belief may keep you distressed, negatively impact your relationships, and possibly lead to legal, work, and social problems.

Goal

- To help you modify your beliefs so they are not so extreme. For example, “*Some* authority figures can be trusted in *some* ways and to *some* extent.”