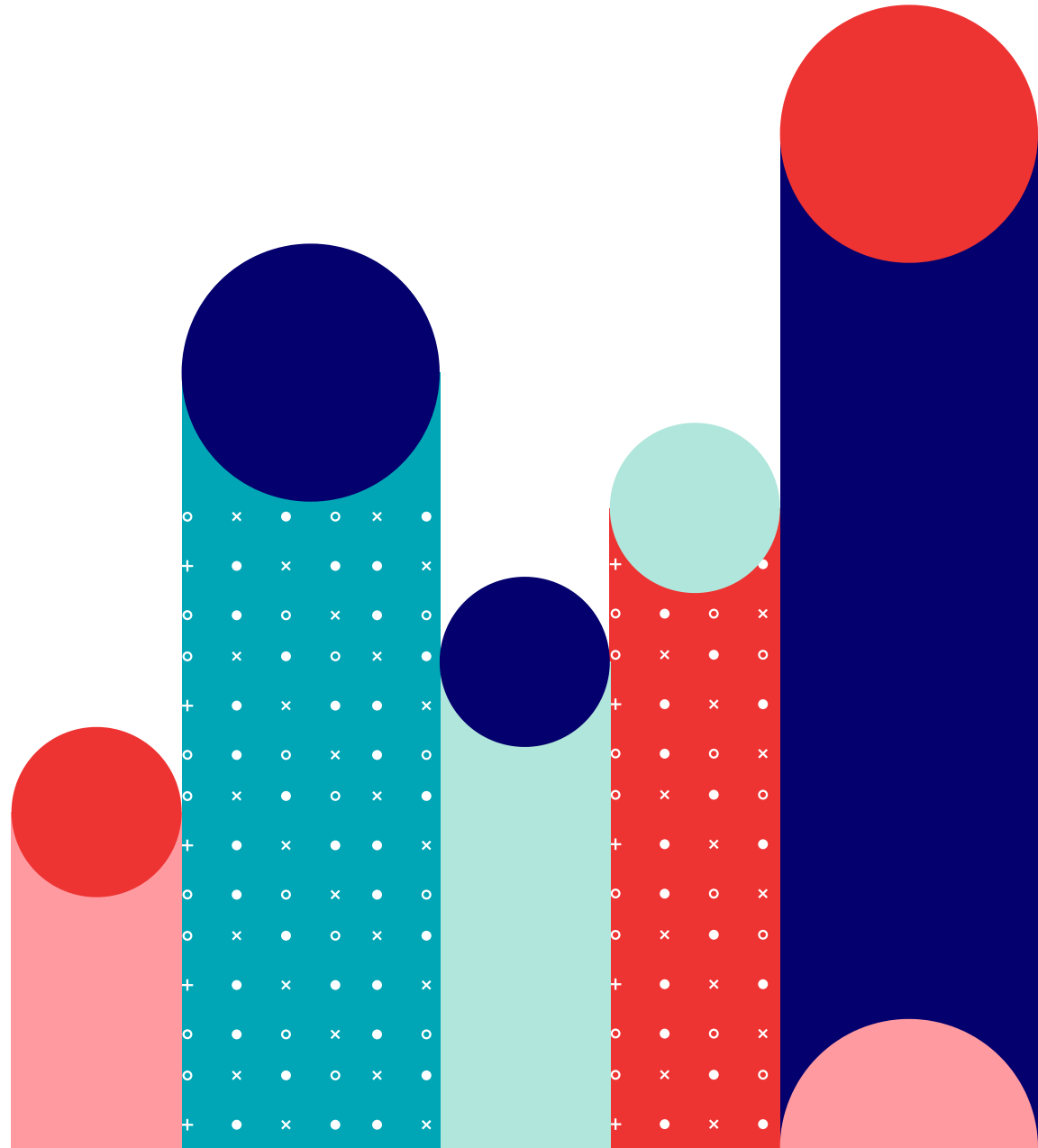


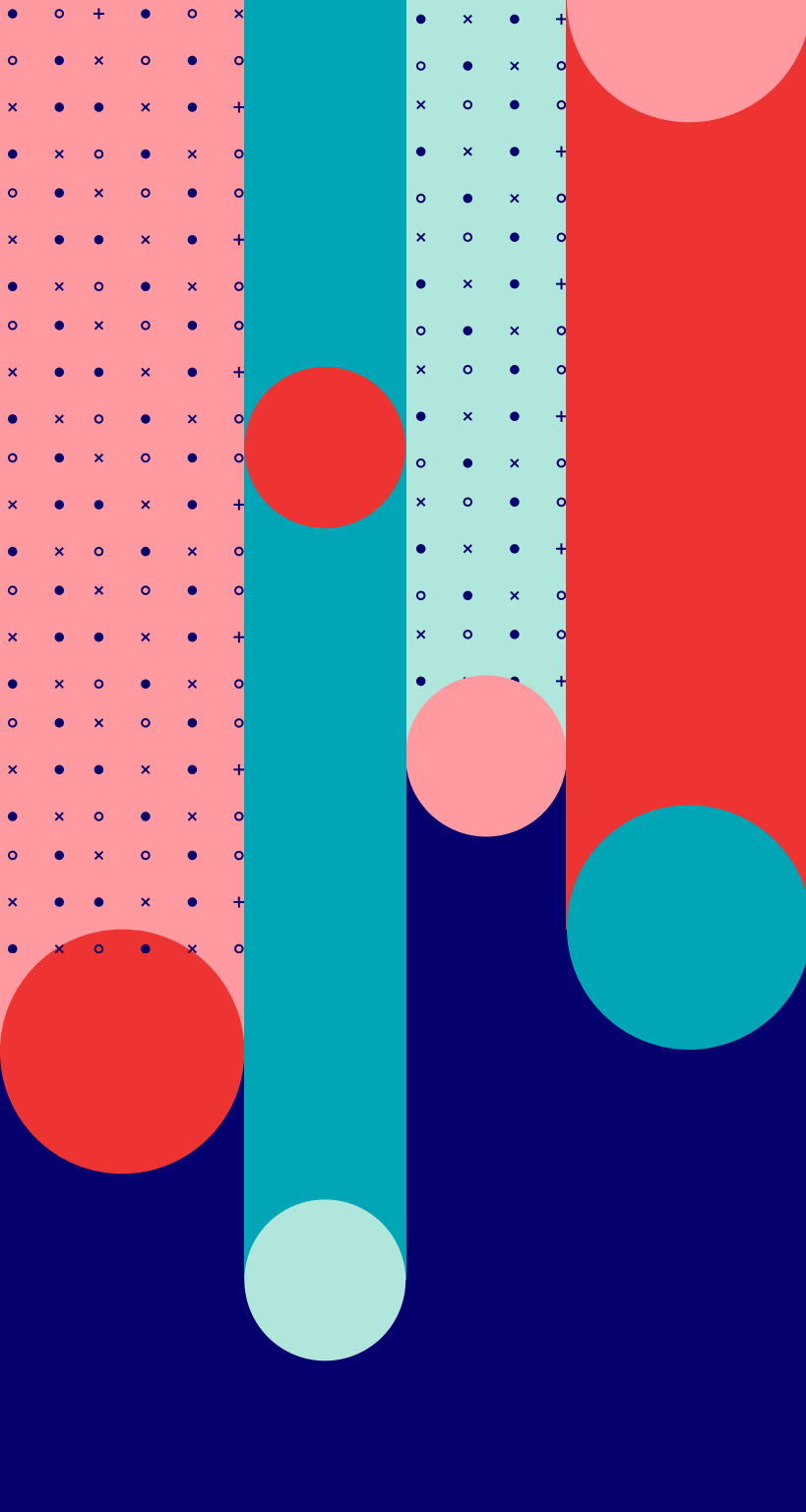
Generational Trauma

And Your Family



**Did you know
trauma can
time-travel?**





Yep, that's right. A traumatic event can be passed down like an heirloom generation to generation.

It's called:

Generational Trauma

So what exactly is Generational Trauma?

- 1 Generational trauma is a phenomenon first observed in Holocaust survivors and their children during the 50's and 60's. However it existed far before these events.
- 2 It happens when one member of the family experiences a life altering trauma but doesn't properly deal with it. Leaving successive generations of their family to wrestle with a trauma that wasn't theirs to begin with.

How is Generational Trauma Passed Down?

Generational Trauma has been hypothesized to pass down in a variety of ways

- 1 Epigenetics - changes to genes caused by biological stress.
- 2 Emotionally toxic parenting (parental trauma).
- 3 Societal events and systems that carry on the trauma

Epigenetic Transmission

Multiple studies have been done in mammals that show stress can cause metabolic changes in a creature's genome that can be passed through several generations:

In animals, exposure to stress, cold, or high-fat diets has been shown to trigger metabolic changes in later generations. And small studies in humans exposed to traumatic conditions—among them the children of Holocaust survivors—suggest subtle biological and health changes in their children.

-Andrew Curry for Sciencemag.org

Parental Trauma

Parents who grew up with their parent's issues can retraumatize their own children through

1

Emotionally
Unstable
(Toxic)
Parenting

2

Abandonment
(Emotional and
Physical)

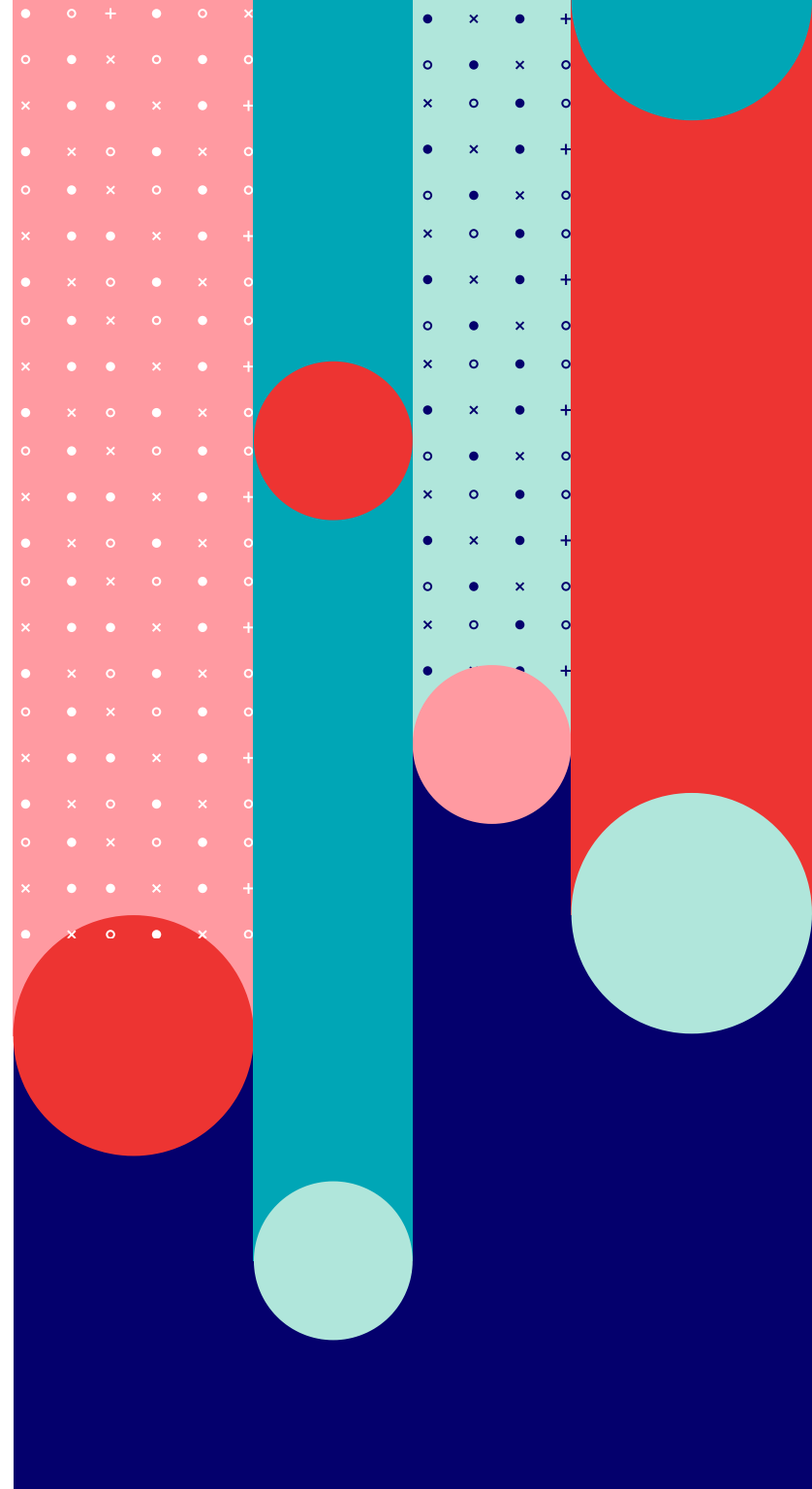
3

Biased World
Views ("The
World is
Against Us")

Societal Sources of Generational Trauma

Continued societal reminders of trauma (i.e. systemic racism) can create fear and uncertainty for future generations

Major historical events like 9/11 and the recession of 2008 also perpetuate generational trauma





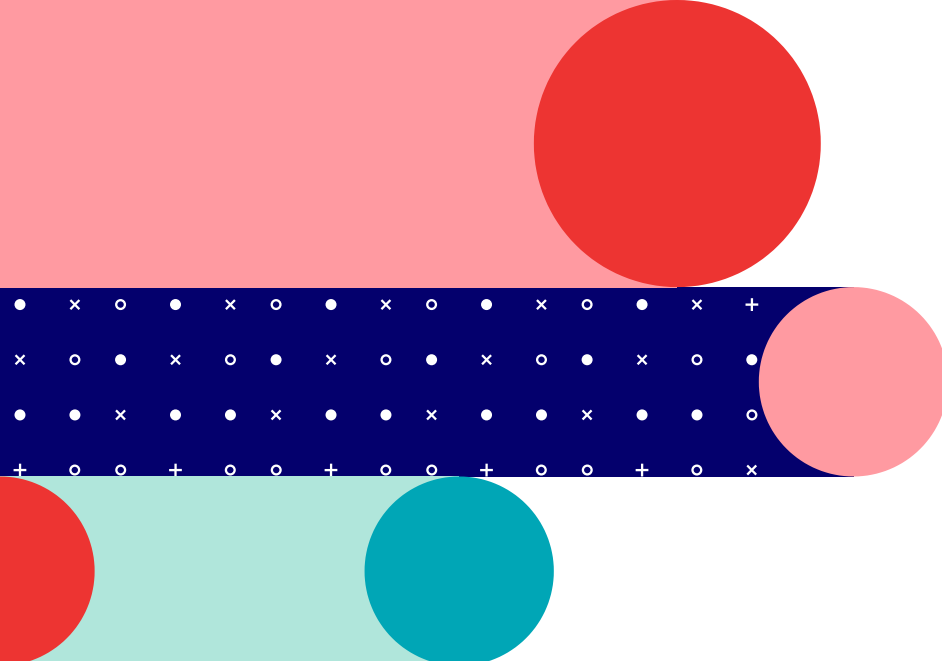
Could Your Family Be Affected by Generational Trauma?

There are a few hallmarks of generational trauma:

- Addiction issues present in multiple family members
- Mental Health issues present in multiple family members
- A family culture of secrecy and denial
- Familial patterns of abandonment (emotionally and physically)

**Any family can
be affected by
generational
trauma. Any
time.**

However, some families
are more likely to be
affected than others...,



Families more likely to be affected by Generational Trauma:

1

Families whose members have been through traumatic historical events such as: the Holocaust, The Great Depression, The Trail of Tears, Slavery, War etc.

2

Families who have experienced historical or ongoing oppression due to race, class, age, religion, gender or orientation

3

Families that historically or currently have experienced extreme poverty

Questions to Ask Yourself:

If you think your family may be affected by generational trauma - ask yourself these questions. The answers can tell you a lot about yourself.

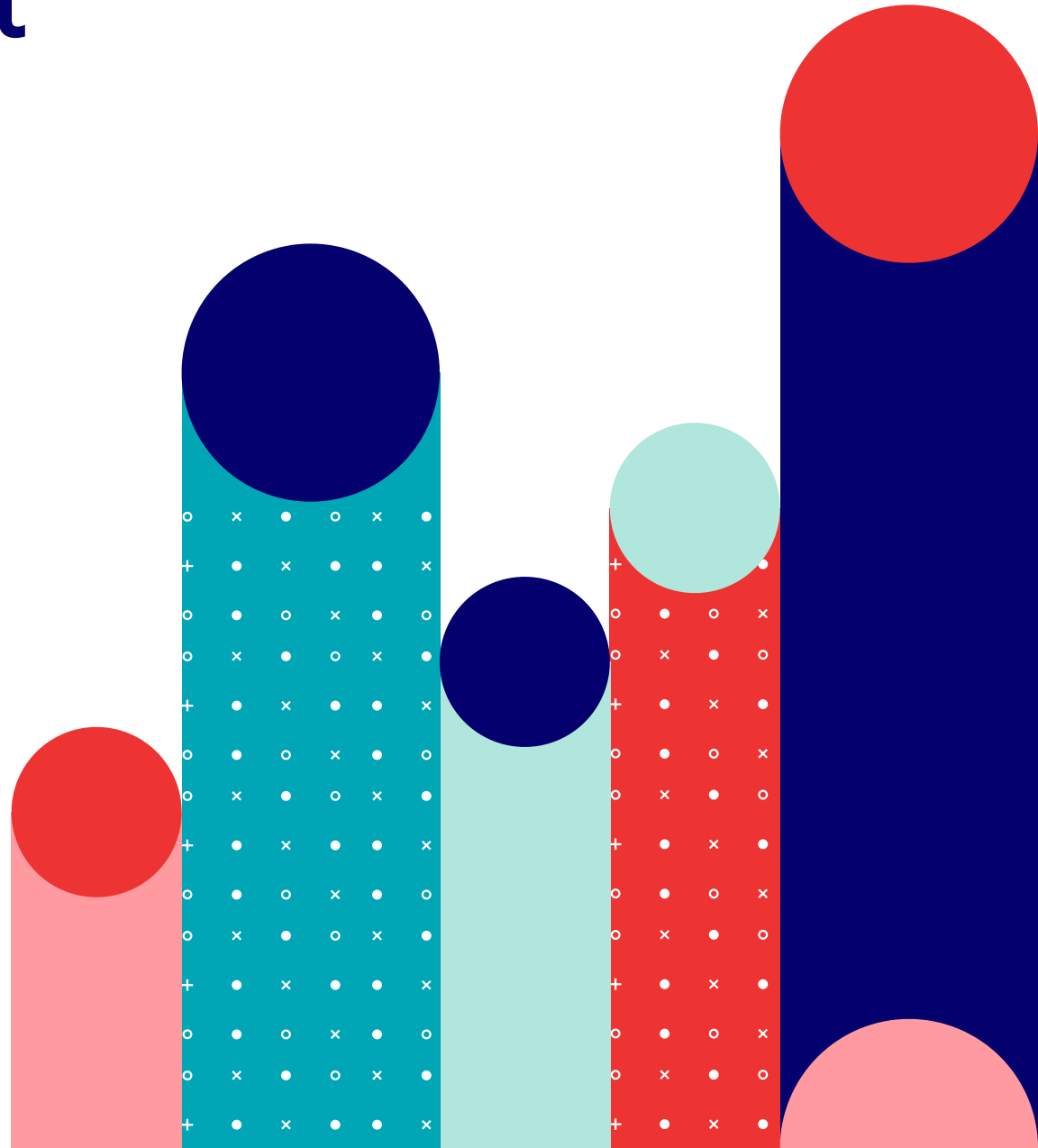
- 1 What emotional patterns/coping mechanisms does my family participate in? Are they negative or positive?
- 2 What life changing cultural events did my ancestors go through?
- 3 How did my parents and *their* parents get along?
- 4 Could it be possible my family is handing down things that might be unhelpful?

And perhaps the most important question of all:

Which negative patterns can I change moving forward with my own family?

You have the power to end the cycle of Generational Trauma by making the choice not to continue harmful behaviors.

What patterns can you get rid of to help future generations?



Resources

- <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/07/parents-emotional-trauma-may-change-their-children-s-biology-studies-mice-show-how>
- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14616739900134041>
- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1471-244X-12-134>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgenerational_trauma
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6720013/>