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In the early 1980s, I began noticing—in both my private practice and in the emergency services of Greenwich Hospital—increasing numbers of patients who exhibited the profound effects of emotional, physical, and sexual trauma: significant personality disorders and abnormal states of consciousness, including multiple personality syndromes.

As a result of my own research in the past decade—and the growing awareness among mental health professions that a whole range of symptomatic illnesses may have their origin in severe childhood or adult trauma experiences—in October of 1993, I brought together a core of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and other mental health professionals specially trained and experienced in trauma diagnosis and therapy, to form the staff of the Northeast Center for Trauma Recovery which offers specialized outpatient treatment for survivors of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

The prevalence of trauma as a source of suffering is much higher—and the psychological impact on people is much more intense—than most of us realize. There's an urgent need to increase public awareness. Current data show that nearly two-thirds of adult female psychiatric patients experienced childhood sexual abuse and/or physical abuse.

NECTR is a new resource for the mental health community as well as individual patients, where survivors can obtain the kind of sensitive, specialized diagnostic services and therapy they need.