



IHR

INSTITUTE FOR
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Integrating the Trauma Informed Approach into the Work You Do

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Welcome!



Trauma: wound

Extreme stress that *overwhelms* a person's ability to cope.

The individual's *subjective* experience of a *threat* to life, bodily integrity or sanity.



Experiencing Trauma Exercise

Traumatic Events

What kinds of traumatic events are the people who come to you for services likely to have experienced?



Impact of Trauma

Trauma Effects on the Body

Somatic Memories

The body remembers what the conscious mind chooses to forget.

Trauma Effects on the Body

Direct

- Exposure to stress hormones
- Bodily injury
- Traumatic brain injury

1. Similar symptoms

Different interventions

Statewide Head Injury Program:

www.mass.gov/veterans/health-and-well-being/tbi/state-tbi-agencies/ship.html

Trauma Effects on the Body

Indirect

- Changes in behavior
 - Increased HIV/HCV risk
 - Decreased self care
 - Increases in substance use
 - Increased risk -taking
 - Self -harm



Daphne Bye, Cpl.
United States Marine Corp
Dave Bye, SSGT
United States Marine Corp

How might trauma affect relationships?

We are all wired for connection

- All humans yearn for connection
- All growth occurs in connection – through and towards relationships
- Relational competence allows for connection

Relational Impact of Trauma

Interpersonal Trauma Creates

- Disconnection
- Disempowerment
- Alienation
- Trust Issues

Healthy Relationships Feel

- Unsafe
- Unfamiliar
- Dangerous

Healthy Relationships

- Most suitable conditions for growth/change is in the context of one or more relationships that are authentic, empathic and mutual
- An increase in the capacity for depth, diversity and articulation in relationships
- These conditions create connection
- Trauma and abuse create disconnection

Supporting Relationship Development

Since the violation often occurred in a relationship, healing must occur by changing the relational context

- From abusive to nurturing
- From unresponsive to empathic
- From lies and denial to honesty
- From controlling to empowering



Supporting Relationship Development

Focus on the development of trustworthy, empathic, mutual, and honest relationships

- Between service staff and service recipients
- Among service recipients
- In developing a support system outside of service setting
- Educate about healthy relationships
- Model healthy relationships

Healthy relational experiences have been demonstrated as an effective way to reduce the emotional by-products of abuse which are rejection, abandonment, betrayal, neglect and erasure.

Implementing the Trauma Informed Approach

Rationale

- Many TANF and low -income individuals seeking services have experienced trauma.
- Trauma informed service delivery is a way of interacting with clients that does not trigger trauma reactions and supports recovery
- Services delivered in a trauma informed manner have been shown to improve outcomes over service delivery as usual.

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Rationale

- Moving toward becoming trauma informed may require changes in how one interacts with participants and in personal self-care
- Individual staff may also be affected by trauma.

Trauma-Informed Approach

Rests on an understanding of clients and their symptoms in the context of **their** *life experiences and history, culture, and society.*

It is a way of *being* that builds safety, trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment in our clients and each other

Being Trauma Informed Means

- Treat every client as if he/she were a survivor of trauma/violence
- View defiance, resistance, acting out, oppositional behaviors as ways to cope with reactions to trauma triggers

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Being Trauma Informed Means

- Avoid power struggles: “power with” elicits cooperation; “power over” creates conflict
- Restore control to the individual by offering choices rather than ultimatums whenever possible

Trauma Informed Service Delivery

- **Engage** the survivor by highlighting the determination, creativity and courage of the survivor spirit
- **Build trust** through consistency and follow-through
- **Listen** for what is not being said and consistently point out strengths

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Trauma Informed Service Delivery

- **Have conversations** focusing on the element of choice and strategize alternative options that encourage different, safer outcomes
- ***Remember,*** we cannot undo the horror of the past but we can facilitate changes in the present that result in safer outcomes in the future

Establish a Safe Environment

Physical safety

- From abuse/stalking by partners, family, other participants, visitors, staff
- Maintain safety for everyone at the service site
- Encourage/help plan for as much safety a possible
- Safety plans for individuals in unsafe situations

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Establish a Safe Environment

Emotional safety

- In which an individual's experience is validated and his or her needs addressed

Establishing a Safe Environment

- Help individuals identify triggers
- Reduce triggering situations
- Minimize retraumatization as much as possible, avoid:
 - Shaming
 - Blaming
 - Threatening
 - Controlling
 - Intrusive monitoring



Common Triggering Situations

- Lack of control, powerlessness
- Threat or use of physical force
- Doors slamming; loud noises
- Being in a closed or locked room or space
- Witnessing threats, assaults, others engaged in self-harm
- Isolation

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Common Triggering Situations

- Being restrained physically
- Profanity
- Anxiety due to lack of information
- Authority figures (e.g., potential employers, professors, etc.)
- For some women, interacting with men in general
- Being closely watched

Common Responses to Being Triggered

- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze



Internal Triggers

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Memories
- Feeling lonely
- Feeling abandoned
- Frustration
- Feeling out of control
- Feeling vulnerable
- Pain

External Triggers

- Arguments
- News articles
- Movie or television
- Seeing a car accident
- Certain smells
- The start or end of a relationship
- An anniversary
- Holidays
- A specific place
- Someone who reminds you of a person connected to your traumatic event

What triggers might your clients encounter?



When an Event Is Likely to be Triggering

- **Acknowledge**
- Help the individual to **predict** what will happen
- Give as much **choice and control** as possible
- Encourage use of **self-regulation/calming** strategies during the event
- Make **space for recovery** after event
- Encourage and support **self-soothing** after the event

Crisis Prevention

Early in your work together:

- Find out what actions or events cause distress for each individual
- Help identify early warning signs
- Find out what each individual knows about what helps them calm down



Preparing for Crisis

- All staff are trained in de-escalation
- Help participants identify triggers and calming strategies
- Provide resources for self-regulation (quiet space, sensory items, yoga)
- De-brief difficult interactions so everyone can work together to establish and maintain safety



Safe Crisis Intervention

Begins with Us

- Pause and notice
 - Am I safe?
 - Am I calm?
- Create safety
- Create calm
- Ask: What is a helpful response?



Strategies for Helping People Who are Upset

- Be respectful no matter what
- Validate feelings
- Indicate a willingness to help
- If necessary, explain and model a calming strategy
- Reflect and check out what you hear
- Give as much information as possible
- Offer options but don't make promises you can't keep

Healthy Coping Skills

- Self and body awareness
 - Sensory
 - Emotional-naming and monitoring intensity
 - Trigger identification
 - Reflective self - observing
- Grounding
- Self soothing
- Adaptive coping





Grounding Exercise

“Staff may have experiences in their backgrounds that may be quite similar to the life histories of their clients (Bloom, 2010).”



Trauma and Staff

- No sector of our society is untouched by abuse
- Staff members may have their own trauma histories
- Staff members may experience trauma at work
- Staff members may experience secondary trauma



Impact of Secondary Trauma

Changes in

- Beliefs about self, others, the world
- Sense of trust or sense of esteem in self or others
- Perception of safety of self or others
- Feeling connected
- Sense of control



Symptoms of Secondary Trauma

- *Intrusive symptoms:*
Flashbacks, nightmares, obsessive thoughts
- *Difficulties with emotional regulation:*
Numbing, dissociation, reactivity
- *Physical:*
Somatization, frequent illness

Resiliency Factors

- *Awareness*
 - Of all aspects of one's experience
 - Needs, limits, emotions, resources
- *Balance*
 - Time for reflection
- *Connection*
 - Social support



Coping with the Impact on Us

Address the Stress

- Self-care
- Nurturing activities
- Escape

- Manage your workload
- Manage your work environment
- Seek education
- Utilize available support

Transform the Despair

- Focus on hope
- Examine negative beliefs and assumptions
- Participate in community - building activities

Creating a Self-Care Plan

- What are some things I need to do on a daily basis to take care of myself?
- What are the things I need to do regularly, but not daily, to take care of myself?
- What are my hot buttons that might occur at work?

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Creating a Self-Care Plan

- What strategies will I use when those hot buttons get pushed?
- Who can I use for support when I am overwhelmed by something that happens at work?

Why We Do What We Do

Passion:

- We all have hidden sources of energy and healing power
- When we identify the things that fuel us, the things we have true passion for, our fatigue will disappear
- Balancing our lives involves putting the things we value and have passion for into our schedules



Thoughts, Comments, Questions?