

Trauma-Informed Leadership: Critical in a Post-Pandemic World

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What will we learn:

- ▶ Participants will be able to define trauma-informed leadership.
- ▶ Participants will be able to recognize key trauma-informed areas for leaders to consider in decision and change processes.
- ▶ Participants will be able to apply a trauma-informed leadership approach in communication.



How will we learn:

- ▶ Informative lecture
- ▶ Group interaction and participation
- ▶ Movement and activity
- ▶ Practical examples and applications
- ▶ Positive encouragement
- ▶ Stepping out of the traditional models and comfort zones



Why should we learn trauma-informed leadership?

- ▶ Promote growth and change
- ▶ Prevent re-traumatization of staff
- ▶ Prevent and recognize burn-out, compassion fatigue, and/or vicarious trauma
- ▶ Strengthen organizational relationships at all levels
- ▶ Improve work environment and culture
- ▶ Improve staff retention
- ▶ Improve quality of care and work overall



What is trauma-informed care (TIC)?

Trauma-Informed Care understands and considers the pervasive nature of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize.



What are the characteristics of a trauma-informed leader?

- ▶ Humble
- ▶ Compassionate
- ▶ Sense of humor
- ▶ Vulnerable
- ▶ Good emotional intelligence
- ▶ Growth mindset
- ▶ Patient
- ▶ Accountable
- ▶ Creative
- ▶ Empathetic
- ▶ Consistent
- ▶ Curious -asks questions
- ▶ Transparent
- ▶ Collaborative
- ▶ Warm and welcoming
- ▶ Conscientious to differences
- ▶ Approachable
- ▶ Open to feedback
- ▶ Good listener
- ▶ Open minded
- ▶ Dependable
- ▶ Not inclined to micro aggression



What is a trauma-informed leader?

A trauma-informed leader:

- ✓ recognizes that people, as well as self, will struggle due to traumatic experiences and responds with compassion and empathy
- ✓ will cultivate the conditions for posttraumatic growth
- ✓ remain calm
- ✓ responds vs. reacts
- ✓ check-in on staff wellbeing,
- ✓ uses positive motivation (not fear based)
- ✓ gives plenty of notice and avoids surprises
- ✓ ensures and prioritizes safety for all through policies and practices and modeling behaviors.





Demonstration Activity:
Losing Sight of Trauma -
Informed Care in the midst of
chaos and crisis



Safety: A trauma-informed principle

physical

emotional & psychological

intellectual

social

ethical/spiritual/moral



Physical Safety

Are you safe from physical harm?

Do you feel secure in your environment?

Do you have the things you need to get on with your day such as housing, clothing, money, food, locked doors, paved roads, safe transportation, physical health, medication, etc.?



Emotional & Psychological Safety

Are you able to manage your emotions in a manner that does not cause harm to you? To others? To loved ones?

Can you identify words that describe how you feel?

Do your feelings make it difficult for you to do what you want to do with your day or this moment?

Does your personal sense of worth and value match your hopes for yourself?



Intellectual Safety

Are you able to say “I don’t know”?

Are you able to learn from others?

Do you know where to get the information/answers?

Is it “ok” to not be the expert?

Is learning a life long process?

Are you able to make and be accountable for mistakes?



Social Safety



Do you have people around you who provide guidance and support?

Are you a part of a group of which you are proud?

Can you rely on others when you feel upset or worried or confused?

Do you have people in your life with whom you have fun?

Do you have people by whom you feel loved and cherished?



Ethical/Spiritual/Moral Safety

Do you feel part of something bigger than just you?

Can you identify a system of values that give you purpose and meaning and keeps you rooted or grounded?

Do you have a “gut feeling” that something is not right for you/that you are heading in the wrong direction?

Are you able to feel a sense of awe?

Do you know when your compass is not pointed in the right direction?



Voice and Choice: A trauma-informed principle

A trauma informed leader:

- Listens actively and regularly through check-ins and feedback
- Gain a deeper understanding of staff situations and context
- Offer and honor choice for both staff and consumers



Trustworthiness: A trauma-informed principle

A trauma informed leader is:

- ❑ Accountable for actions and outcomes
- ❑ Transparent in all communication - Explains the WHY?
- ❑ Acknowledges own strengths and areas for growth and effect on staff
- ❑ Predictable and consistent
- ❑ Accepting of a realistic view of the organizational culture and services even if negative
- ❑ Identifies barriers and challenges



Collaboration and mutuality: Trauma-informed principle

A trauma informed leader is:

- Dependable
- Follows through
- Directly involved in the trauma informed efforts



Learning and change



Trauma-Uniformed vs Trauma-Informed

Trauma-Uniformed

- ▶ Tradition of toughness
- ▶ Focus on power
- ▶ Rule enforcers/Compliance
- ▶ What's wrong with you?
- ▶ Decisions without input
- ▶ Behavior viewed as intentional
- ▶ Labeling language
- ▶ Head down/no greeting
- ▶ Authoritarian

Trauma-Informed

- ▶ Recognizing what may be re-traumatizing
- ▶ Focus on culture (minimal power/control)
- ▶ Supporters/Collaboration
- ▶ What happened to you?
- ▶ Decisions with input
- ▶ Understanding behavior occur for a reason
- ▶ Objective, neutral language
- ▶ Eye contact/warm greeting
- ▶ Diplomatic



Back to the basics of communication

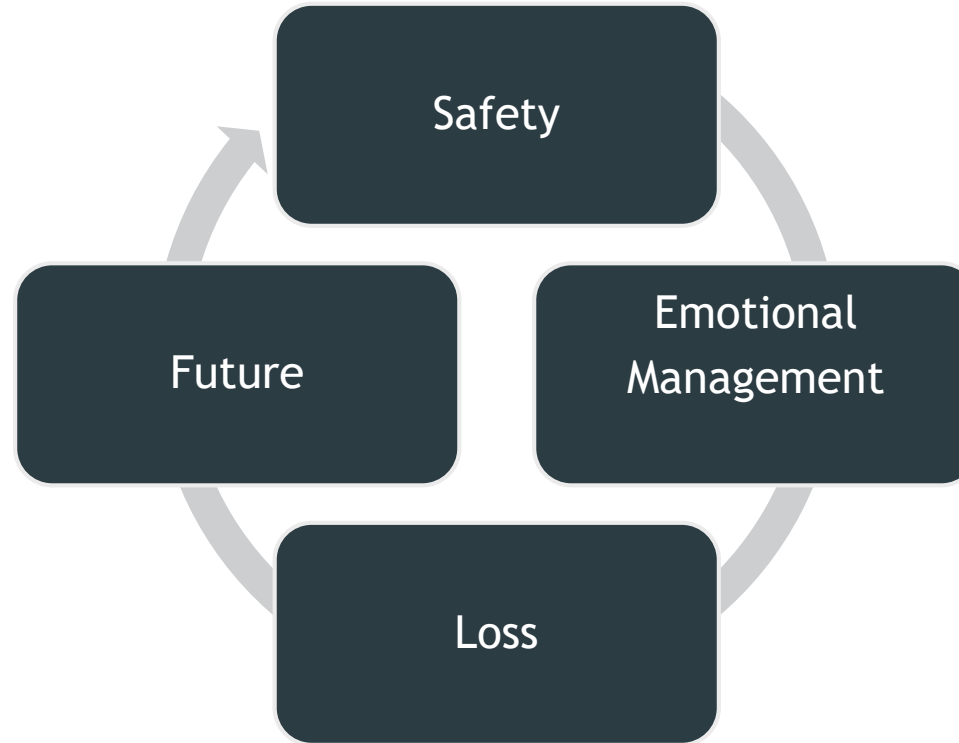
- ▶ A person under stress or crisis cannot communicate due to neurological processes involved
- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Prevent conflict due to competition, miscommunication, and/or differences
- ▶ Be solution focused and collaborative in problem solving
- ▶ Ask yourself what is going on with:
 - ▶ You
 - ▶ Person
 - ▶ Environment
- ▶ Make a plan for next steps



The S.E.L.F. Circle

SAFETY leads to ...
EMOTIONAL
MANAGEMENT leads
to...
LOSS leads to ...
FUTURE leads to ...

And the cycle
continues



S.E.L.F. CIRCLE ACTIVITY

- ❖ Where do you find yourself in using trauma informed practices?
- ❖ Where do you find your program/agency with trauma informed practices?



QUESTIONS?



THOUGHTS?



DISCUSSION, FEELINGS, FEEDBACK?



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References

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