Trauma 101: An Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care

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May 12, 2021
Overview

• Consider how we define trauma
• Recognize the ways trauma can impact the brain
• Discuss re-traumatization and what it may look like
• Introduce the guiding values/principles of a trauma-informed (TI) approach
• Reflect on current trauma-informed practices
What is Trauma?
Trauma: defined

“Psychological trauma is an occurrence which is outside the scope of everyday human experience and which would be notably distressing to almost anyone.”

** Acute Stress Disorder (ASD), Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
** Complex Trauma
** Historical/Cultural/Collective Trauma
** Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

(American Psychiatric Association, 1987)
The “Three Es” of Trauma

*Events* or Circumstances

Individual’s *Experience*

Long-lasting *Effects*

(SAMHSA, 2014)
World View

"I expect crisis, danger, and loss."

"The world is an unsafe place to live."

"I have no self-worth and no abilities."

"My own thoughts and feelings are unsafe."

"Other people are unsafe and can't be trusted."

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) & Wellness

Lunch Room Meetup
Trauma and the Brain

When we perceive something as a threat, the amygdala activates and generates a fear response—commonly referred to as the “fight, flight, or freeze” or stress response.

(Burke-Harris, 2014; Klinic, 2013; Pessoa, 2011)
Active Trauma & Crisis: Emotion Dysregulation

Being in the middle of an active crisis or trauma event can cause the amygdala to be on overdrive...

...resulting in ongoing emotion dysregulation—particularly heightened feelings of worry, fear, anxiety and stress.

* Important to also recognize the impact of complex trauma on the brain

Hand Model Courtesy of Dan Siegel (Click for YouTube Video)

(Dunn et al., 2018; Siegel, 2012)
Relationships
Trauma affects one’s ability to:
• trust others
• set boundaries
• express needs and wants to others
• identify and form healthy relationships

Cognitive Functioning
Trauma affects one’s ability to:
• form memories
• make decisions
• learn & concentrate
• process and express language

Physical & Mental Health
Trauma affects the likelihood that one will:
• attempt to die by suicide
• engage in substance abuse
• develop a sexually transmitted disease
• develop diabetes/heart disease/cancer

Perceptions & Beliefs
Trauma affects one’s:
• ability to hope
• core beliefs about self, others, & the world

Emotion Regulation
Trauma affects one’s ability to:
• control impulses
• interpret emotional cues
• trust in the reliability of others
• establish a predictable sense of self

THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA

(The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, 2020)
We’ve learned that the way we sometimes DO business can hurt people.
What is “Retraumatization”?

A situation, attitude, interaction, or environment that replicates the events or dynamics of the original trauma and triggers the overwhelming feelings and reactions associated with them.

- Can be obvious - or not so obvious
- Is usually unintentional
- Is always hurtful – often exacerbating the very symptoms that brought the person into services

(The Anna Institute, n.d.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System (Policies, Procedures, Structural and Institutional Racism and Oppression)</th>
<th>Relationship (Power, Control, Subserviveness, Interpersonal Racism and Oppression)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having to continually retell their story</td>
<td>Not being seen/heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being treated as a number</td>
<td>Non-transparency and veiled truths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being seen as their label, title or status (i.e., addict, disabled, illegal)</td>
<td>Doing things for rather than with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No choice in service or treatment</td>
<td>Using punitive treatment, coercive practices and oppressive language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-acknowledgement of work-related stress</td>
<td>Racial profiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to services</td>
<td>Being non-collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices without accessibility considerations</td>
<td>Victim blaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation or exclusion practices</td>
<td>Non-acknowledgement of historical narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalizing practices</td>
<td>Microaggressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices without cultural considerations</td>
<td>Non-inclusive language and messaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“isms” and phobias</td>
<td>Non-acknowledgement of power dynamics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retraumatization

**WHAT HURTS?**

(The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, 2021)
Reality of now...

Past adversity or trauma

Possible Re-Traumatization From:
- Seeing/experiencing illness & death
- Stigma, shame, blame
- Leadership response
- Health inequities
- Isolation, fear, guilt

Current pandemics

(Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, 2020)
Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

We stop asking:

“What is wrong with this person?”

and begin asking....

“What has happened to this person?”

★ Universal Precaution
Trauma-Informed Guiding Values and Principles

Safety

Empowerment

Trustworthiness

Collaboration

Choice

(Fallot & Harris, 2001)
Universal Precaution

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC): Provides the framework for all individuals, organizations, and systems to engage in Universal Precaution for individual, historical, and systemic trauma by using the values and principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment.
Your Role and Responding to Trauma

Trauma-Informed

- Understand trauma and its impact
- Recognize possible trauma reactions and behaviors
- Identify and use the 5 values/principles in all interactions

**Everyone in the health center/system**
Your Role and Responding to Trauma

**Trauma-Sensitive**

- Make deliberate changes to interactions, policies, protocols and environments to address potential re-traumatization
- Acknowledge the impact of the work on self and colleagues
  **Everyone in the health center/system**
- Administer trauma screening and assessment tools
  **Counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, etc. who are trained**
Your Role and Responding to Trauma

Trauma-Specific

Offer evidence-based interventions designed to treat trauma, such as:

• Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR)
• Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)
• Seeking Safety (SS)
• Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

**Trained trauma therapists only**
Being trauma-informed is about **the way we do our work.**
Reflection Activity

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being you are engaging in the value/principle of ______, and 1 being the total opposite, where would you rate yourself right now?

2. What is already in place that helps you be at that number?

3. What will be different that will let you know you’ve moved up just 1 point higher?

4. What is the next small step to get to that higher number?
Shorts

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Additional Resources

ITTIC Trauma-Informed Organizational Change Manual:
http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/trauma-manual

TIC Implementation Resource Center:
https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/

SAMHSA TIP-57: Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services:

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Please completed the evaluation survey: https://forms.office.com/r/LXJPaR42b9

We truly value your feedback!