

Stress and Trauma-Informed Care– AMSSA

Post workshop Resources and Materials

No matter what the past traumatic experiences are, trauma occurs when something or someone has been a thief of a victim's power. By allowing a learner to have choice in their environment, you're instilling power back into their experience working with you.

The purpose of this workbook is for you to explore opportunities to implement Trauma-Informed Practice into your work. This workbook also supports you in exploring your personal boundaries and assessing if you are burnt out. After completing this workbook, refer to the Canadian Red Cross Psychological First Aid Self-Care Plan and take time to work through it.

Group Charter – The purpose of a group charter is to create buy-in of all participants, including ones who may have initially resisted being included, holding team members, including leadership, accountable to all the same principles. Spelling out roles and responsibilities in a clear, measurable way, defining operations, including ways to adapt to change, address roadblocks, and even define actions like attendance.

This is also a practice of SAFETY and COLLABORATION for trauma-affected students and clients.

Participants will personally reflect on the following thoughts and are prompted to write down their answers:

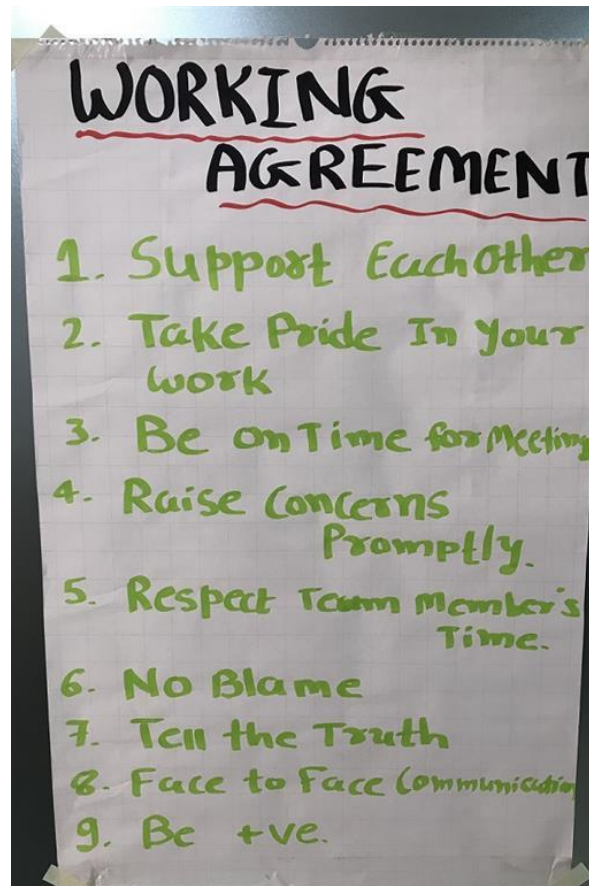
Recall a memory of your favorite experience learning?

Think about why it was a positive experience with prompting statements like:

- There was no...
- I was able to...
- I felt I could...
- The topic was....
- The instructor/teacher made me feel like....

Participants will then contribute to the group charter. After the participants are asked if everything is included in the group charter to their satisfaction, each member will put their name on the group charter.

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Here is a Sample Group Charter




Incorporating Stress Management in the Classroom

Beginning to talk about stress is the first step in acknowledging that stress exists and it's nothing to be ashamed of. In your virtual or in person classroom or office, you can have signs up about stress as well as include stress in the group charter. For example, a group charter contribution can be, "We acknowledge that everyone has stress in their lives, and it's safe to say, I FEEL STRESSED."

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4 ways to deal with stress

In the long-term

- ✓ Exercise regularly
- ✓ Eat well
- ✓ Practice Mindfulness
- ✓ Practice relaxation techniques

In the short-term

- ✓ Take a walk
- ✓ Practice deep breathing
- ✓ Use aromatherapy
- ✓ Get a hug from a loved one

Home

- ✓ Express yourself
- ✓ Take action
- ✓ Get organized
- ✓ Create your own space

Work

- ✓ Understand the expectations
- ✓ Avoid multitasking
- ✓ Minimize conflict
- ✓ Get comfortable

Relationships

- ✓ Remove external stressors
- ✓ Get to the root of the problem
- ✓ Save time for yourself
- ✓ Improve your communication skills

Self-Actualization
You are living to your highest potential

Esteem
You've acquired the skills that lead to honor and recognition

Love & Belonging
Achieving deeper, more meaningful relationships

SAFETY
Home, sweet home

Physiological Needs
Food, water, sleep

Basic Needs Referrals

Ensuring your learners/clients have their basic needs met or can access the right referrals is a trauma-informed practice. Have a referral poster or image prepared that shows the local phone numbers to FOOD, SHELTER, PHYSICAL and EMOTIONAL SAFETY is all you need.

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What Are Boundaries?

Boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify for themselves what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around them and how they will respond when someone steps outside those limits. (outofthefog.net) The easiest way to think about a boundary is a property line. We have all seen “No Trespassing” signs, which send a clear message that if you violate that boundary, there will be a consequence. This type of boundary is easy to picture and understand because you can see the sign and the border it protects.

Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries can be harder to define because the lines are invisible, can change, and are unique to each individual. Personal boundaries, just like the “No Trespassing” sign, define where you end and others begin and are determined by the amount of physical and emotional space you allow between yourself and others. Personal boundaries help you decide what types of communication, behavior, and interaction are acceptable.

Why is it important to set boundaries?

- To practice self-care and self-respect
- To communicate your needs in a relationship
- To make time and space for positive interactions
- To set limits in a relationship in a way that is healthy

Physical Boundaries

Physical boundaries provide a barrier between you and an intruding force, like a Band-Aid protects a wound from bacteria. Physical boundaries include your body, sense of personal space, sexual orientation, and privacy. These boundaries are expressed through clothing, shelter, noise tolerance, verbal instruction, and body language. An example of physical boundary violation: a close talker. Your immediate and automatic reaction is to step back in order to reset your personal space. By doing this, you send a non-verbal message that when this person stands so close you feel an invasion of your personal space. If the person continues to move closer, you might verbally protect your boundary by telling him/her to stop crowding you.

Other examples of physical boundary invasions are:

- Inappropriate touching, such as unwanted sexual advances.
- Looking through others’ personal files and emails.
- Not allowing others their personal space. (e.g., barging into your boss’s office without knocking)

Emotional and Intellectual Boundaries

These boundaries protect your sense of self-esteem and ability to separate your feelings from others’. When you have weak emotional boundaries, it’s like getting caught in the midst of a hurricane with no protection. You expose yourself to being greatly affected by

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others' words, thoughts, and actions and end up feeling bruised, wounded, and battered. These include beliefs, behaviors, choices, sense of responsibility, and your ability to be intimate with others.

Examples of emotional and intellectual boundary invasions are:

- Not knowing how to separate your feelings from your partner's and allowing his/her mood to dictate your level of happiness or sadness (a.k.a. codependency).
- Sacrificing your plans, dreams, and goals in order to please others.
- Not taking responsibility for yourself and blaming others for your problems.

Barriers to Boundary Setting

It seems obvious that no one would want his/her boundaries violated. So why do we allow it?

Why do we NOT enforce or uphold our boundaries?

- FEAR of rejection and, ultimately, abandonment.
- FEAR of confrontation.
- GUILT.
- We were not taught healthy boundaries.
- Safety Concerns Assess the current state of your boundaries

Healthy Boundaries allow you to:

- Share personal information gradually, in a mutually sharing and trusting relationship.
- Protect physical and emotional space from intrusion.
- Have an equal partnership where responsibility and power are shared.
- Be assertive. Confidently and truthfully say “yes” or “no” and be okay when others say “no” to you.
- Separate your needs, thoughts, feelings, and desires from others. Recognize that your boundaries and needs are different from others.
- Empower yourself to make healthy choices and take responsibility for yourself.
- Have high self-esteem.

If you are dealing with someone who is physically dangerous or threatening to you, it may not be safe to attempt to set explicit boundaries with them. If you are in this situation, it can be helpful to work with a counselor, therapist, or advocate for you, support you with boundary setting and provide you with professional support. **Refer to your safety plan** and reach out for help immediately.

Unhealthy Boundaries are characterized by:

- Sharing too much too soon or, at the other end of the spectrum, closing yourself off and not expressing your need and wants.
- Feeling responsible for others' happiness.
- Inability to say “no” for fear of rejection or abandonment.
- Weak sense of your own identity. You base how you feel about yourself on how others treat you.

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- Disempowerment. You allow others to make decisions for you; consequently, you feel powerless and do not take responsibility for your own life.

Adapted by the Violence Intervention and Prevention Center from PositivelyPositive.com, outofthefog.net and Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin by Anne Katherine

Boundaries Questionnaire – Complete this questionnaire on your own in a quiet spot.
If a statement is relevant to you, write YES, and if it is not NO.

1. You can't say no, because you are afraid of rejection or abandonment. ___
2. You know when the problem is yours and when it belongs to someone else. ___
3. You change to try to be what other people want you to be. You are a chameleon. ___
4. You know your own wants, needs and feelings. You communicate them clearly. ___

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5. You rarely ask for help. ____
6. You know your limits. You allow others to define their limits. ____
7. You take on other's problems as your own. ____
8. You are likely to say no to people if the request involves close interaction. ____
9. You feel responsible for other's people's happiness. ____
10. You avoid meaningful connection by picking fights or being too busy in your relationships. ____
11. Most relationships feel like they move to meaningful connection too fast. ____
12. You share personal information gradually in a mutually sharing/trusting relationship. ____
13. You fear abandonment OR engulfment, so you avoid closeness. ____
14. You rely on others opinions, feelings and ideas more than you do your own. ____
15. You allow others to be responsible for their own happiness and fulfillment. ____
16. You are able to ask for help when you need it. ____
17. You put your own wants, needs and feelings secondary to other peoples. ____
18. You don't compromise your values or integrity to avoid rejection.
19. You rarely share personal information. ____
20. You compromise what you want a lot of the time to avoid conflict. ____
21. You have difficulty identifying wants, needs, feelings. ____

Instructions and Answer Key for Boundaries Questionnaire

Next add together your responses for the following groups of questions (1 for YES 0 for NO):

Group a - Questions 2, 4, 6, 12, 15, 16, 18

Group b - Questions 1, 3, 7, 9, 14, 17, 20

Group c - Questions 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 19, 21

Whichever group has the highest score will give you an indication of your own style of boundaries.

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Healthy Boundaries (a)

In both personal and professional relationships, the line between the relationship is easily identifiable. People are independent but they are also close enough to be connected and to have an impact on each other's life. In healthy relationships boundaries are flexible. They grow and change. Boundaries can be lowered to promote connection or extended to promote safety.

Collapsed Boundaries (b)

It is difficult to distinguish one person from the other. Individuals in an enmeshed personal or professional relationship generally try to merge with the other to avoid the emptiness they feel when alone. This is troublesome, because a person may either seek to lose themselves in the other person or expect someone else to become lost in them.

Rigid Boundaries (c)

In a professional or personal relationship an individual may want to be completely self-contained, having very little impact on the other people and also very little connection. This is called an emotional detachment with rigid boundaries. The boundaries in this relationship tend to be more like walls and prevent connection to others and at times to themselves.

Burnout Questionnaire - Complete this questionnaire on your own in a quiet spot.

Find a quiet place that is free from distractions and work through the Burnout Questionnaire. in the space provided.

Rate each of the 28 questions according to the following scale:

1 = never/no change 2 = rarely 3 = sometimes 4 = often 5 = always/much change

Do you:

- ___ 1. Worry at night, have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep?
- ___ 2. Feel less competent/effective than before or work harder yet accomplish less?
- ___ 3. Consider yourself unappreciated or "used" on the job?
- ___ 4. Feel tired/fatigued rather than energetic even when you get enough sleep?
- ___ 5. Dread going to work or feel trapped in your job situation?
- ___ 6. Feel angry, irritated, annoyed, or disappointed in people around you?

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___ 7. Suffer from physical complaints or frequent illness (headaches, stomach/back/neck aches, colds)?

___ 8. Feel overwhelmed?

___ 9. Think that sex seems like more trouble than it's worth?

___ 10. See close friends and family less often?

Are you:

___ 11. More forgetful (about appointments, deadlines, personal possessions) or disassociated than usual?

___ 12. Always watching the clock?

___ 13. Avoiding conversation with co-workers or isolating from people in general?

___ 14. Rigidly applying rules without considering more creative solutions?

___ 15. Increasing your use of alcohol or drugs?

___ 16. Easily or automatically expressing negative attitudes especially to changes?

___ 17. Absent, out sick more often, or while at work?

___ 18. Unable to laugh at a joke about yourself or have difficulty finding joy?

___ 19. Experiencing interpersonal conflict with co-workers/family?

___ 20. Too busy to do ordinary things (making phone calls, reading, calling/contacting family or friends)?

Does your job:

___ 21. Seem meaningless or filled with too many repetitive situations?

___ 22. Pay too little?

___ 23. Lack access to a social-professional support group?

___ 24. Depend on capricious funding sources or not have enough funds to accomplish agency goals?

___ 25. Lack clear guidelines or require you to deal with rapid program changes?

___ 26. Entail so many different tasks that you feel fragmented?

___ 27. Demand coping with an angry public?

___ 28. Overload you with work, demand long shifts and frequent overtime or deny you breaks/self monitored time-outs, lunch time, sick leave, or vacation?

Total up the numbers in the response column.....Your score: _____

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WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

Now, place yourself on the burnout scale. Burnout is reversible, no matter how far along it is. Of course the higher number signifies that the sooner you start being more gentle with yourself, the better life will be for you.

28 – 38 You appear impressively mellow, with almost no job stress and seem practically burnout-proof.

38 – 50 You express a low amount of job-related stress and are not likely to burn out. Look over those questions on which you scored a 3 or above and think about ways you can reduce the stresses involved.

51 – 70 You seem to be under a moderate amount of stress on the job and have a fair chance of burning out.

For each question on which you scored a 4 or above, consider ways you can reduce the stresses involved. If possible, take action to improve your attitude or the situation surrounding those things that trouble you most.

71 – 90 You express a high amount of job-related stress and may have begun to burn out. Consider studying stress reduction, assertiveness, and burnout prevention. Mark each question on which you scored a 4 or above and rank them in order of their effect on you—beginning with the ones that bother you most. For at least your top three, make a list of ways you can reduce the stresses involved and take action to improve your attitude and/or situation. If your body is reflecting this stress, get a medical checkup.

91 & up You seem to be under a dangerous amount of stress and are probably nearing an advanced stage of burnout. Without some changes in your behaviors, attitude, and job situation your potential for succumbing to stress-related illness is high. Consider taking classes in stress reduction and burnout prevention and/or seeking professional help.