

**STRESS AND TRAUMA INFORMED CARE**



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# TRAUMA INFORMED LITERACY INSTRUCTION

## TYPES OF STRESS

<b>Day to Day</b> Argument with a friend or partner.  Driving bad weather.  Job Interview  Deadline to complete a project.	<b>Cumulative/Distress</b> Struggling to pay rent on a low income.  Working long hours over a period of time.  Hurtful Relationships.
<b>Extreme or Traumatic Stress</b> Car accident (experienced or witnessed)  Natural disaster  Death of a pet  Losing a job	<b>Vicarious or Secondary Stress</b> Hearing stories of serious loss.  Supporting people who are experiencing traumatic stress.  Over-exposure to violent or upsetting stories in the media.

## TYPES OF TRAUMA

**Acute trauma** refers to a one-time event, such as an earthquake, fire, assault, or car accident.

**Chronic trauma** refers to traumatic experiences that are repeated and prolonged, such as ongoing exposure to family or community violence, chronic bullying, or a long-term medical issue.

**Complex trauma** refers to exposure to multiple traumatic events from an early age, often within the caregiving system or without adequate adult support, which has short and long-term effects in many areas. Examples include abuse and neglect within families, witnessing domestic violence, or experiencing other forms of violence or adversity without adequate adult support.

**Historical trauma** refers to the collective and cumulative trauma experienced by a group across generations that are still suffering the effects. This includes discrimination, violence, and oppression of particular groups. **Racial or race-based trauma** refers to experiences of racially driven discrimination, harassment, and systemic oppression.

**Participant instructions:** The chart below lists various types of trauma by category: acute,

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chronic, complex, historical, and racial. Fill in the fourth column with examples of different types of trauma experienced by the learners, individuals or groups in your community.

Category	Definition	Trauma Type	Examples from your community.
Acute	Single, isolated incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accident</li> <li>■ Natural disaster</li> <li>■ Single act of violence or terrorism</li> <li>■ Sudden unexpected loss</li> </ul>	
Chronic	Traumatic experiences that are repeated and prolonged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Prolonged family or community violence</li> <li>■ Long-term illness</li> <li>■ Chronic bullying</li> <li>■ Chronic poverty and related stressors</li> <li>■ Exposure to war, or forced displacement</li> </ul>	
Complex	Exposure to multiple traumatic events from an early age, often within the caregiving system or without adequate adult support that has short- and long-term effects in many areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse within caregiving systems</li> <li>■ Ongoing neglect by caregivers</li> <li>■ Witnessing domestic violence</li> <li>■ Other forms of chronic violence without support</li> </ul>	
Historical & Racial	Collective and cumulative trauma experienced by a group across generations that are still suffering the effects and current experiences of race-based trauma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Systematic oppression of particular groups across generations</li> <li>■ Racism</li> <li>■ Discrimination</li> <li>■ Harassment</li> </ul>	

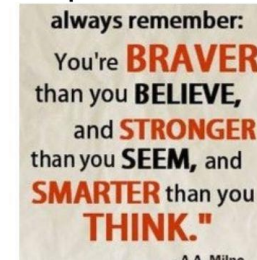
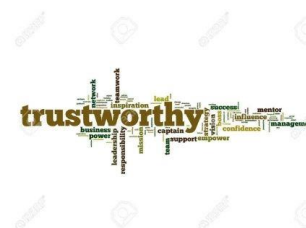
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## SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA - UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND IT'S IMPACT

<b>Physical Reactions</b>	<b>Cognitive Reactions</b>	<b>Emotional &amp; Behavioral</b>	<b>Interpersonal Reactions</b>
Sleep Disturbances Shakiness/trembling Muscular tension Fast heartbeat Headaches Aches and Pains Chronic Pain Fatigue Loss of Appetite	Confusion Difficulty concentrating . Difficulty making decisions. Difficulty in managing time. Limited attention span. Difficulty in setting priorities. Memory Loss	Fear/high anxiety Startled Response Constant watchfulness Paranoia Emotional numbness Withdrawal Depression Avoidance Shame/Embarrassment Despair Sadness Guilt Anger/Why me?	Withdrawal from family/friends/coworkers Isolation Blaming Difficulty listening Difficulty in sharing Ideas Difficulty accepting help Impatient/disrespectful Lack of community Intolerance of group process Criticizing/Negative attitude

What would it look like for a client/learner/friend/coworker/family member to have these symptoms? What actions, behaviors, physical signs would be apparent to you as a staff member? (Choose one category)

# Safety Choice Collaboration Trustworthiness Empowerment



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## Definitions

Ensuring physical and emotional Safety

Learner has choice and control in the learning

Making Decisions with the learner and sharing power

Task clarity, consistency, and interpersonal boundaries

Priority given to empowerment and skill building

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## Principles in Practice

**Common areas are welcoming and privacy is respected**

**Learners are provided a clear message about their rights and responsibilities.**

**Learners are provided a significant role in planning and evaluation learning**

**Respectful and professional boundaries are maintained.**

**Providing an atmosphere that allows learners to feel validated and affirmed with each and every contact in their learning.**

**Case Study:** Work through Trauma -Informed Practice for Instructors – Creating a Safe, Caring and Welcoming Environment below.

### **Empowerment Voice and Choice**

- Ensure each of your student has the tools, software, and resources they need to be successful in their work.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Before beginning a course, create a group charter, which will help you set boundaries, allow for students to have choice and voice in their learning environment.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Offer time to support your students with questions or concerns, outside of class time. This will support students in knowing they can come to you and speak personally about the course content, concerns about deadlines or factors that are leading them to feel stressed.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Consider offering a buddy method in your course. The purpose of the buddy method is that working with someone else can expand your knowledge on a subject, influence your perspective on different concepts, and help students to become more aware of a variety of attitudes and beliefs

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Connect with each student one-on-one before the course begins and if time permits. This allows you to build a relationship with your students, reduces shame and fear of learning and provides “power with” rather than “power over” your students.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

## TRAUMA INFORMED LITERACY INSTRUCTION

- Thank your students for sharing feedback and ideas with you, even if feedback is hard to hear.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Provide specific praise when empowering students. Rather than “Great Job”, be specific, “I liked the paragraph you wrote, it was concise and had flow, just what I was looking for.”

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

## Foster Safety – Physical, Emotional and Psychological

- Invite your students to share with you about what safety looks like to them.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Carve out time for students to share and give feedback on processes and procedures; don’t rush this. Conduct mid course and instructor evaluations as well as at the end of the course. Mid-course instructor evaluations, allows for issues to be addressed sooner rather than later.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Admit when you are wrong or have made a mistake. Model this for students as it support them in feeling that no-one is perfect and mistakes may happen and that is ok.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Remove expectations (explicit or implicit) for employees to “check their personal lives at the door.” Acknowledge that life exists outside of learning. Recognizing this takes the pressure off of you and your students.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

## **TRAUMA INFORMED LITERACY INSTRUCTION**

- Send routine messages of support and connection. Have the Group Charter posted every time your students begin the class and remind everyone of it. This supports how individuals will engage with one another in a respectful and supportive manner.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Have your classroom tidy and well organized. Ensure that when students come into the class you are prepared to instruct.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

- Incorporate nature music, or bilateral music when students are entering into the class. This can reduce anxiety and create a warm and caring environment.

Already doing \_\_\_\_\_ Hope to implement \_\_\_\_\_ Does not apply \_\_\_\_\_

### **Time to Decompress**

1. What are three things you do to decompress after a stressful experience?