Creating Trauma Sensitive Learning Environments
Healing through Trauma Informed Care Approaches

Paula Buege
Facilitator and Coach
buegeconsulting@gmail.com
Trauma-Informed Care

What it is
A principle-based culture change process

What it is not
An intervention to address PTSD

Move from ‘What’s wrong with you?’
to
‘What happened to you?’

Everyone has a story
All of Us.....
There is no “THEY”
You and Me
Us and We
Parallel Process
Self Care and Compassion

What does it mean to feel safe?

Stress-relieving strategies:

- Breathe
- Feel feet on the floor
- Count to 10
- Use fidgets
- Walk/stretch
- Chew gum
- Doodle
- Put lotion on hands
- Think of a favorite place or person
Benevolence

Considerate
Humane
Compassionate
Heart

Kindhearted
Big-hearted
Caring
Altruistic

Philanthropic
Tenderhearted

Generous
Warmhearted
Helpful
Trauma-Informed Care shifts our perspective to People do well if they can
Why Trauma?  Why Now?

- Consumer Activism
- Prevalence
- Science
- Effective Services
- Hope
Prevalence

- 56% of the **general population** reported at least one traumatic event. (Kessler, 1996)

- 90% of **mental health clients** have been exposed to a traumatic event and most have multiple exposures. (Muesar, 1998)

- 83% of females and 32% of males with **developmental disabilities** have experienced sexual assault. Of those who were assaulted, 50% had been assaulted 10 or more times. (Hand, 1986)

- 97% of **homeless women** with mental illness experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse. (Goodman et al., 1997)

- **75-93% of youth entering the juvenile justice system are estimated to have experienced some degree of traumatic victimization.** (Healing Invisible Wounds, Justice Policy Institute)

- **92% of incarcerated girls reported sexual, physical or severe emotional abuse in childhood.** (Healing Invisible Wounds, Justice Policy Institute)
Trauma

• Refers to extreme stress (e.g. threat to life, bodily integrity or sanity) that overwhelms a person’s ability to cope

• Is subjective

• Often results in feeling vulnerable, helpless and afraid

• Often interferes with relationships and fundamental beliefs about oneself, others and one’s place in the world

• Disrupts the nervous system
Trauma Continuum

**Acute Trauma**
- Adult onset
- Single incident
- Adequate child development
- No co-morbid psychological disorders

**Complex Trauma**
- Early onset
- Multiple incidents
- Extended over time
- Highly invasive
- Interpersonal
- Significant amount of stigma
- Vulnerability
Complex Trauma

- **Re-experiencing**: disturbing memories and thoughts, dreams, flashbacks

- **Hyper-arousal**: high alert, difficulty going to sleep or staying asleep, difficulty paying attention, exaggerated startle response, hyper-vigilant, usually constant, stressed, angry

- **Avoidance**: disconnected, detached, numb, disengaged from the real world (daydreaming, fantasy, spacey), may appear to be uncaring or unmotivated, trouble remembering event
Complex Trauma

Re-experiencing  Avoidance  Hyper-arousal  PLUS Dysregulation

**Emotional:** difficulty managing feelings; low frustration tolerance; problems using words to express needs, thoughts, concerns; few self soothing strategies; chronic emptiness; shame.

**Cognitive:** catastrophizing; concrete thinking (black & white); difficulty maintaining focus; memory impairments.

**Interpersonal:** difficulty assessing social cues; difficulty seeking attention in appropriate ways; challenges in seeing another’s point of view; difficulty maintaining relationships; challenges in managing transition, unpredictability and change; unstable self image.

**Behavioral:** impulsive; suicidal; self-injurious; chemical use/dependency; trauma re-enactment.
Sanctuary Trauma

The overt and covert traumatic events that occur in settings that are socially sanctioned as ‘safe’:

- Medical, mental health & substance use disorder services
- Corrections
- **School** and child care
- Law Enforcement Interactions
- Places of worship
- Boarding schools (Residential Care Centers)
Generational Trauma

**Epigentics** - passed down through DNA

Who we are and who we become is both Nature and Nurture

We bring both our ancestral past and our present experiences to the table
Historical trauma

“a constellation of characteristics associated with massive cumulative group trauma across generations”

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.