Resilience in Action: An Intimate Look at Trauma Through the Lens of a Mother, Survivor, and Behavioral Health Leader

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Objectives

Define
Define trauma informed care

Understand
Understand how a trauma informed culture impacts both staff and the people we serve

Identify
Identify key ways to support trauma survivors in your organization

Identify
Identify key factors of resilience
Everyone Has a Story
Trauma always represents Significant Loss....
Losses Associated with Trauma

- Loss of childhood
- Loss of a sense of safety in the world
- Loss of attachment in relationships
- Loss of the ability to manage emotions like other people
- Loss of self esteem

- Loss of capacity to establish healthy, nourishing relationships
- Loss of good role models
- Loss of conflict resolution skills
- Loss of ability to individuate
- Loss of ability to complete mourning
We need to presume that not only our clients that we serve, but all of us have a history of traumatic stress and exercise “universal/sensitive practices” in our daily work.
Trauma-Informed Organizations

A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed

- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others involved with the system;
- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices;
- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;
- And seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Why do this hard work?

Profoundly changes the way we view the persons served

• Teaches all staff to understand the impact of trauma.
• Allows staff to understand the reasons client’s respond to situations in sometimes “inappropriate” ways.
• Staff are able to connect differently with clients as they recognize their own trauma responses.

Profoundly changes the way we serve our clients.

• More appropriate interventions and conversations with clients in regards to behavioral concerns.
• A holistic response to treatment needs.
• Recognizes the value of making our physical space as safe and comfortable as possible for clients.
• IT SAVES LIVES!
Why do this hard work?

**Profoundly changes the way staff understand self and each other**

- Teaches staff to be empathetic towards each other.
- Teaches staff how to recognize signs and symptoms of secondary trauma in self and others.
- Encourages staff to be a part of the culture shift and allows for additional training as necessary.

**Profoundly changes the way we take care of ourselves and coworkers**

- Justifies the need for staff-focused and self care activities with leadership.
- Gives permission for staff to talk about secondary trauma as well their own trauma.
- Allows managers to supervise from a trauma informed and strengths perspective.
What you say and do matters

Do:

• Honor their story
• Allow time and space to heal
• Give choices
• Have resources available
• Ask them what they need

Don’t:

• Silence them
• Have unrealistic expectations
• Minimize the impact trauma has on all staff
• Do Nothing
Teach staff about the science of trauma, toxic stress and resilience

Utilize Trauma-Informed Supervision

The Doing
The Doing

Allow and Encourage opportunities at work to learn/practice self-care

- Encourage movement: walking, yoga, exercise breaks
- Encourage mindfulness: meditation, breathing, journaling
- Encourage brain breaks: sensory tools, coloring
Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate to and connect with people for the purpose of inspiring and empowering their lives.

Oprah Winfrey

Practice Empathy
I can be changed by what happened to me. But I refuse to be reduced by it.

'Maya Angelou
What is Resilience?

The capacity to prepare for, cope with and grow through adversity.
National Resilience Institute, 2019
5 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF RESILIENCE

True Resilience, Gail Wagnild PhD. Building a life of Strength, Courage and Meaning, An Interactive Guide
Purpose

What’s your why?
Perseverance
Authenticity

"Authenticity is a collection of choices we have to make everyday. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our real selves be seen."  Brene Brown
Last thoughts on resilience:

- Vulnerability is a part of being resilient
- Grace for self and others is vital
- Non-judgmental support helps others to improve their resilient core

HOPE is EVERYTHING......