Transcript for Trauma-Informed Facilitation
BCcampus webinar held on January 24, 2022
Facilitator: Dawn Schell
Moderator: Robynne Devine

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ROBYNNE:
So, it is my privilege to hand it over to Dawn Schell who will be the facilitator for today's session. Thanks, Dawn.

DAWN SCHELL:
Thanks, Robynne. And welcome, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here with you all today and to be talking about trauma-informed facilitation. As Robynne said, my name is Dawn. I'm the manager of mental health outreach and training at the University of Victoria. And next slide, please. 'Cause I would like to start us off in a good way and acknowledge that I am on the territory of the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples whose traditional territory, the whole university stands, which includes the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. And for me, I just came from a meeting just before this and really we were focusing and talking about the words, acknowledge and respect, and thinking about what it means to be on land and also talking about what it means to say a territory acknowledgement such as this and thinking about the fact that I am an uninvited guest here and have been for many, many years and how I can sit with that, both acknowledging the land, but also respecting the people who came before me and what I have to learn from them.

So, thank you for listening and I invite you to take a moment just to acknowledge wherever you are, you know, even silently to yourself or perhaps in chat, if you wanted to include that as we move forward. Next slide, please. I also have a poll that I'd like to start off with, and it's the poll is, the question is how's the weather with you today, but I want you to think about it from an emotional kind of point of view, not just how's the actual physical weather with you. So, we're gonna put the poll up right now. So, how's the weather with you today? And we'll give you a moment for everybody to answer how you doing from a weather kind of point of view. Oh, as I see all the answers coming in there. OK. We'll give another moment. OK. Alright. I think we can close that poll and share the results. Yeah, I can see. Yeah, we're kind of divided. Looks like the main ones foggy or sunny with cloudy periods seem to be the main ones. And then we're divided between sunny, cloudy, cloudy with sunny periods.

Nobody's rainy. A couple of people are snowy. So, thank you for sharing in that. Hopefully, maybe a little fog will clear here today. Hopefully, that's my aim anyway. So, next slide, please. Here's some practical information for you and I'll explain why I'm doing this right after I give this information. So, we're gonna be meeting together for about an hour, for an hour and a half. Questions, reflections are encouraged. You can either pop them into chat and Robynne will give me a hand with monitoring that, or you can save your questions to the end because I will allow some time for questions and answers just even to hear what your reflections are. The handouts of the slide will be available on the BCcampus website. And if we're online, remembering to use our mute button and that leaving your camera on is optional, if you wish, or if you not wish and if you're asking question, same is true as well. So, why would I say this? Already we've had quite demonstrated some of the kinds of practical things that I do and I incorporate into my work when I'm doing facilitation that's trauma-informed.

So, I think the front end slide of thinking about how we engage in this webinar is partly, is trauma-informed. It's a good practice to have, like we've set the stage for this is how we would like these conversations to go. A trauma-informed practice is really to say, here's the practical information, here's what our expectations are, here's how we would like you to, you know, so, you know these things, you know what to expect a bit as we go forward about how you might engage with what we're doing, but also about how long this might take. And that helps you make some choices and decisions about how you're gonna continue to engage with the material. So, next slide, please. What we're here to do today is another important piece of this. I will talk a bit about my own background and the context in which I do my work so that you understand I'm speaking from my perspective with the kind of work that I do with the trauma-informed, sorry, the information that I have both about trauma, about trauma-informed practices.

I have some examples that I wanna share with you about ways in which we can apply a trauma-informed lens to all of the work that we do. There's some tips, tools and strategies. And my hope is that when we get to that, that we will be able to tap into the wisdom that's here in the room with us today. However, long or short you're able to stay with us is great. Also, I have prepared a list of resources for you that come under a number of different categories. It's really been helpful for me to hear from you ahead of time, both what you're hoping to take away, but also of what some of your questions are. And I hope that I've been able to pull together some meaningful resources that will be helpful for you to answer some of those questions that you have. And we'll be sharing some of those today as well. So, next slide, please. So, I wanna talk about this support and self-care. So, I will invite you to take any actions that you need to for your own wellbeing as we go through this process for the next hour and a half together.

Well, if you need to pause, if you need to ground yourself, if you need to get water, if you need to have tea or coffee, or if you need to have a snack while you're doing this, anything that you need to do take to take care of yourself I encourage you to do. You'll see under that, number one, I've also said like, if you're going to..., if I was in person with you all, I'd also offered the option to, you could get up and leave the room as we're having this conversation. And if you gave me a thumbs-up as you went by, it would be helpful for me to know where he, you know, that you're OK. Or if you didn't do that, I might need to send somebody to see how you were doing. So, it's something that I incorporate into my facilitation certainly when I'm in person, I offer the option of sharing only if you're as much or as little as you feel comfortable sharing. So, it's not, you know, you don't have to share, you can pass. You need to know that. And also, that you don't have to share everything.

You can share just a little bit, if you prefer. And also, if you need further support, I'm gonna be sticking around for a little bit after we're done, but also I can offer other sessions. So, when I'm teaching a variety of topics that might be difficult for people, this is something I suggest, I may either, depending on the topic might put crisis line numbers up right away or crisis text numbers. So, the tip, somebody needs support in the moment, they have an ability to reach out and to connect with that support more immediately. So, what I'm gonna ask us all to do right at the moment is just I want you to take a moment to maybe put your feet flat on the floor and just take a moment to take five deep breaths. So, we're just gonna take five deep breaths just to bring us really in here into the room, take a moment to really ground ourselves in what we're gonna be talking about today. And so, I will get you to begin. And just from wherever you're sitting, you can close your eyes. If you wish, you can leave them open, just take five deep breaths and I'll do the same before we move on any further.

Alright. Thank you all for doing that. This is something that you could do, whether it's with participants in a workshop or it's with a classroom. You can just start with that. Five deep breaths really can help us

reset. It can help us focus and can bring us into the moment in a different way, can help us ground. And there's many things that you can share with students as well. That breathing exercise is one of them. Here's a couple of others. I'll just share them. And then if other people have ideas that they wanna pop and chat that they use to help people bring themselves into that kind of just settling, breathing, grounding moment. One of them is, you know, like rubbing your hands together or clapping or shaking can be that kind of energy release one that maybe can shake some things off or you can rub your feet on the ground to do that. Can give it all a try right now. If you want, just how does that feel to do that? And is that something that works for you to feel grounded? Another one, oh, slowly sipping some water.

That's a really excellent suggestion. Just really focusing and concentrating on one activity at a time and paying direct attention to that. Another one is to take a minute to look around the room and just, what is it that I see? What do I hear? What maybe could I taste? What am I touching? What do I smell? And I missed a sense and I've forgotten what it is, but is thinking about bringing ourselves into the senses can be something that can help us to listen to up to five sounds inside or outside the room and just bringing us into those senses? There's, I see lots of great suggestions coming into the, yeah, into the chat. And there is also, yeah, the five things like using our fingers to actually show us like five things that we can do. All of those can be helpful. So, this is something that we can front-load any of these discussions with whatever it is that we're facilitating, we can start with it, we can get people to try them so that they have them at their fingertips. If they need them, we can start these conversations with this kind of grounding for folks.

So, keep popping ideas into the chat and sharing with each other as we go along 'cause these are great ideas and suggestions for people to just really pause and help us ground. Next slide, please. So, a bit about my background is I have my Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Simon Fraser University. And over the past 35 years, I have worked at the sexual assault center here, I worked at the child sexual abuse center, I worked with youth employment programming, which included working a lot with street-involved youth and young adults. And also, for the past seven years, I have worked here at the University of Victoria doing mental health outreach. So, in each of my job, it has been both I have either worked with trauma and trauma recovery work with people who'd experienced trauma, but also, my work has always included going out to groups, talking to people about what often could be difficult programs, I mean, difficult subjects for people to engage with. There's many other often I've also stepped into conflict-laden workplaces and worked with people to how do we resolve conflict?

How do we mediate? How do we speak to each other around difficult topics? So, I just wanted to give you a bit of, that's why I'm talking about this today and just a bit of where I'm coming from with my understanding or experience of both trauma, trauma recovery, what it means to have places that are trauma informed. And my understanding of having facilitated a lot of sessions where the topic has the potential to bring up difficult feelings or emotions for people. So, next slide, please. So, we're gonna launch into some definitions. Next slide, please. So, there's many different definitions of trauma that I have found over time. This one comes from the Manitoba Center for trauma information and education. And so, they say like a traumatic event can involve a single experience or repeated events. The point being that it overwhelms the individual's ability to cope or to integrate what happens in that experience. So, this trauma is defined as, you know, could be an experience in which somebody's internal resources aren't adequate to cope.

There can be many different ways in which people experience that. Not everybody who experiences the same event will experience trauma. So, that's an important thing to name. And it's also who does trauma affect? Well, it can affect everybody, can affect individuals. There can be family, community,

cultures, can also affect service providers, can affect organizations and institutions. There's... and those are different kinds of experiences. So, there's an understanding from my part that it's complex. And it could be that I experience it in all of these kinds of ways depending on my different identities that I may identify with and/or experiences that I might have had. It is not so much that the event, but it's how we experience and interpret the event that leads up to some of those experiences of trauma or not trauma. So, that's from an individual point of view, but then there's many ways in which the effects of trauma can be passed on through, from generation to generation. And so, there's earlier conceptions of trauma.

We're just focused on an actual traumatic event, but as you can see if we expanded out to looking at communities and cultures as well, that there's many different ways that we can see a range of effects that are unique individuals and to those communities and cultures. Next slide, please. There are different types of trauma that people may experience. It could be that it was an interpersonal trauma, might be a trauma that comes from outside of us. An example of that could be that war is a good example of an external trauma, could be trauma that developmentally speaking, there's also historical trauma. And so, there's a lot of different things that we need to consider. And really the blurb that I sent out to say, what we're here to talk about today is just identified that we have no way of knowing when we're looking at a group of people that we may be offering training to, or that we're offering a class to, we have no way of knowing what their experience might be. And it could be that they've experienced all of these at the same time, but we can't tell by looking at somebody.

And so, we need to have, this is where the trauma-informed piece comes in, why it's important. So, next slide, please. The effects of trauma are varied and often there's... and we've listed some of the ways in which people may experience some of these different types of trauma, but definitely, there is the neurobiological and I'm not a neurobiologist. So, I'm just gonna say there's ways, the first thing that happens, there's this, I'm doing this with my hand because I'm indicating there's a part of our brain, that limbic system that really is a very primitive system is about our survival. So, if we experience threat, that's where this area of our brain gets activated. People talk about you know, whether it's fight, flight, freeze, flop, I've heard fun, there's lots of different ways in which we will naturally react in response to a threat that we are experiencing from a biological way. And so, it could... all of these kinds of hormones and everything are gonna be flowing through can shut down speech, might impair our thinking or judging or processing at the time triggers off the amygdala.

So, there might be things that we have a neurobiological impact that goes on from that traumatic experience or experiences may also recur, may feel the effects, not just in our biology, but in our relationships spiritually, cognitively, behaviorally, emotionally, and physically. So, there's a lot of ways in which trauma can have an impact on us. Next slide, please. So, we may have heard these many words. People sometimes use them interchangeably, sometimes have very specific definitions for them like trauma aware, trauma-sensitive, trauma-responsive, trauma-informed. There's lots of those kinds of words. I've also heard compassionate pedagogy. So, there's lots of ways in which this can show up for us. Next slide, please.

DAWN:
And being informed about why is it important at all to be informed about trauma, knowing how pervasive it could be, because it means knowing how we can be of help, other to people, groups of people, to communities, to cultures just even have that grounding and understanding for ourselves. Before I move on, Robynne, is there anything that I need to be paying attention to in the chat?

ROBYNNE:
No, there's a great conversation going on around canine-assisted education, but I think good, good at your end right now. Yeah.

DAWN:
OK, great. Glad to hear that there's those kinds of conversations going on. Next slide, please. So, trauma-informed, this comes from substance use mental health stuff from the United States. And I have provided the resource for this specific... it's a big long document about concepts of trauma and how we bring trauma-informed lenses to whether it's to healthcare or to education. So, if we're thinking about what it means to be trauma-informed, well, part, it comes down to some of these four R's. Number one, realizing there is a widespread impact of trauma and understanding there are many potential pathways to healing and wholeness. The second R is really recognizing learning to recognize signs or symptoms of trauma that may show up in faculty, staff, students, or other people who are involved with the system. And then a trauma-informed system responds by integrating that knowledge about trauma into our policies, our procedures, our practices, and our settings. So, it's quite comprehensive.

And the aim is also that we're avoiding re-traumatizing people if we possibly can do that. That's the aim of a trauma-informed system. And it applies individually as well. When I think about the work that I do, I do integrate these four R's as far as I am able into the work that I do when I do facilitation for folks. Next slide, please. So, trauma-informed work really includes understanding the effect of trauma, both on educators and students, and practicing methods that promote resilience and prevent further harm. So, that comes from a wonderful, and I'm gonna show it here. Trauma-informed practices for, oh, maybe you can't see that Trauma-Informed Practices for Post-secondary Education: A Guide. Again, this is a link I have provided in resources where it really is looking at in a very comprehensive way for post-secondaries thinking about at the effects of trauma and also how we can address them at the institution level, at the classroom level, at the peer to peer level as well working with individual students.

Thinking about trauma-informed really looks at how language matters. And language matters in terms of shifting our focus from something that's like, what's wrong with you, you've experienced this trauma and moves it to a, what happened to you, kind of question or curiosity. Trauma and shame are often very closely connected. And so, something that's important for us think about when we use language is how do we provide non-shaming responses? If somebody shares something with us that happened to them, how do we not shame them? How do we not blame them? How do we pay attention to our words in such way that we don't further compound that? And how can we use respectful and hopeful language? Part of that comes in. Sometimes when we talk about trauma, some people think that that's like a lifelong sentence. That means I never recover, I never recoup, but it's understanding that there is also work that people can do that will help them recover from trauma. And I have also included links at the bottom to talk about healing-centered engagement with people that takes it a step beyond you've experienced trauma and into more, how do I engage in a way that can help with healing and wholeness for you?

Next slide, please. This information, again, I have provided link talks about trauma-informed pedagogy, and it's saying that, you know, it keeps that awareness in front of mind, and these are some practices. And again, this question had come up, how similar is this to UDL? And it is very similar. This kind of work when you come from a trauma-informed lens in terms of higher education. And it's thinking about some of these kinds of practices, that makes sense, how do I provide content information in advance that might be helpful for people? Using content descriptions so that people are aware of what the content is that's gonna be talked about at our sessions or in our classes, creating a safe and inclusive framework

for discussions, how do we check in on students so that we're offering them some sense of connection? How do we encourage that sense of community building and belonging? Allowing for multiple ways for students to engage with the course content, building in some flexibility into assessment, perhaps, and absence policy, and how do we value student input and feedback as well?

So, that's the information that comes from a trauma-informed pedagogy point of view. Next slide, please. These are some of the principles of trauma-informed work, and we'll dive into this a much more in-depth in a moment explaining what each of these kinds of categories are and what they mean. But definitely, how do I create a sense of safety, whether it's physical, emotional, social, and academic? And there's a number of different questions that we'll look at in a moment about what that means. How do I build some sense of trustworthiness and transparency? How do I create support and connection? How do I head to collaboration and mutuality? Choice, voice, and control. So, having some empowerment, some voice, some control, hugely important, because one thing that happens within trauma often is that somebody's choice, their ability to speak, or to have any control may have been taken away. And so, how do we build that back in if we do nothing else, even thinking about choice, voice, and control and how we can incorporate that into our work is important, the lens of social justice, but also that awareness that there is resilience, growth, and change.

That's possible. Next slide, please. So, these are some of the ways that you can apply all of those principles into our teaching. And this comes from a blog called trauma-informed teaching, and she has a number of resources that are on her webpage there, but it's also like looking at the questions. So, let me give you some questions and think about your own place of work or wherever that might be. So, from the safety kind of point of view, I'm just gonna talk about the physical first like even how safe is the building or the environment? Like are sidewalks and parking areas well lit? Are they easily accessible for everyone? Are directions clear and readily available? Are security personnel readily available? Are signs welcoming, clear, legible? What about restrooms? Are they easily accessible? Are they well marked? Are they gender neutral? Or are they universal? And our first contacts or introductions, welcoming, respectful, and engaging. So, those are some of the questions that they're asking around that physical and perhaps emotional safety as well.

But also, there's the questions that we have here, how do we create an environment that respects and accepts all class members and helps 'em feel safe, including when they make mistakes? So, it expands out to show, this is some of the kinds of questions that we need to ask like that's pretty detailed. And so, we'll go next slide. And then we might come back to this in a moment just to talk about an example. So, from this example comes from the Office of Student Life here at the University of Victoria. And I wanna talk about our student support coordination that we have because we have been through an extensive process of applying a trauma-informed lens to the work that we do. So, what you see here on the screen and I wrote, read them all again, are the values that are behind the student support coordination work that we do. And so, this is very clearly laid out that each person who works within this department, these are the values that they have agreed to and the ways in which they offer support, coordination for student as well as it's clear to the people who are making referrals, that this is the values that are behind that in the trauma-informed way.

So, one of the ways that we did this and applied a trauma-informed lens was starting, we started our conversations with, OK, so how do we interact with people? And then we said, oh, so when they're here, we do this, we do this, we do this, we set up our offices this way. And then it was like, oh, but how do they get in the door? And when they walk in the door to my office, what does that general office area look like? And how do they interact with people? And then we had to take a step back and say, oh, how

do they even arrive at the door by a referral? And what does that process look like? And so, it really made us think about every single step that we took along the way. And it was a very extensive process for every process, every policy, every procedure, every practice, every setting that we had, that we engaged with students with that there was great thought put into. So, when you walk, when you look at the website, is it clear what you will happen when you meet with us? Do you know what to expect?

Will you have a sense that you are supported right from there? Is it welcoming? Is it engaging? When you get, when we were able to meet in person, this is less. So, now, we've also had to apply this to the online environment. How do we interact with people? How do our emails to students to reach out to them or back to staff and faculty as part of this connect? So, there's a lot of work, but it really was looking at, we had to say, what are all the policies? What are all our procedures? What are the practices that we engage in? And what does our environment look like so that we can provide as much as possible, a trauma-informed lens to that? So, can we go back a slide? So, we went through each of these pieces of the trauma-informed lens and asked ourselves the kinds, the level of questions that I was just sharing with you a few moments ago about safety, for example, but also trustworthiness. And again, each one of these, we had each of these areas to really look at every single thing that we did, that where we interacted with a student, what does that mean for how we behave for what things look like for how we're interacting?

It might seem like that's a lot of work, but that was front end work that we did that I think has paid off and has really made things a lot easier for us over the long haul to really, and it's not a one and done, there is new research, new work that comes out new thoughts that we need to give to things that are happening, that we need to keep informed for ourselves and offering students the best that we have that with the knowledge that we have at that moment in order to stay as trauma-informed as possible, and also moving into that healing centered engagement with students as well. I'd like to pause just for a moment and just see if there's any questions or comments or anything that you would like to know about this part before we move on or anything that you would like to know about student support, coordination, example that I've given you. And either you can unmute yourself and ask or raise your hand, or put it in the chat.

SPEAKER:
Dawn, are you able to see the chat?

DAWN:
Yes. I can see Danielle's first.

SPEAKER:
Yeah.

DAWN:
A lot of these actions look like they take time for them to take effect. Yeah. I would say that's true. And it can be challenging to make a place seem safe and trusting. Of course, we don't... Let's talk about trust for a moment. Trust takes time to build. So, absolutely, all of these have some element of, they are steps towards building a sense of trustworthiness and transparency, which doesn't automatically happen just because I say it does. And it does take time for that to take effect. And so, it might be thinking about what's one step that I can take now, one thing I can do that would be different. And how do we make things feel safe? I mean, some of that's, there's my perception of what might be safe. But also, we've been involved students in some of those conversations about what's welcoming, what feels,

helps you feel safer and maybe safer is a better choice of word 'cause how can I guarantee safety for anybody in, at any time, but I can take steps towards doing something that would reduce the chances that you might be at risk in this environment.

And Simon, "Do we take into consideration immigrants?" Yes, absolutely. Taking into consideration international students that we have here, what their experiences might be, how we can make something, you know, changing, thinking about those power dynamics and how we could shift those in some way so that it doesn't feel like I'm telling you what to do. You know, like there's ways in which we're trying to address those power dynamics and really giving 'cause so there was a whole consideration to how and work with our international center for students, but how we can do that in a way with our international students that felt the same and somebody had their hand up. Was that Lucinda? Do you wanna ask your question before I answer some of the others?

LUCINDA:
Yeah, it wasn't, and I'm not sure if it fully connects. So, please advise. In a meeting earlier today, we were talking about things like having signs throughout a campus to say this is a safe place, but also that, that can be a little problematic if we're announcing that it is a safe place when perhaps not every faculty member is as safe as we would like to be.

DAWN:
Yeah, it's a good question. And I think it's a fair comment I've heard and that's why we aim to make this a safe place, we aim for inclusion, we aim for that's some of the choices of language that I know student wellness here at UVic has changed, not saying we are inclusive, for example, but saying we aim to be because that can help address where it's not. Did that make sense Lucinda?

LUCINDA:
It absolutely does. And that's just such a lovely little detail to say we aim to be.

DAWN:
Yeah. 'Cause then it gives us something that we aspire to. And it says we're working on it. And we may not have it perfectly nailed down. But that's our aim, that's what we plan, that's what we hope for. Yeah. Thank you. That's a good point. Yes, Meryl, I have shared, I'll show you the resources at the end. I have shared the resources on the trauma-informed practices at the post-secondary level. It comes from the Oregon Student Success Center through Education Northwest. And I do have that listed there. And Marika, and then I'll get to discovered in Fraser Health, it diffuses and has a multiplier effect if you're ready, willing and able, yeah, if there's an organizational readiness to do this kind of work. Did you wanna say anything more about that, Marika, before we...?

MARIKA:
Yeah, we've been implementing. In 2013, the Ministry of Health came up with the trauma-informed practice guide. And in our education with staff, we also use trauma-informed education. We've moved it to trauma and resiliency-informed practice trip. And so, we've been using education as a change agent for our services, including how we educate our service providers. Sorry, that's my pug snoring in the background. (DAWN LAUGHS) He's my grounding agent. (LAUGH)

DAWN:
Here's for pug snores.

MARIKA:
I know, I know we should read about. But yeah, we find that...

SPEAKER:
There is, in distress systems like systems that have a lot of trauma activation, there're trauma-organized systems that there has to be some kind of priming or readiness because you're right, it does create, people can feel quite vulnerable and systems become quite vulnerable too. So, we're working on some kind of, from our learning and evaluation right now, coming up with some kind of readiness assessment, like a few things that you have to have in place if you're gonna engage in any kind of system wide implementation of TRIP. And I think it's the ethical thing to do as well. Yeah, and I appreciate what you said about trauma and resilience informed, which speaks to a piece that I'll bring up in a moment for sure as well. Yeah, thank you. Did somebody have their hand up rather before I. Yes, I do see a hand up. Let me see if Glenda Yes, hi. I just wanted to say thank you, DAWN, I'm really appreciating the dialogue so far. And I wanted to lean in and just offer with my experience.

I do teach in facilities and aspire to be as trauma-informed and resiliency- informed as I possibly can. And one of the things that have been emerging for me just in within my consulting circles in both education and health care which I really feel like, you know, isn't talked about enough is equity. I think equity as a principle for trauma and resiliency-informed practice kind of gets loosely thrown around. But, you know, as colleagues, as friends and colleagues and comrades in this good work, I feel like it's one of those ones that also gets, you know, often lost sight of. It becomes one of those superficial things that all of our institutions and our organizations, you know, preach and have in the mission and goals and values. But it's one that I often find with so many of my participants gets really lost in really quickly because we're so conditioned to, we need to treat everybody equally, we don't normally do that. You know, there's equality versus equity because my domain, I'm engaging with professional development.

So, staff who are teaching, either the faculty members or their health care workers. But I find that that pendulum kind of tends to switch back and forth between equity and equality. And sometimes that's been a barrier for me in terms of holding that space for professional development when we have peers and colleagues of ours who are kind of, you know, but equally equally. And it's like, well, we're talking about trauma-informed. It's more equity, right? 'cause we're talking about, you know, people who have some lived experience or maybe coming from a marginalized or targeted community, like coming from an indigenous community, which I am a First Nations person myself. Or whether you're a person who uses substances or you're a person with a disability. You know, this topic of equity is a really important principle to you. I just wanted to share to add to this conversation. Thank you. Yeah, thank you. That's a very important point that you bring up. Yeah, absolutely. Needs to be more of the conversation, that equity lens as part of this, for sure.

You know, and the, I'm just looking through. Thank you so much, Tina, for sharing that poem, I bet no such thing as a safe space and safe, safe is subjective for sure. So, you know, there's been a lot of conversation. Do we use the word safe or we make this safer? Yeah, we're committed to, just such great comments, brave space, yeah, is something that I have heard other people share out as well. And Jacqueline, you've seen in a public restroom, if you're feeling unsafe, please notify staff. Yes, there can be simple things for sure that people can add in. So thank you all for sharing these safe and brave spaces. And thank you, Lynn, for your comments as well. And great articles. Safe and brave spaces don't work and what you can do instead. There's so many ways that we can approach and have these conversations. So thank you for that. Let's carry on, and the next slide, please. I mean, there's already

stuff that we're doing, there's trauma and resiliency-informed, lots of things that people have suggested that we can think about.

Some of it can be very simple. You know, I'm thinking about what you said about the lens of, you know, really thinking about, you know, what are we saying we do and does everybody agree to it and commit to it? And how do we hold up the space or how do we hold space for that? How do we see it, not just as ,you know, I think there's that strength-based piece as well that needs to come in as a lens. And if we can't go to the next slide, please. It really is looking at like, what are we doing and, you know, just press one. Click for this next question. So, we can think about this question, like, how do we create an environment in which people might feel safer, accepted, respected, including feeling safe to make and learn from mistakes, which probably includes all of us at any given time? Do people have anything that they wanted to add to what we've been discussing so far? Any through the chat or..Gail, do you wanna , can you say more about your comment there, like conversations that you're hosting for faculty to enhance relationships?

Yes, I hear your message, it's a great message. I just wonder how people are learning about this and are you offering opportunities for like ongoing reflection on their practice or kind of structures have you introduced? At the University of Victoria, in the work that I do, there's kind of two or three ways. So I do training and that is part of the training. What does it mean to be connected? And also how do we at the same time maintain professional boundaries? So there's, that conversation is both about how do I be connected? How do I connect with students? How do I connect them to each other? And how do I maintain boundaries within that? So there's some opportunity for people to think about that, to act on that, to find some ways in which, I have sometimes sentence starters that they can do. There's some, and I'm sharing more and more resources that I see. For example, check ins with students SFU's, well-being and learning environments has a whole list of many ways that you can offer at check-in that students can do to check in with themselves or that they could perhaps use as a way to check in with each other.

So there is lots of examples out there. And UBC did, at their Teaching Learning Center, did some fabulous work around effective teaching practices and the intersection with student mental health and well-being. So I'm often sharing that information so that there's lots of ways for people to engage in the material in the moment, think about ways they can bring it to their classroom, but also some research that's going on that they can read about, learn about. So that's my way of getting people that continued reflection. Did that answer your question? Yeah. Oh, that's great, thanks. Yeah. Yeah, 'cause there's many ways to do that, for sure. Next point. So how do we, one thing that comes up in the literature in terms of what's helpful in general is really making our expectations clear, maintaining boundaries is, you know, and our expectations and our boundaries because it helps to ensure that people know what to expect. Predictability is helpful for anyone who may have experienced trauma, it also helps build trust.

And so there are some things that we can think about, like how do we make, how clear are we? There's a new Act, legal Acts that came out in the US that's called the No Surprises Act. And I, that's what came to mind for me when I was thinking about doing this. How do I create it so there's no surprises, so I don't startle people with something that might feel like it came out of left field and they weren't ready for it and prepared for it? So maybe we could call this the no surprises part of the work that we do. So we can think about like, how do we do this? How do we maintain that consistency? How do we set our boundaries and maintain appropriate ones? But also, 'cause that minimizes disappointment. I think you've already, somebody in chat kind of named that around boundaries. Clear boundaries are helpful

for relationships of all kinds. Next point please, click. Like, how do we connect students and colleagues with appropriate resources to help them succeed, whether it's academically, personally, professionally?

There's many examples. One example that ,again, well-being and learning environments at SFU, they have the option that you, as faculty or staff, could take slides from there and put them in your course materials so that students know what the resources are. We have created a set of slides here. Kind of same idea. You know, the idea was that as you're going through, you can have this maybe running at the beginning of class, like there's resources on campus for different things, for different purposes. Not just about counselling per se, but perhaps about, for example, our Centre for Academic Communication which helps people work on writing, or our Centre for Accessible Learning. Our tutors, our learning strategists, our fitness people. So looking at all the dimensions of health, how do we connect students to all of those things and continuously remind them they're available? Next, click. So how do we help students and colleagues provide input or share power or perceive us as an ally rather than an adversary?

That's a huge question. Thank you very much, [...], for bringing that one up. But it is really thinking about how do we do this? How do we engage in these conversations both with our colleagues and ourselves? But how do we make these shifts and changes if we feel they're important to do? And the next, click. How can we empower students and colleagues to make choices or to advocate for themselves and develop some sense of confidence and competence in their knowledge and skills? Next click, please. And how are we being responsive to issues of privilege and power and educating ourselves and informing ourselves about that and being aware of that? And how do we acknowledge and respect other people's diverse experiences and identities? Next, click. And how do we recognize strengths and resilience and provide feedback that helps everyone to grow and to change? So the, I will be sharing the resources at the end of this slide, just so that everybody knows where you can find these other materials to go along.

Next slide, please. Is there anything else that we, as a group here, can come up with or think about? How do we help establish or re-establish some sense of control, connection or meaning for those who are participating in the work that we're doing, as well as thinking about ways in which we can use that with students on our campuses? And I see people that are popping that into chat, yeah, creating trust among participants. Maylen, do you, would you like to say anything more about some ways that you know of to build trust or create trust among participants that have worked? Yeah. One of the things ,you know, when we're working with any group, I'm a community developer, is to be able to go to the next step. I do have to let them know that, you know, there is a welcome space. There is a space where they can be respected and listened to and that we are going to, you know, meet their expectations or we're gonna meet them at the same place where they're at. Mm-Hmm. That creates trust. Yeah.

Great, thank you. Yes, and creating the goals or the outcomes of the time together together. Yeah, that's a great way to do that too. Dr Southam, is there anything else you wanted to add to that? I just noticed that when I was doing a lot of community work, for instance, with university and community groups and government and non-government, that that was a really important step is to agree on, it seems obvious, but agree on what we're going to do together, not come with an agenda. Mm-Hmm. Yeah, that's great. Thank you. And being appropriately vulnerable as a facilitator, if I can say where I'm coming from, what my experience is, you know, and you're right, appropriate Brandy, and express my empathy, that can help. There's one person that was, say, whose work I was reading was saying to be trauma-informed needs to be a person first, and then the instructor or the facilitator second. And I really quite like that. I resonated with that. Yes. And meetings, you know, making sure that you can get consent to take notes.

Consent is important and there's many different consent conversations that we need to be having and making it clear who gets the, has access to those notes. It provide challenges to students that go from easy to harder to harder so they build confidence. Absolutely. Admitting mistakes and missteps. That's so important. I know when people have said, you know, something that helps them to be able to repair sometimes when there's conflict is if the person genuinely says, thanks Erin for sharing that, like that, I admit I made a mistake and that I would like to try to fix this or to repair that. Supporting conversations, fabulous reading material here. Agreeing that the notes represent what's said, that kind of iterative thing where we share and we ask people to connect with that to make sure it represents them and what they had to say. Absolutely. So many great things in the chat here. And addressing issues that come up rather than just shutting it down. Can be hard. I'm just seeing ,Rosa, your question.

You know, like from the perspective of a TA having to grade and give back assignments or forcing students to present can be very upsetting and sometimes a negative surprise. So how can you deal with those limitations and meaningfully engage? And yeah, there's many ways that I can think of. That could be, whether it's a discussion for how do people, like I had one student I worked with who had a severe panic disorder and diagnosed, and it was very difficult to do presentations. So it was a matter of ending up working with the TA and the professor to find a different way to do it. Some people have found that pre-recording actually is more helpful than being seen in the moment doing it. So maybe there's ways to think about how do we do those and give more choices for people and more flexibility? And I appreciate your point again there, Brandy, about calling out how our society and media conforms us to believe that if we're not happy, we're somehow broken or wrong. Yes, so true. Yeah, it is finding, umm. There's lots of good feedback coming in for presentations and good stuff in terms of a TA allowing people to ,yeah, I have had people present umm Donna with their back turned to people, facing the class only when they're ready to do so, having their video off. What ,you know, it's the feedback piece often for people. Yeah. Yeah, there's lots of great dialogue and discussion about ways that we can do more of this that are going on and sharing of resources. Just taking a moment to think about that. Uuumh, yeah, 'cause there's so many more things that are coming in. A lot of it is about offering options, you know, offering choices, and that ,you know, that we're here to learn, and not expecting perfection. Lucinda has her hand raised. Thanks, Dawn. I teach business presentations course. And one of the first things we talk about, we named it Shame Wave and I wrote a little article about it. And I get the students to read it, we discussed it in class. And so we just sort of normalizes it and give it a name.

And they say it's. Even if you did a great presentation, you'll sit down and your brain will just focus on that one thing that you did wrong. And it's like a huge wave that just knocks you off your feet and you feel embarrassed. You feel ashamed, you feel horrified. And so, I've had students say even in the middle of their presentation, they're like, 'Oh, just a minute, I'm just being hit by a shame wave'. And it's like, I almost cried. It was just like, 'Yes', it was such a wonderful thing. So, sometimes just talking about it and normalizing and giving them vocabulary beforehand seems to make a difference.

DAWN SCHELL:
Yeah. Oh, I love that idea. Would you be able to, you said that's an article Lucinda?

SPEAKER:
Yeah, I wrote an article and a little podcast.

DAWN SCHELL:
Would you be able to share that with us?

SPEAKER:
Sure, I'll look for the link, yeah.

DAWN SCHELL:
OK, great. Thank you. Yeah, 'cause I love that normalizing it and letting people know you're human. In the work that I do as a counselor, as well as the work I do in facilitation, the students who tell me, 'Nobody else feels it, I'm the only one who feels this way. I'm the only one with this experience', that sense that we are the only ones who might be struggling in this way. Everybody else seems to have it together can be one of those experiences that if we can normalize, that probably not everybody does feel the way you're assuming they do. That it's common for us to fixate on stuff. For example, as you as you shared, that one little thing that we did wrong will be where our brain will go. Because, I think it's Rick Hansen who talks about our brains are... Velcro for the negative and Teflon for the positive. And so, he talks about the ways in which we latch on to the stuff that's negative. And so, if we can share, even sharing that with students that at different points, they're gonna feel those kinds of ways or they're gonna be focused on the stuff that's not going well, when there might be other things that they're doing well and they're learning and sharing.

That's great. And, thank you so much for sharing in the chat there. Shame and transformational learning. Um, sorry. Did I say that right, Dr Theresa?

DR THERESA:
Yeah, I mean, it's such there's so many great things on imposter syndrome, which is a little bit of what we're talking about, I think, here too. So, yeah.

DAWN SCHELL:
Yes, and there's a lot of work on the imposter syndrome and how, maybe this comes back to [...] even some of those talks about equity, like where do we see ourselves belonging? And, how do we present a more equitable picture of belonging and where people fit in? So, thank you for all of this and for sharing the links to Rick Hansen too. How we take in the good is a big thing. Next slide, please. Some people asked ahead of time, they're like, 'How do we facilitate discussions on difficult topics'? And, we've kind of talked around this already. One of the things is really thinking ahead. So, like taking preventative measures. Like, maybe I do hand out materials, maybe I ask the students to engage in reflection first with material. Maybe I inform people of what to expect. But, also preparing myself, thinking through what it is that might possibly happen or come up knowing I'm not gonna figure this out completely 'cause there often are surprises, for sure. I put the word activation there because people often use the words content warning, trigger warnings, when what is it that happens for an individual who maybe has a trauma history?

They may find in the moment that they are actually their system, their limbic system is being activated, so it's not like a trigger over which they may have zero control. But, it's that awareness of, 'I'm being activated'. And so then, I have choices I may need to do to ground and settle myself again. So, there may also be some things that we can think about. Do we call it content warning, or maybe we don't say it's a warning, but just inform people? There's a couple of suggestions there and you'll find more in the trauma informed practices. Maybe we find ways to, if we feel like something's spiraling out of control, do we put a pause, get everybody to do some grounding or something and then come back into that conversation and finding ways to engage with that? Yeah, some people don't actually use the word trigger anymore, just talking about the activating effects of trauma, how that comes up in terms of our

body and our reactions and responses. So, there's a lot more to be shared, but we've all been doing this as well, thinking about how we do this kind of work together.

But preparation, thinking ahead, having some tools at my fingertips that I can do or things that I can suggest for people. And, sometimes it's OK to come back to a conversation after something happened and come back. I'm thinking about a process that she and I worked with together on a difficult conversation that was being had amongst her students and how to continue to address it moving forward. So, some of it's front loading like we did at the beginning here. This is the ways in which we expect these conversations to go. Some of it's being prepared in the moment to be able to interrupt or to call a halt or a pause. But maybe, if we've established those guidelines at the beginning, it's helpful. It's just that awareness of how do we think through what some of those kinds of pieces might be that we need to prepare for and ready ourselves to respond to. I also find, having been part of a huge discussion around issues of racism and systemic oppression with a cultural organization here in Victoria in the last year or so.

Holding space for people to have different views and to allow people to sit with discomfort and teaching people how to tolerate discomfort with conversations that are difficult to have was a huge piece of making the work work. Hopefully, I said that in a way that makes sense. Next slide, please, which speaks to the, how do we hold space? And, some of it is resisting the temptation to help by fixing something for somebody. But, the holding space idea is about the way that we show up to the conversations, the way that we show up to the facilitation or the classroom. And, releasing control doesn't mean that I don't manage what's happening. But, I'm not there to control the outcome of what happens. I release that control. And then, I can learn to trust the other person's both wisdom and autonomy. But, maybe even more importantly is, how do I stay present in the midst of disruption? And, some of those ideas come from the Center for Holding Space, which is a woman in Winnipeg who does a lot of work around how we hold space for these kinds of difficult dialogues for us to have, but for us to be present, to be authentic, to be there and resist those temptations.

Yeah. It's human of us, of course, to want to fix things and to want to solve it. And so, learning how to allow that space for the wisdom of others as well. Next slide, please. I think it's important for us to remember that there is a difference between something that's highly upsetting or uncomfortable to talk about and something where we may be retraumatizing somebody. And, maybe we need to have dialogues about that as well and recognizing there is a continuum between uncomfortable and unsafe. So, maybe those are pieces of the work that we do as well. So it's just, how do we have these conversations, how do we think about them? How do we show up for ourselves and next slide, please. I wanted to talk about resources, but first I'll have a look at some of the things that are coming in. Are you sharing to share or sharing to problem solve? Did you wanna say more about that Jean? What a great comment. It's a good question.

JEAN:
Something I developed at first with my husband, actually, because sometimes you just wanna say it out loud and you don't want him to fix all your problems, you just need to say it. But other times, you do want a hand trying to problem solve, trying to get to a solution. And so, I work with math and students who need supports with math, and sometimes they'll just come in and blah. It's like, 'OK, so are you sharing to share or are you sharing to problem solve? And, it kinda gives them that space to know that they can just share. Like, if what they need to do is just say it out loud, go for it. But then, if they want to have a hand in doing some problem solving, we can do that as well. It has worked really well in my

marriage as well as in my job to avoid challenges. (LAUGHTER) I do it with my kids as well. All sorts of people in my life. Sharing to share or sharing to problem solve. Yeah.

DAWN SCHELL:
Well, and I like that because you're also saying, 'I'm giving permission for both'.

JEAN:
Yeah. What do you want?

DAWN SCHELL:
It helps me figure out what my role is at the moment to help, to be of assistance to you. I can just listen and that's well. And, there's never 'just' in listening. I can listen, I can hear and, or, if you would like me to engage with you in problem-solving, then we can do that too. Yeah.

JEAN:
And it makes sure that it's a space where they get to have that choice.

DAWN SCHELL:
Right.

JEAN:
I'm not imposing that on them, it is their choice. And, I think lack of control is something that not too many of us like. And so, it puts that control back in there and helps to recognize they do have the control with that as well.

DAWN SCHELL:
Yeah. And I really, yeah, go ahead.

JEAN:
I was just seeing some of the chat things. One of the people, I'm using that with my husband. Yeah. (LAUGHS)

DAWN SCHELL:
Yeah. Yeah. What do you need from me right now? What would you like? I just want you to listen. Absolutely, I can do that. Because listening is powerful, and that's something in terms of trauma-informed work. I was looking at the breakdown of the words that is listening with my ears, with my presence, with my heart. And, it has an impact on the other person to be heard. If we think about those times in our life when we really felt heard by somebody else. And who's not like, 'Oh, I completely understand what you're going through', but who's just really hearing what we have to say. It can be a powerful experience. It can either lift our burden or it helps us clear up our own thinking so that we know, now we've kind of cleared up the clutter of that. And maybe, we've heard ourselves say our own answers. And, we've recognized again our own strengths, our own wisdom that we can move forward with. So it's lovely. I like the phrasing that you've used and a couple of you have named some of those as well.

What do you need from me? Yeah. Is this listening or problem solving? Just one quick aside, we McGill University years ago, two graduate students offered, they set up a volunteer program called Venting Over Tea. And so, they set it up. There's people just need to vent, well, we have volunteers who are willing to listen to your vent. So, you can sign up on our thing and somebody will meet you for tea or

coffee at a place and you can just vent. And then they said, 'We think the world would be a better place if people had more opportunities to simply vent without getting the advice or the solutions, et cetera'. So, one of my directors here at Student Wellness says, 'I think we need to set that up on our campus'. So, coming soon to a campus near you, Venting Over Tea. Yeah, I like that, Raymond. Is this a ranting moment? Because it's OK. I was screaming for us. Hey, maybe it just needs random rooms for screaming on campuses too. There could be lots of those kinds of opportunities. So, let me share some resources as we go along, and in the interest of consent, there's many resources that people have shared here and we would love some.

How can we navigate that, Robynne? I thought about how we can share some of the resources that have been shared in the chat.

ROBYNNE:
Yeah, everybody that shared is OK with us including them in our email. I did open them up and in the event that they're OK with them being shared out.

DAWN SCHELL:
OK. Right. So, I have listed some trauma resources, some resources here first on trauma. The Manitoba Trauma Information and Education Center is stellar, as is the SAMHSA. It's a big document, 'Concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach'. Tend Academy has education and resources for helping professionals, but that also works for us. So, back to Theresa's point earlier about we need a break too sometimes. It is thinking about how do we navigate these pieces where we may be exposed to or we're hearing stories. We're living with, carrying the load for other people who may be experiencing trauma. But, there's some excellent resources on Tend Academy and helpguide in Anxiety Canada. There's just some good general articles and information on trauma if you want to expand your understanding of that. Next slide, please. Then pulled together a number of these resources on higher education and trauma-informed pedagogy. So, there's the trauma-informed practices guide that I mentioned earlier.

Trauma-informed teaching resources, which this Minnesota University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, they have a fabulous site where they've just listed a whole bunch of things. They're like, there's articles, there's descriptors, there's all kinds of things that have come through. Just really well thought out, very beautifully put together. So, you can dip in or out, you can look at blogs or other kinds of things that they've listed. You can watch little videos. It's really well done. As well as the creating spaces for trauma-informed care in higher education. I mentioned her work earlier. There's a blog from Dalhousie. And, UCI University of California, Irvine has their Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation, has some great information as well. And, they also have a checklist. So, it was really quite neat to look at practices and values and thinking for yourself, 'What are three things I can do in these different areas'? Next slide, please. And again, for teams and workplaces, some people are asking about that as well.

There are these top two. They're organizational self-assessment, looking at trauma in organizations, like, how do we have these conversations? How do we get together? How do we share some thoughts about that? How do we get ready to have the conversation as you were mentioning earlier? The Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute has a little book. And, I put a dollar sign there 'cause it costs, I think, $6 or $7 to get the book. But, they intended to be, again, a conversation starter, practical information. Then, there is the link to understanding workplace trauma and employee's well-being. So, there's a lot of really good information. Next slide, please. And then, there's these two things both related to Shawn

Gimwright's work on healing-centered engagement which is a healing-centered approach to addressing trauma. Requires that different question that we've named earlier and looks at those who are exposed to trauma as agents in the creation of their own wellbeing rather than victims. So, some interesting work.

And, he's written a book called 'Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Activists are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart', which is just a delightful title for a book. And so, there's some good information there. It's stuff that I'm keep being reminded of over time. That there's ways to look at this, not just using the trauma word, but really looking at the healing and the hope that comes with that as well. That's what I have to present, and I see other people are sharing some great information in the resources here as well. The Missouri Model for Trauma-informed Schools. And so, I will open it up to any other comments or questions or things that you would like to ask or share. Before I go to, I think the next slide is the 'thank you' slide. (CHUCKLES) Yes, it is.

ROBYNNE:
Awesome. Well, thank you, Dawn, so much for a great session, and thanks to the participants. It was so cool.

DAWN SCHELL:
Yes.

ROBYNNE:
To watch all that interaction and sharing of resources. So, we will definitely share whatever we can through our chat. So, yeah. So, thanks so much, everybody, and thanks, Dawn.

DAWN SCHELL:
Yeah. So, I'm happy to hang around for a bit if people have other questions or comments. And again, I do so appreciate the engagement and the conversation that we've had here. Clearly, it fits. It's hitting a note that a lot of us wanna be having these conversations. Very important to be having. So, thank you all for all of your participation.