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# TRAUMA-INFORMED FACILITATION

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I acknowledge and respect the ləkʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day*

# POLL

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How's the weather with you today?

# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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- Presentation is 1.5 hours long.
- Questions and reflections are encouraged.
- Handouts will be available at the end.
- If online, remember to use the mute button.
- If online, leaving your camera on is optional.

# WHAT WE ARE HERE TO DO TODAY

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- My background and context in which I do my work
- Definitions
  - Trauma
  - Trauma-informed
- Examples of applying a trauma-informed lens
- Tips, Tools and Strategies
  - Tapping into the wisdom in this room
- Resources



# SUPPORT AND SELF-CARE

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1

Take any actions you need for your own well-being:

- Pause
- Ground yourself
- Take a break or leave (give us a thumbs-up as you're leaving so we know you're okay)

2

Share only if you are comfortable

3

If you need further support, reach out after the session

# MY BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Places I have worked over the past 35 years

- Victoria Sexual Assault Centre
- Mary Manning – Child Sexual Abuse Centre
- WorkStreams – youth employment programming
- UVic – Mental Health outreach

# DEFINITIONS

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# TRAUMA

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- A traumatic event can involve a single experience, or enduring repeated events, that completely overwhelm the individual's ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved in that experience.
- Who does it affect?
  - Individuals
  - Families
  - Communities
  - Cultures
  - Service Providers
  - Organizations and institutions

# TYPES OF TRAUMA

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- Interpersonal
- External
- Developmental
- Historical

# EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

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- Neurobiological
- Relational
- Spiritual
- Cognitive
- Behavioural
- Emotional
- Physical

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YOU MAY HAVE  
HEARD THESE  
TERMS

Trauma aware

Trauma sensitive

Trauma responsive

Trauma informed

# BEING INFORMED ABOUT TRAUMA

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Means knowing how we can help



# TRAUMA-INFORMED

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- A trauma informed system:
  - Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential paths for healing;
  - Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in faculty, staff, students, and others involved with the system
  - Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices and settings.
  - Is designed to avoid re-traumatizing

Source: SAMHSA 2014



# TRAUMA-INFORMED WORK

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- Understanding the effects of trauma on educators & students and practicing methods that promote resilience & prevent further harm
- Language matters
  - Shift our focus from “what’s wrong with you” to “what happened to you”
  - Trauma and shame are closely connected
    - Provide non-shaming responses to what someone shares with us
  - Using respectful, hopeful language

# TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY

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- ... pedagogical practice that keeps trauma, its prevalence, and how it affects an individual, in mind. These practices are very similar to [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) and include practices such as:
  - Providing content information in advance
  - Using content descriptions, especially for potentially triggering media
  - Creating a safe and inclusive framework for discussions
  - Checking in on students
  - Encouraging community building and sense of belonging
  - Allowing for multiple ways to engage with course content
  - Building flexibility into assessment and absence policies
  - Valuing student input and feedback

# PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED WORK

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- Physical, emotional, social and academic safety
- Trustworthiness and transparency
- Support and connection
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment, voice and control
- Social justice
- Resilience, growth and change

Source: SAMHSA 2014

# Being TI means applying trauma-informed principles

Safety	Trustworthiness & Transparency	Support & Connection	Collaboration & Mutuality	Empowerment, Voice, & Choice	Social Justice	Resilience, Growth, & Change
Creating an environment that respects and accepts all class members and helps them feel safe, including when they make mistakes.	Making course expectations clear, ensuring consistency in practice, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and minimizing disappointment.	Connecting with appropriate peer and professional resources to support academic, personal, and professional success.	Acting as allies rather than as adversaries and creating opportunities to share power and make decisions.	Building in opportunities to make choices, be heard, build skills, and develop confidence and competence.	Striving to be aware of and responsive to forms of privilege and power and respecting one another's diverse experiences and identities.	Recognizing strengths and resilience and providing feedback to help each other grow and change.

(Principles adapted from [Fallot & Harris, 2009](#); [SAMHSA, 2014](#))



# AN EXAMPLE OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE AT UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

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- Student Support Coordination
  - Cultivate genuine, authentic & compassionate relationships
  - Appreciating the complexity of individual experiences and responses
  - Recognize signs & symptoms of trauma
  - Apply a strengths-based perspective
  - Build safety, trust, and connection
  - Integrate knowledge of trauma into policies, procedures, practices and settings

WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING THAT'S  
ALREADY TRAUMA-  
INFORMED?

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# WHAT ARE WE DOING?

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- How do you create an environment in which people feel safe, accepted, and respected, including feeling safe to make and learn from mistakes?
- How do you make your expectations clear, ensure consistency in practice, maintain appropriate boundaries, and minimize disappointment?
- How do you connect students and colleagues with appropriate resources to help them succeed academically, personally, and professionally?
- How do you help students and colleagues provide input, share power, and perceive you as an ally rather than an adversary?
- How do you empower students and colleagues to make choices, advocate for themselves, and develop confidence and competence in their knowledge and skills?
- How are you responsive to issues of privilege and power, and how do you acknowledge and respect students' and colleagues' diverse experiences and identities
- How do you recognize students' and colleagues' strengths and resilience and provide feedback that helps everyone grow and change



WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO TO HELP  
(RE)ESTABLISH A SENSE OF CONTROL,  
CONNECTION, AND MEANING?

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# FACILITATING DISCUSSION ON DIFFICULT TOPICS

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- Take preventative measures
  - Materials handed out ahead of time and have students engage with content through reflective activities
  - Inform participants of what to expect in facilitation
- Prepare yourself for in the moment reactions (activation)
- Provide strategies for grounding and settling
- Suggestions for wording
  - *Throughout this presentation, trauma and events that may prompt a trauma response will be discussed. There will also be a scenario depicting a disclosure of trauma that uses words only.*
  - *Please take breaks as needed and engage in the way that feels safe and comfortable to you.*
- If you feel like the discussion is becoming nonproductive or spiraling out of control, pause the discussion and have everyone perform grounding/settling exercises

# HOW CAN WE HOLD SPACE?

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- Resisting the temptation to help by ‘fixing’
- The way we
  - Show up
  - Release control
  - Learn to trust each other’s wisdom and autonomy
  - Stay present in the midst of disruption

Source: <https://centreforholdingspace.com/>



TRAUMA



UPSET OR DISCOMFORT



# RESOURCES



## RESOURCES – TRAUMA (GENERAL)

- [Manitoba Trauma information and education centre](#)
- [SAMHSA – concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach](#) (2014)
- [Tend Academy](#) – Education and Resources for Helping Professionals
- Anxiety Canada – [articles on trauma](#)
- [Helpguide](#)

# RESOURCES – HIGHER EDUCATION & TRAUMA- INFORMED

- [Trauma-informed practices for post secondary education: a guide](#)
- [Trauma-informed teaching resources](#) – Minnesota State University Centre for Excellence in teaching and learning
- [Creating spaces for trauma-informed care in higher education](#)
- [Trauma-informed pedagogy](#) – Dalhousie blog
- [Trauma-informed pedagogy](#) – UCI Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation
  - [Checklist from UCI](#) for integrating trauma-informed practices and values.

# RESOURCES – TEAMS & WORKPLACES

- Manitoba Trauma and Information Education Centre
  - [Organizational Self Assessment](#)
- Workplace Strategies for Mental Health
  - [Trauma in Organizations](#)
- Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute
  - [A little book about Trauma-informed workplaces](#) (\$) and so much more!
- [Understanding workplace trauma and employee wellbeing](#)

# RESOURCES – HEALING- CENTERED ENGAGEMENT

Shawn Ginwright on Healing-centered engagement

A healing centered approach to addressing trauma requires a different question that moves beyond “what happened to you” to “what’s right with you” and views those exposed to trauma as agents in the creation of their own well-being rather than victims of traumatic events.

- <https://medium.com/@ginwright/the-future-of-healing-shifting-from-trauma-informed-care-to-healing-centered-engagement-634f557ce69c>

Blog post on Ginwright’s book - Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Activists are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart.

- <http://www.expandedlearning360-365.com/blog/shifting-from-trauma-informed-care-to-healing-centered-engagement>

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# THANK YOU

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