

FOSTERING TRAUMA-INFORMED CONSUMER LEADERSHIP

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Goals of the Webinar

- Discuss the value of teaching consumer leaders trauma-informed care and trauma-informed leadership skills
- Describe important considerations in creating safe and engaging spaces
- Discuss how organizations can support the growth of these skills
- Provide examples of relevant trainings, tools and activities for fostering these skills in consumer leaders

What is Trauma-Informed Leadership?

Understanding trauma and its effects in order to recruit, engage, and lead the work in ways that respects where individuals are at and creates safe spaces for everyone to participate and engage

What we Mean by 'Trauma'

Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, sexual assault, or natural disaster.

Trauma is impacted by the 3 E's: the event, the experience of the event, and the effects of the event

What we Mean by 'Trauma'

Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical.

Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea.

Key Aspects of Trauma for Consumer Leaders to Understand

- Impact on thoughts, feelings, behaviors, relationships
- Key factors of recovery
- Core principles of trauma-informed care
- Importance of, and how to, create safe spaces
- Secondary trauma and self-care

Value of Trauma-Informed Leadership for Consumer Leaders

- Create engagement spaces that are safe for other consumers and themselves
- Foster growth as individuals and leaders
- Model positive behavior and interactions for others
- Preparation for shared decision making
- Informed participation in feedback

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

- Effective, sensitive communication
- Emotional intelligence
- Group participation/facilitation
- Conflict resolution and de-escalation
- Cultural humility

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

Effective, Sensitive Communication

- Consider offering a confidential opportunity for trauma-related disclosures including triggers or comforting messages
- Active, patient listening
- Empathetic and non-judgmental communication

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

Emotional Intelligence

- Being aware of your emotions and being able to read how others are feeling
- Understand how to process your own emotions and consider how to react
- Anticipate how others may feel or respond

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

Group Participation/Facilitation

- Appropriately learning about the group
- Understanding and managing group dynamics
- Building consensus and engaging participation

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

Conflict Resolution and De-Escalation

- Having a better understanding of the group's members and circumstances will help leaders and facilitators to anticipate where problems may come up and consider and prepare possible de-escalation options
- Understand how to create open participation with respectful disagreement

Key Trauma-Informed Leadership Skills

Cultural Humility

- If you have knowledge of one culture, it doesn't mean you are an expert for that culture
- Allowing others to define their culture and identity
- Suspend ideas about what you know, or what you think you know, about a person based on generalizations about their culture.

Relevant Values

- Respect for individuals and communities
- Authenticity
- Egalitarianism
- Humility
- Respect for science, learning and knowledge

Values Drive Community

- Creating safe, productive spaces for consumers and others with those values to care for people and communities
- Values, spirit, tone, culture, atmosphere matter
 - Words and policies will not work if the spirit is wrong
- Learning when to assume the best of intentions in others
 - Building a community where it is safer to assume the best

Creating Nurturing Spaces

- Listen and be attentive - all groups are different and there may be unexpected diversity in the group
- Focus on tone rather than regulations
 - Trust, respect, openness
 - Atmosphere and body language of people
 - Developing guidelines that allow for flexibility
 - Space considerations - freedom to leave, seeing faces, no one behind

Creating Egalitarian Spaces

- Egalitarian models
 - Equal respect for all positions including leadership, while acknowledging power dynamics
- Every individual is of the same inherent value

Basic Psychological Needs From Self-Determination Theory

- Autonomy
- Competence
- Relatedness

Requires an environment with enough perceived safety to allow for openness to experience.
This will vary based on the group's members.

Autonomy

- Autonomy in this context means perceived choicefulness - Do I have real choices in my life?
- Environments can be supportive of a person feeling a sense of autonomy and those environments lead to many good outcomes

Competence

- A person's sense of their own competence or effectiveness is related to whether they want to keep doing a task or job
- Environments can encourage perceived competence by having tasks and challenges at the 'right' level

Relatedness

- A person's perceived relatedness to others and comfort with self is related to intrinsic motivation and many positive outcomes
- Work environments can encourage or get in the way of a person's perceived relatedness

‘Let’s be careful out there’

- Accountability to the well-being of patients and staff
 - Do no harm
 - Pay attention to the emotional climate of the setting over the need to ‘just get it done’
 - Assumption that re-traumatization is possible
 - Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s “Quadruple aim” - beginning to recognize risks to caregivers

Specific risks for those in recovery

- Pressure of “role-model” status
- Getting to what feels comfortable or normal may not go well with a leadership role
 - Learning a new set of ‘what’s comfortable’
- Develop proactive solutions anticipating challenges to recovery
- Humor is very powerful, so be very sensitive to the different perspectives of group members, and what is not known

Humor

- What's funny to someone...
- At the root of what's funny is sometimes an uncomfortable truth or possible truth
 - If you're not looking to make some people feel uncomfortable, have a tight filter on your humor - you may never hear from those who were hurt or offended

Organizational Steps in Supporting Trauma-Informed Leadership

- Determine the needs/goals of the group in terms of leadership skills and how to implement trauma-informed work into their engagement spaces
- Consider what supports are needed and what organizational resources are available
- Develop plan for implementation and evaluation

Necessary Organizational Supports

- Commitment to sharing knowledge and expertise
- Willingness to have difficult conversations
- Space and resources for training
- Staff support
- Provide opportunities to practice skills

Want more?

The National Consumer Advisory Board is hosting a Learning Lab on this topic at this year's National Health Care for the Homeless Conference

- Examples of how to train on trauma and trauma-informed care in accessible forms
- Practical applications of what consumers can do to create safe spaces and trauma-informed leadership

Sign up now at nhchc.org



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Questions?