



Definitions

Module 1 What is Trauma Informed Care?

Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. Experiences can refer to one event, a series of events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful and have lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being

Trauma Informed Care is an approach that acknowledges the existence and significance trauma (past and present) plays in the health and recovery of our patients/clients. The approach includes ensuring safety of both patient/client and provider; using supportive practices and environments to engage patient/client (s); being patient/client focused through collaboration and choice; and acknowledging the strength and resilience of the individual.

Three key elements of a trauma-informed approach are (1) *realizing* how often trauma occurs; (2) *recognizing* how trauma affects all individuals involved with the program, organization, or system, including its own workforce; and (3) *responding* by putting this knowledge into practice.

Trauma Specific Practices are therapies that facilitate healing from trauma such as trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), skills development, sensorimotor psychotherapy, Somatic Experiencing, Neurosequential Model (NMT) among others. These practices are evidence-based practices.

Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) is a condition that arises as a response to stress. The symptoms develop within four (4) weeks of the event. ASD is more likely experienced in relation to one specific trauma than the experience of long term, chronic exposure

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the most commonly diagnosed trauma related disorder. Symptoms last more than four (4) weeks and can be very debilitating





Module 2 What is Trauma?

Adverse Childhood Experiences Trauma can also be adverse *conditions* in the environment, such as sexual, physical and psychological abuse, neglect, witnessing violence in the home and living in poverty, living close to war and crime, living with someone with a mental health or substance use disorder.

These experiences are termed **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**, and often are committed by trusted adults, caregivers and/or older figures in the person's life.

Developmental trauma refers to harmful experiences that happen during an individual's developing years – in infancy, childhood, adolescence and even young adulthood

Intergenerational Trauma is an aspect of historical trauma and describes the psychological and/or emotional effects that can be experienced by people who have long term connection to trauma survivors. Memories of the trauma, as well as coping strategies and the ways people adapt to make room for the trauma get passed from one generation to the next.

Domestic violence also known as interpersonal violence is a pattern of actual or threatened physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse between adults in an intimate relationship.

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Social Determinants of Health are factors and conditions that influence the health of populations. They include income and social status; social support networks; education; employment/working conditions; social environments; physical environments; personal health practices and coping skills; healthy child development; gender; and culture.

Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) refers to positive changes that are experienced by an individual as a result of a struggle with highly challenging life circumstances.





Module 3 Disaster Preparation and Response

Disaster is a sudden, damaging event that interrupts a community's ability to function and may cause injuries, loss of life, property damage, social disruption and damage to the environment. Often the community is not able to cope with only its own resources and outside help is needed.

Module 4 Loss and Grief after Trauma

Grief is an emotional response to loss - the feelings that come up when a person suffers a loss

Loss is the breaking of a bond that has been formed with a person, place, thing or idea (including beliefs)

Grieving is the process of recognizing and acknowledging the loss, experiencing the grief that comes about because of the loss, finding new meaning and making the loss part of a new normal

Mourning is the expression of sorrow usually through rituals, ceremonies or with other people

Bereavement is the state of having suffered a loss. Grief and mourning are two components of bereavement.

Module 5 Trauma in Human Service Workers

Burnout is a term that describes a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion that is often caused by excessive and/or continuous stress over time. Anyone in any profession can be impacted by burnout.





Compassion Fatigue (CF) has also been called secondary traumatic stress. It is a gradual process that leaves a person feeling like they have little left to give and there is nothing left for them resulting in difficulty showing empathy and compassion to others and oneself. People may struggle to rebound from challenging work and lose enjoyment in their work.

Vicarious trauma is a response found in helpers who work with trauma survivors. It builds up over time with the experiences of bearing witness to the worst of human experiences — torture, violence, neglect, aggression, intense loss and pain. When a helper opens themselves to these processes they can experience a profound shift in the way they see, experience and understand the world. Helpers notice that their core beliefs about the world and about themselves are changed, and maybe damaged by being repeatedly exposed to traumatic stories. Having core beliefs shaken is a key distinguishing feature of vicarious trauma.

Secondary traumatic stress is the emotional upset that happens when you hear stories from a survivor about their experiences of trauma. The symptoms are similar to those of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or acute stress disorder.

Second Victim Syndrome refers to any healthcare professional who experiences emotional distress following an adverse medical event. Health care systems are highly complex environments; unfortunately events that cause harm to a patient happen. The events are not expected and there was no intention to cause harm.

Module 6 Emotional Literacy

Emotional literacy is a broad concept which includes understanding, expressing, and managing emotions. Being emotionally literate requires that you know what emotions you and others have, how strong they are, what causes them and taking responsibility for how your emotions affect others.

