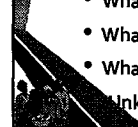


The Impact of Historical Trauma On the
Health: African Americans
September 12, 2017

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Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, Inc.



Underlying Assumptions about Our Cultural Lens


- Reality is what we take to be true.
- What we take to be true is what we believe.
- What we believe is based upon our perceptions.
- What we perceive depends on what we look for.
- What we look for depends on what we think.
- What we think depends on what we perceive.
- What we perceive determines what we take to be true.
- What we take to be true is our reality.

(Unknown author)



"No one is born hating another person because
of the color of his skin, or his background, or
his religion. People learn to hate, and if they
can learn to hate, they can be taught to love,
for love comes more naturally to the human
heart than its opposite."
Nelson Mandela

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What is Race?

DVD: Race –The Power of An Illusion

Is not a biological construct that
reflects innate differences,

But a social construct that
precisely captures the impacts of
racism.

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Statements From Race: the power of an Illusion

- Race and freedom evolved together in the United States. The idea of race helped rationalize why some people could be denied the rights and freedom that others took for granted.
- Race justified social inequalities as natural. As the race idea evolved, white superiority became "common sense" in the US.
- It helped justify slavery, Indian conquest, the exclusion of Asian immigrants, and the taking of Mexican lands in spite of our belief in democracy and freedom.
- Racial practices were institutionalized within US government, laws, and society.

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Microaggressions

- Microaggression Theory- a term, coined by Professor Pierce in 1970, used to describe insults and dismissals he regularly witnessed non-black Americans inflict on African Americans. Later, economist Mary Rowe extended the term to include similar aggressions directed at women, and those of different abilities, religions, and other socially marginalized groups. Eventually, the term came to encompass the casual degradation of any socially marginalized group, such as the poor and the disabled.
- It has been argued that the microaggression concept "fits into a larger class of conflict tactics in which the aggrieved seek to attract and mobilize the support of third parties"
- Psychologist Derald Wing Sue defines microaggressions as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership. She describes it as generally happening below the level of awareness of well-intentioned members of the dominant culture"

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Types of Racism

- Institutional Racism -Prejudice means differential assumptions about the abilities, motives, and intentions of others according to their race. Discrimination means differential actions toward others according to their race. It includes acts of commission and omission
- Personally Mediated Racism or Prejudice/ Discrimination-Prejudice means differential assumptions about the abilities, motives, and intentions of others according to their race. Discrimination means differential actions toward others according to their race. It includes acts of commission and omission
- Internal Racism-Acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their abilities and intrinsic worth.

Source: Dr. Camara Jones, CDC

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Implicit and Explicit Bias

- Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These bias, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. Residing deep in the subconscious, these bias are different from known or explicit bias.
- Characteristics of Implicit biases
 - Pervasive, everyone possesses them, even people with avowed commitments to impartiality such as judges.
 - Implicit and explicit biases are related but not distinct mental constructs. They are not mutually exclusive and may even reinforce each other.
 - They do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
 - Tend to hold implicit bias that favor or own group
 - Implicit bias are malleable. They can be unlearned.

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The Normalization of Deviance

- Normalization refers to social processes through which ideas and actions come to be seen as 'normal' and becomes taken for granted or natural in everyday life. As Foucault used the term, normalization involved the construction of an idealized norm of conduct.... And then rewarding and punishing individuals for conforming to or deviating from this ideal
- Deviance means departing from the norm and can be biased toward the positive or negative. Most, however, think that "deviant behavior" is someone who is breaking the law or acting out in a negative manner.

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The Normalization of Deviance

- Prielipp and others ask: Do we (Un)Knowingly Accept Doing the Wrong Thing? Examples
 1. Shuttle Challenger – O-ring erosion problems ignored
 2. MD, breaking sterile field
 3. Flint – water used annually for 2 weeks without incident

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The Normalization of Deviance

- Deviance means departing from the norm and can be biased toward the positive or negative. Most, however, think that "deviant behavior" is someone who is breaking the law or acting out in a negative manner.
- Deviance, like conformity, is shaped by society.
Social Foundations of deviance:
 1. Symbolic interaction- How people define deviance in everyday situations. The negative label is **stigma**
 3. Social conflict – linked to social inequality. What is labeled "deviant" is dependent upon who is in power- In our society- the rich and powerful have the resources to resist deviant labeling.

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Life Course Concepts

- It is the study of people's lives, structural contexts, and social change. In particular, it directs attention to the powerful connection between individual lives and the historical and socioeconomic context in which these lives unfold.
- The family is perceived as a micro social group within a macro social context—a "collection of individuals with shared history who interact within ever-changing social contexts across ever increasing time and space" (Bengston and Allen 1993, p. 470).

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Life Course Concepts

- Life course examines an individual's life history and sees, for example, how early events influence future decisions and events.
- The life course perspective elaborates the importance of time, context, process, and meaning on human development and family life

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How the Past Shapes the Future

- Early life course decisions, opportunities, and conditions affect later outcomes.
- The past has the potential to shape the present, and the future. This can occur at various levels. Cohort and/or individual/family.
- The timing and conditions of events can set up a chain reaction of experiences. e.g. reproduction of poverty, cycle of family violence, cycle of community violence or community resilience.

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Life Course Concepts

- The increased research on life course offers unique opportunities to interconnect historical and cultural location and changes in the societal institutions with the experiences of individuals and families.
- The advancement of research in this area will enable researchers to extend the knowledge pertaining to continuity and discontinuity in family life amid ever-changing social, economic, and global environments.

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How the Past Shapes the Future

- The past, therefore, can significantly affect later life outcomes such as SES, mental health, physical functioning, and marital patterns.
- **This long term view, with its recognition of cumulative advantage or disadvantage, is particularly valuable for understanding social inequality in later life and creating social policy and programs**

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Historical Trauma Theory

- New concept in public health
- The premise is that populations historically subjected to long-term, mass trauma— colonialism, slavery, war, genocide, Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration, exhibit a higher prevalence of disease even several generations after the original trauma occurred.

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Historical Trauma Theory

- 2) Political/economic theory which addresses the political, economic and structural determinants of health and disease such as unjust power relations and class inequality; and
- 3) Social/ecological systems theory which recognizes the multilevel dynamics and interdependencies of present/past, proximate/distal, and life course factors in disease causation.

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Historical Trauma Theory

- It incorporates and builds upon three theoretical frameworks in social epidemiology:
- 1) Psychosocial which links disease to both physical and psychological stress. In this framework it not only believed that the stressors create susceptibility to disease, but also acts as a direct pathogenic mechanism affecting biological systems in the body;

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Historical Trauma Theory

- According to Elder " lives are lived in specific historical times and places....if historical times and places change, they change the way people live their lives. I.e. Pre and post industrialization in Milwaukee for the African American community.
- According to Sotero, Understanding how historical trauma influences the current health status of racial/ethnic populations in the US may provide new directions and insights for eliminating health disparities.

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Historical Trauma Theory

Sotero states that based on the literature, there are at least four distinct assumptions underpinning this theory:

- 1) Mass trauma is deliberately and systematically inflicted upon a target population by a subjugating, dominant population;
- 2) Trauma is not limited to a single catastrophic event, but continues over an extended period of time;
- 3) Traumatic events reverberate throughout the population creating a universal experience of trauma; and
- 4) The magnitude of the trauma experience derails the population from its natural, projected historical course resulting in a legacy of physical, psychological, social and economic disparities that persist across generations.

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Historical Trauma

- Primary generations are the direct victims of subjugation and loss, which threaten their population and economic and cultural survival.
- Secondary and subsequent generations are affected by the original trauma through various means.
- Extreme trauma may lead to subsequent impairments in the capacity of parenting. Physical and emotional trauma can impair genetic function and expression.
- Secondary and subsequent generations also experience "vicarious traumatization through the collective memory, storytelling and oral traditions of the population.
- Traumatic events become embedded in the collective memories of the population.

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Historical Trauma Theory Three Basic Construct

- 1. The Historical Trauma Experience- All trauma experiences are technically historical in nature.

The experiences of chronic trauma created deep emotional scars affecting life-long patterns of interpersonal relationships, the ability to master life-skills and role performance.

Trauma as the result of deliberate intent produces a profound sense of dismay and alienation. Intentional violence threatens basic assumptions about an orderly, just world and the intrinsic invulnerability and worthiness of the individual.

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Historical Trauma

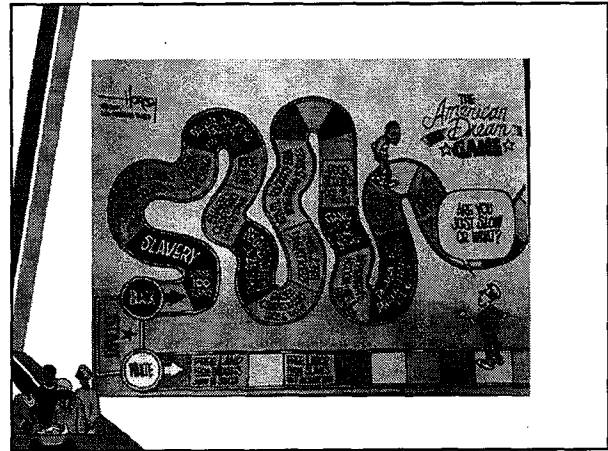
- Offspring are taught to share in the ancestral pain of their people and may have strong feelings of unresolved grief, persecution and distrust. They may also experience original trauma through loss of culture and language, as well as through proximate, first hand experiences of discrimination, injustice, poverty, and social inequality. Such experiences validate their ancestral knowledge of historical trauma and reinforce the historical trauma experience and response.
- Finally, the cumulative effects of historical trauma on the population mitigated to some degree by the existence of resiliency and other protective factors, result in a surfeit of social and physical ills that ultimately lead to population-specific health disparities.

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Historical Trauma Implications for Public Health and Research

- Modern epidemiology embraces a paradigm that "focuses on the individual, blames the victim, and produces interventions that can be harmful."
- Some professionals have begun to change this by developing intervention programs that integrate theories of historical trauma, community capacity and community empowerment.
- These programs are designed to be holistic, culturally relevant, and respectful of indigenous self-understanding of historical trauma and its impact on community health.
- Connecting the past with the present is inherent in many cultural traditions. It creates an emotional and psychological release from blame and guilt about health status, empowers individuals and communities to address the root cause of poor health and allows for capacity building unique to culture, community and social structure.

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AFRICAN AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP STATUS WEALTH ACCUMULATION and HEALTH EXPERIENCE FROM 1619 TO 2016				
TIME SPAN	CITIZENSHIP STATUS -YRS	Experience accounts for this proportion of time in US	STATUS	HEALTH & HEALTH SYSTEM EXPERIENCE
1619-1865	246 years	62%	Chattel slavery	Disparate/inequitable treatment poor health status & outcomes. "Slave health deficit" & "Slave health sub-system" in effect
1865-1965	100 years	25%	Jim Crow Virtually no citizenship rights	Absent or inferior treatment and facilities. <i>De jure</i> segregation/discrimination in South, <i>de facto</i> throughout most of health system. "Slave health deficit" uncorrected
1965-2015	51 years	13%	Most citizenship rights: USA struggles to transition from segregation & discrimination to integration of AA as equal Citizens	So. med school desegregation 1944; Imhotep Hospital Integration Conf. 1957-1964, hospital desegregation in federal courts 1964. Disparate health status, outcomes, and services with apartheid, discrimination, institutional racism and bias in effect.
TOTAL	397 years	100%	The struggle continues	HEALTH DISPARITIES/INEQUITIES

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Source: Byrd, WM, Clayton, LA. An American Health Dilemma, Volume 1, A Medical History of African Americans and the Problem of Race. Reprintings to 1990. New York, NY: Routledge. 2000. Data Updated 2016

American Slavery: 1619-1865

"The bound labor of at least twelve generations of black people".

- Slavery created wealth for slaveholders, wealth that was translated into extraordinary political power. The slave trade and the products created by slaves' labor, particularly cotton, provided the basis for America's wealth as a nation, underwriting the country's industrial revolution and enabling it to project its power into the rest of the world.

Slavery and the Making of America (PBS)
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Definition of Social Determinants of Health

- Are the economic and social conditions under which people live which determine their health. They are "societal risk conditions such as, education, socioeconomic status, segregation, racism rather than individual risk factors that either increase or decrease the risk for a disease, for example for cardiovascular disease and type II diabetes.

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Human Agency and Personal Control

- However, it should be recognized that the ability to make specific choices depends on opportunities and constraints.
- The concept of control cycles suggest that families and individuals modify their expectations and behavior in response to changes in either needs or resources.

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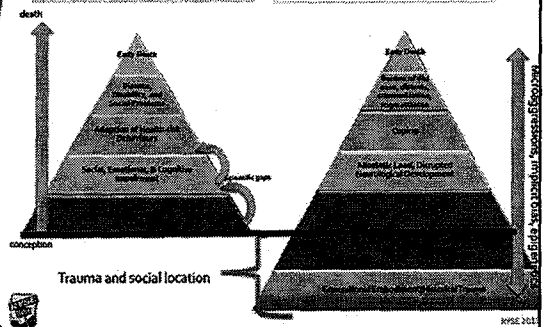
Human Agency and Personal Control

- According to life course perspective, individuals are active agents who not only mediate the effect of social structure, but also make decisions and set goals that shape social structure.
- Individuals are assumed to have the capacity to engage in planful competence, which refers to thoughtful, proactive, and self-controlled processes that underlie one's choices about institutional involvements and social relationships.

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Trauma and Social Location

Adverse Childhood Experiences Historical Trauma/Embodiment



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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- African Americans has lived in Wisconsin since the early 1800s
- John Oliver, came to Milwaukee in 1835 and voted in the first election held. This was prior to Wisconsin having a state constitution in 1845.
- By 1860, there were over 100 African Americans in Milwaukee. The state of Wisconsin did not let African Americans vote even though the state had passed a law in 1849 guaranteeing African Americans voting rights.
- In 1866, Ezekiel Gillespie who came to Milwaukee in 1854, sued for the right to vote and his case went to the Wisconsin supreme Court. Eventually, the Supreme Court ruled in his favor.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- However, these new workers were often the first people to be fired or laid off from their jobs when businesses were not making money. Things were also difficult for African Americans because of the so called Jim Crow laws.
- These laws, in the Northern United States, promoted segregation or separation of African American people from white people. Even though the right to vote in Wisconsin was finally upheld, it took African Americans many decades before they were able to gain other rights.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- Gillespie was also a founding member of Saint Mark's African American Episcopal Church. Members first met in a blacksmith shop. In 1869 the congregation built a church on fourth and Kilbourn Avenue. It later moved to its current location on 16th and Atkinson.
- This occurred 4 years before the United States constitution was amended to say that no United States citizen or any State could be denied the right to vote because of race or color.
- During the 1920s Milwaukee businesses urged African Americans to move to Milwaukee to work in the factories.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- In spite of discrimination, African Americans joined together to form productive communities. Bronzeville was an example of that. Black businesses provided all the needs for African Americans on a daily basis. Between 1910 and 1960 Milwaukee had Mayors who were socialist.
- Although African Americans had lived and worked in Milwaukee for many years, at the turn of the 20th century, they were few in number compared to other ethnicities. That changed drastically between 1905 and 1935 during what was called the first "Great Migration." Milwaukee's population grew steadily and by 1960, 15% of Milwaukee's population was African American.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- But African Americans continued to face discrimination and prejudice. One practice was called "red lining". Some banks marked a red line on a map to indicate an area where they would not loan money. Those areas were most often African American inner city neighborhoods. Because of red-lining many African Americans could not get loans they needed to buy houses.
- In addition, some Milwaukee citizens refused to sell their homes to African Americans and moved out of the city as more African Americans moved in. This "white flight" created a very segregated Milwaukee that still exists today. These events, along with other forms of discrimination, further influenced African Americans to continue their fight for civil rights.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- Milwaukee moved from a German, Irish, and "Yankee" residents before the Civil War and after were arrivals of Slovaks, Russian Jews, Italians, and Polish by 1901. The rapid growth of the African American and Hispanic populations after the Second World War and of the Asian population since the 1980s reflects the population shifts of other cities.
- Politically, Milwaukee shares with most major urban area economic and social problems all too common, such as, crime rate, deteriorating infrastructure, and strained race relations.

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Historical Trauma Milwaukee Style

- After World War II, was the second "Migration". More African Americans came to Milwaukee. But still not in the numbers of the other cities.
- Milwaukee became a "rust belt" in the 1970s. While the city had an economic upturn in the 1990s, the gap between whites and African Americans widen and has not changed.
- The Civil Rights wins of the 1960s changed very little of the daily lives of African Americans in Milwaukee.
- Milwaukee School Desegregation began in 1974 and has not improved the educational outcomes of poor African American children.

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Why is Milwaukee So Bad for Black People?


- K-12 schools in Wisconsin suspend black high school students at a higher rate than anywhere in the country and has the second-highest disparity in suspension rates between white and black students. Milwaukee, the state's biggest city, suspends black high student at a rate nearly double the national average.
- While many rust belt cities, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, etc. have similar histories of African-American struggles, Milwaukee has some of the same problems, but not the same profile, mainly because it isn't well known for its large black population at all. But blacks make up 40 percent of the city.

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Social Determinates Affecting Black Males ability to protect and support themselves and their families in Milwaukee

- Milwaukee Ranks 1st in segregation, 4th in poverty, hyper-segregated across race and class
- Historical barriers to low income housing in suburbs and integration of housing in the city lead to flight of the small black middle class to the periphery of the city and suburbs.
- Since deindustrialization of 1980s, there has been a lack of jobs for unskilled and under-skilled workers. However, a study showed that white males who were felons had 17% better chance of getting a job in Milwaukee than black males with no arrest record. Skill level didn't matter. 2020 unemployment rate for black males over 60%.
- There has been historical barriers to extending transit to suburbs to access jobs. It has been projected that Waukesha county will create 74,000 new jobs in the next ten years and that Milwaukee will create a net 300.
- Wisconsin has the highest incarceration rate of African Americans in the country.
- Poor Community – Criminal Justice relationships.
- Listed in Forbes Magazine as one of the top ten violent cities.
- In 2014, an Annie Casey Report ranked Wisconsin as the worst state to raise African American children.


• Lower educational outcomes for students in both public and voucher/charter schools.



Principles of Trauma Informed Care Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

1. **Safety:** Throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve feel physically and psychologically safe.
2. **Trustworthiness and transparency:** Organizational operations and decisions are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, clients, and family members of those receiving services.
3. **Peer support and mutual self-help:** These are integral to the organizational and service delivery approach and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.

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Life expectancy gap between blacks and whites improves – but not in Wisconsin

By Emily Conover of the Journal Sentinel
Aug. 4, 2014

The discrepancy in life expectancy between black and white Americans is improving – but not in Wisconsin. Wisconsin is the only state in which the life expectancy gap between blacks and whites has grown significantly, particularly for women, according to research published Monday.

Black Americans, on average, do not live as long as white Americans. This difference in life expectancy between blacks and whites, known as the life expectancy gap, is the subject of a new study published in the *Journal Health Affairs*.


The gap, the study shows, has been closing over time, but Midwestern states, and Wisconsin in particular, are lagging in comparison to other states.



Principles of Trauma Informed Care Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

4. **Collaboration and mutuality:** This is a true partnering and leveling of power differences between staff and clients and among organizational staff from direct care staff to administrators. There is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. The organization recognizes that everyone has a role to play in the trauma-informed approach. One does not have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.

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Principles of Trauma Informed Care Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

- 5. Empowerment, voice, and choice: Throughout the organization the clients served, individuals' strengths are recognized, built on and validated and new skills developed as necessary. The organization aims to strengthen the staff's, and family members experience of choice and recognize that every person's experience is unique and requires an individual approach.
- This includes a belief in resilience and in the ability of individuals, organizations, and communities to heal and promote recovery from trauma. This builds on what clients, staff, and communities have to offer, rather than responding to perceived deficits.

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Trauma Informed Services

1. Trauma-informed services recognize the Impact of Violence and victimization on Development and Coping Strategies. The Program recognizes the long-term and pervasive impact of the interpersonal violence and childhood abuse, the experiences of survivors are validated and the difficulties they face in seeking services are recognized. This validation and recognition increase the survivor's sense of safety and hope.

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Principles of Trauma Informed Care Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

- 6. Cultural, historical, and gender issues: The organization actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, geography), offers gender responsive services, leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.

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Trauma Informed Services

2. **Trauma-informed Services Identify Recovery from Trauma as a Primary Goal.** It is important to provide integrated care rather than sequential or parallel.
3. **Trauma-Informed Services Employ an Empowerment Model.** A primary goal of any service provision for survivors is to facilitate the client's ability to take charge of their life, specifically, to have conscious choice and control over one's actions. There must be a partnership between the client and the helper; The goals of the work are mutual and established collaboratively; A client's issues are understood as created or influenced by the sociopolitical context, and the impact of the person's cultural context is also considered.

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Trauma Informed Services

4. Trauma Informed services Strive to Maximize a person's choices and Control Over their success.
5. Trauma-Informed services are based on a relational collaboration. Staff must be aware of the inherent power imbalance in the relationship and do their best to flatten the hierarchy.
6. Trauma Informed services Create an Atmosphere that is respectful of the Survivors' Need for Safety, Respect, and Acceptance.
7. Trauma Informed services Emphasizes Strengths, highlighting Adaptions over Symptoms and Resilience over Pathology.

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"Of all the forms of inequality, Injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhumane."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr

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Trauma Informed Services

8. The Goal of Trauma-informed Services is the Minimize the Possibilities of Retraumatization.

This principle rests on the premise that service providers recognize and understand the potential for retraumatization.

When one understands the abuse of power inherent in all victimization, it becomes clear that the power differential between the person seeking help and the person offering it will be threatening .

Survivors need to have their experience heard and validated. Making connections between their past experiences and their current situation is crucial.

This does not mean pushing them to uncover memories when they are already overwhelmed. It does mean understanding trauma, how current problems relate to the past trauma, and the need to provide them with concrete information about an integrated model of recovery.

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