

BEST PRACTICES IN TRAUMA INFORMED SUPERVISION & LEADERSHIP

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GOALS FOR TODAY

1. Recognize the benefits of having a trauma informed approach as a leader.
2. Understand strategies for leading / supervising that promote psychological safety, trust and healthy teams.
3. Review why and how to create a culture of wellness within your organization.

Always take
care of yourself
first



Take a Break if you need it!

BENEFITS OF TRAUMA INFORMED LEADERSHIP

- It can **increase trust and loyalty** among employees and customers, as they feel valued and cared for by the organization.
- It can **reduce stress and burnout** among employees, as they have access to support and flexibility to cope with their challenges.
- It can **improve productivity and performance** among employees, as they are able to work in a positive and collaborative atmosphere.
- It can **enhance creativity and innovation** among employees, as they are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment or retaliation.
- It can **foster diversity and inclusion** among employees and customers, as they are respected and celebrated for their unique identities and perspectives.

ACCORDING TO SAMHSA'S CONCEPT OF A [TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH](#), "A PROGRAM, ORGANIZATION, OR SYSTEM THAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED:

1. **Realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;
2. **Recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;
3. **Responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and
4. **Seeks** to actively resist *re-traumatization*."

3 Realms of ACEs

Adverse childhood and community experiences (ACEs) can occur in the household, the community, or in the environment and cause toxic stress. Left unaddressed, toxic stress from ACEs harms children and families, organizations, systems and communities, and reduces the ability of individuals and entities to respond to stressful events with resiliency. Research has shown that there are many ways to reduce and heal from toxic stress and build healthy, caring communities.



Thanks to Building Community Resilience Collaborative and Networks and the International Transformational Resilience Coalition for inspiration and guidance. Please visit [ACESConnection.com](https://www.acesconnection.com) to learn more about the science of ACEs and join the movement to prevent ACEs, heal trauma and build resilience.



THE INVISIBLE BAGS WE CARRY



WHICH SIZE BAG ARE YOU CARRYING TODAY?



CREATING A TRAUMA INFORMED ENVIRONMENT

Whenever possible we want to create an environment that promotes physical and emotional safety, decreases stress on clients and staff, and actively work towards preventing re-traumatization.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



DEFINITIONS

Psychological safety is a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.

Psychological safety allows for moderate risk-taking, speaking your mind, creativity, and sticking your neck out without fear of having it cut off

When **psychological safety** is prioritized, team members feel confident that no one on the team will embarrass or punish anyone else for admitting a mistake, asking a question, or offering a new idea.

WHY DO WE NOT ALWAYS FEEL PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE IN THE WORKPLACE?



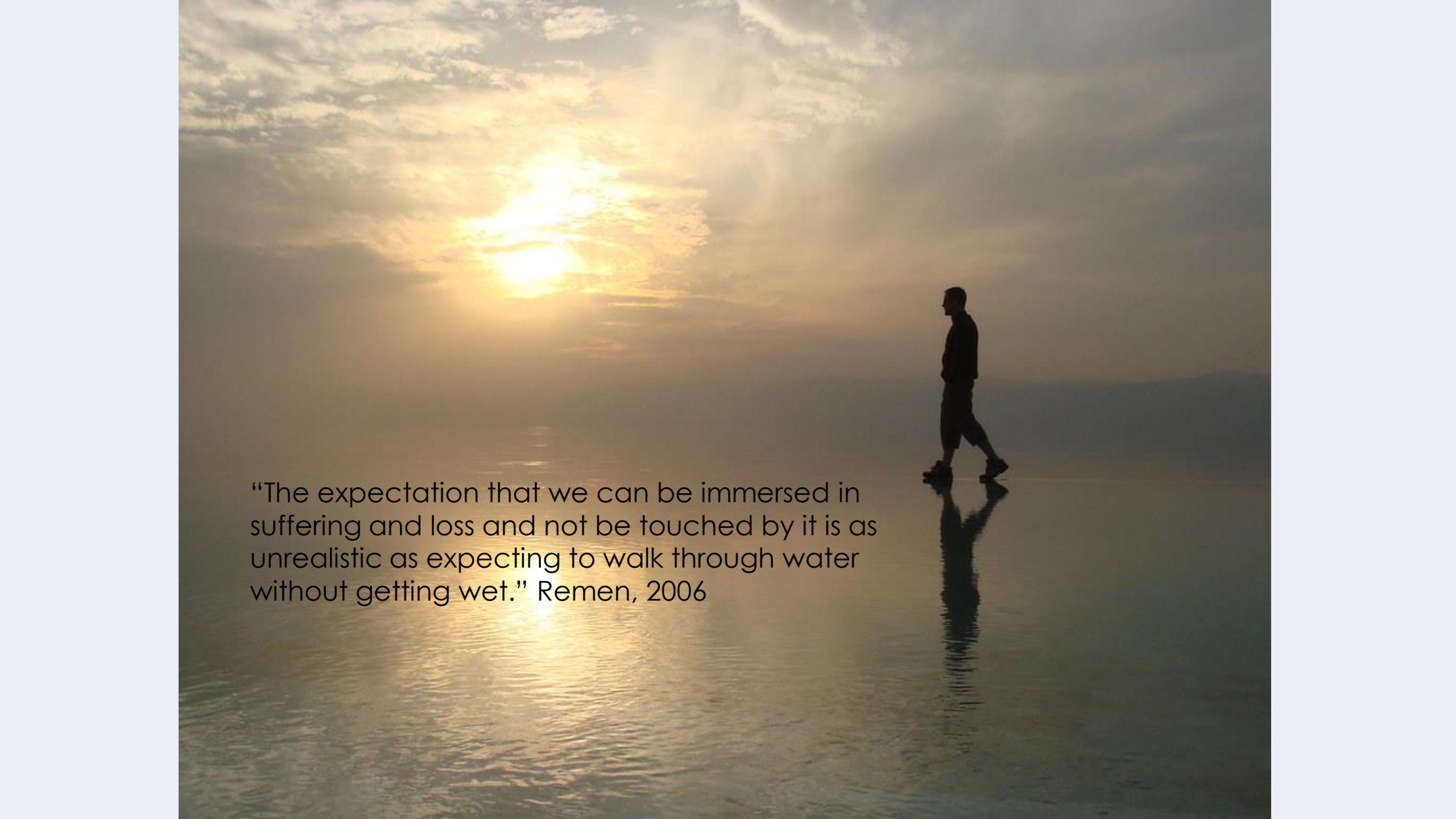
FACTORS THAT MAY IMPACT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Having our own trauma history

If the work environment has:

- Unclear expectations
- Conflicts among team members
- Lack of consistent supervision or opportunities to debrief
- Staff wellness not prioritized
- Unrealistic workload and lack of time / support to get work completed
- Limited opportunities for professional development / professional growth

Continuous exposure to trauma. Cumulative impact over time.

A silhouette of a person walking on a reflective surface at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water. The person is walking from left to right, and their reflection is visible on the water. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and some clouds.

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to walk through water without getting wet.” Remen, 2006

BE ATTUNED TO THE HEALTH OF YOUR STAFF AND YOURSELF:

HOW ARE WE, OUR STAFF, AND OUR COLLEAGUES POTENTIALLY EXPOSED TO TRAUMA AT WORK?

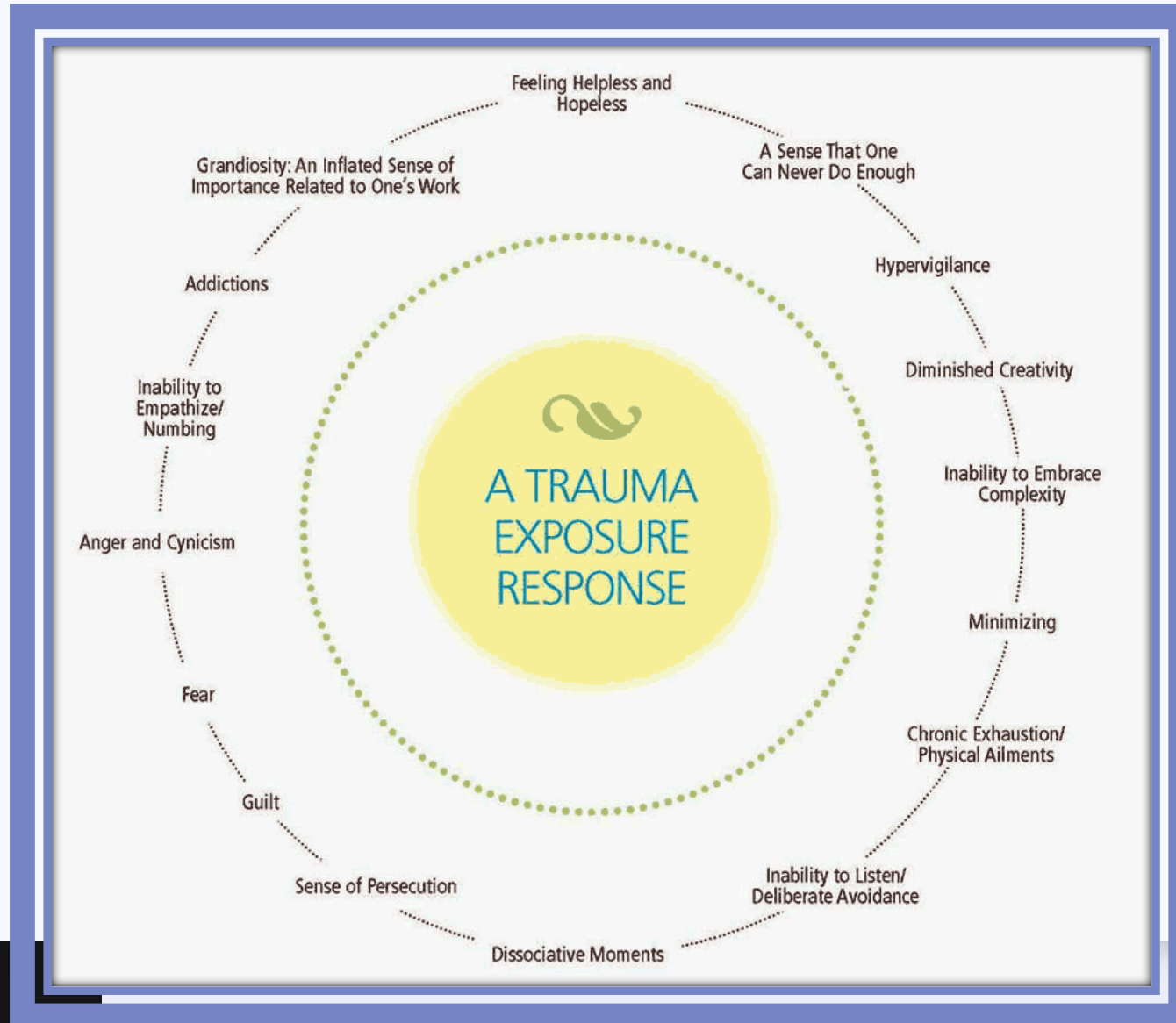




What is a Trauma Exposure Response?

A trauma exposure response is defined as the transformation that takes place within us as a result of exposure to trauma and the suffering of other living beings or the planet (Van Dernoot Lipsky).

NOTICE THE SIGNS



ADDITIONAL CAUSES FOR CONCERN:



You or Staff view other's behaviors as deliberate / personal, and staff is not working to figure out how they might be adaptive for that individual.

Clients are viewed in negative terms like "manipulative" or are referred to using their mental health diagnosis such as "borderline".

You or Staff are experiencing **increased emotional reactivity** to situations

Other things you've noticed???

WHAT RESPONSES DO YOU SEE IN YOURSELF OR IN THOSE YOU'VE SUPERVISED?



HOW DO YOU CREATE A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE SUPERVISORY /
TEAM ENVIRONMENT?



SAFETY, TRUST & TRANSPARENCY: PRINCIPALS OF TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

Strategies:

- Connected, **caring relationships are priority**
- Openly explaining processes/procedures
- Using clear and effective communication
- Pacing
- Be true to your word and follow through on your commitment
- Be consistent
- Admit mistakes
- Processes and decisions are made with transparency



ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Are your expectations congruent with what you are modeling?

Maintain healthy boundaries

Refrain from judgment

Be physically and emotionally present

Use active listening (maintain eye contact, monitor facial expressions, voice tone...)

Be respectful and treat supervision as protected time:

- Meet on a regular basis (don't frequently cancel or arrive late)
- Minimize disruptions (limit interruptions by other staff, phone etc.)
- Don't allow the supervisor's agenda to dominate supervision
- Respect confidentiality



A FEW QUESTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS...

What is the appropriate amount of time to meet for supervision or one on ones?

How frequently are you meeting with your staff?

Where does supervision take place?

How do you plan for supervision and how do you structure the time?

What do your staff know regarding expectations for supervision?



RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO DISCLOSURE.

Supervision is NOT therapy. You are not your staff's therapist.

Maintain neutral, non-judgmental tone and body language

Be supportive and empathetic, without asking questions about the details.

Don't give directions or unsolicited advice.

Do offer support and acknowledge feelings and resiliency.

Don't assume you know what is best.

Do offer connection to resources that might be helpful

LOOKING AT BEHAVIOR THROUGH A DIFFERENT LENS...

UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES



WHAT SHOWS UP AT WORK

TARDINESS & ABSENTEEISM

Employees are always late or don't show up.

BAD INTERVIEW SKILLS

Interviewees lack basic interview skills like making eye contact. Do they have something to hide? Should they not be trusted?

HIGH TURNOVER

Employees' chaotic lives disrupt their work performance.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON

“ I didn't sleep last night because I am **so stressed out** about paying the rent, getting the kids to school on time, and keeping this job.

“ Eye contact is **intimidating**; it triggers abuse I've experienced in the past after "talking back."

“ I don't know **how much of my life is okay to share** at work. It's impossible to tune out the abusive relationship I have to go home to.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...

1. How are my past experiences (trauma) affecting how I lead my team?
2. How can I create a space that supports trauma recovery?
3. How can I prevent overwhelm, shame and blame in my leadership?
4. How have I judged my team when I could have shown grace?

CREATING A CULTURE OF CARE & WELLNESS

IT BEGINS WITH AWARENESS AND ATTUNEMENT

RESIST RE-TRAUMATIZATION

Whenever possible we want to lessen the amount of stress on those we serve and avoid adding additional stress.

We want to be aware that our actions / practices / policies may cause additional trauma or could trigger painful memories and potentially re-traumatize our clients and ourselves.

WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION

What is your organization doing to address secondary traumatic stress?

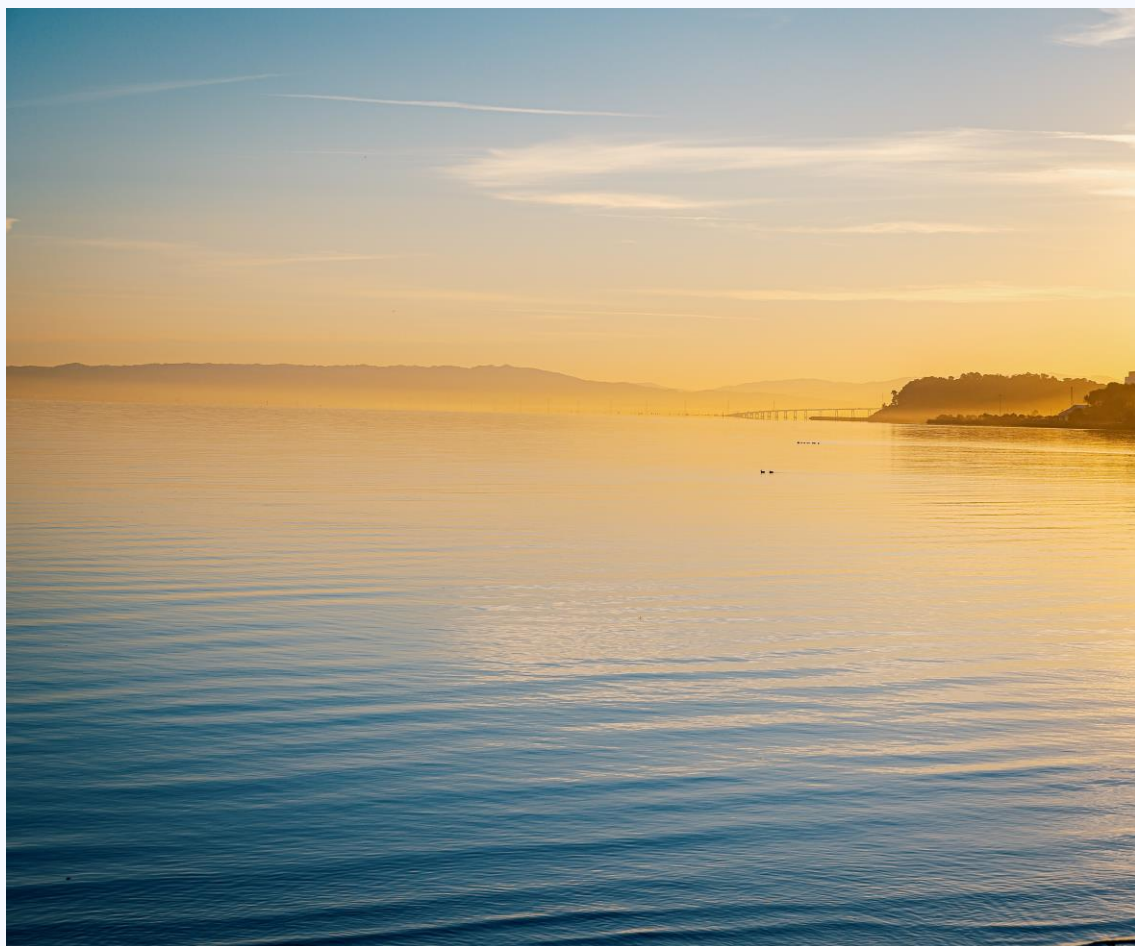
Are any of these practices in place at your organization?

Does the organization recognize that all staff may be impacted by this work?

Does your organization explicitly value and support work-life balance for staff?

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS WORKPLACE STRESS

- Pay attention to basic needs of those who are working harder than before
- Watch the number of hours worked / use of PTO
- Share mental health support (access to resources, education etc.)
- Compassion and empathy from leadership
- Flexibility
- Talk about it



Every environment we step into has an impact on our state of being.



PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS



Richmond J&DR Court



HOW TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT....

Grounding

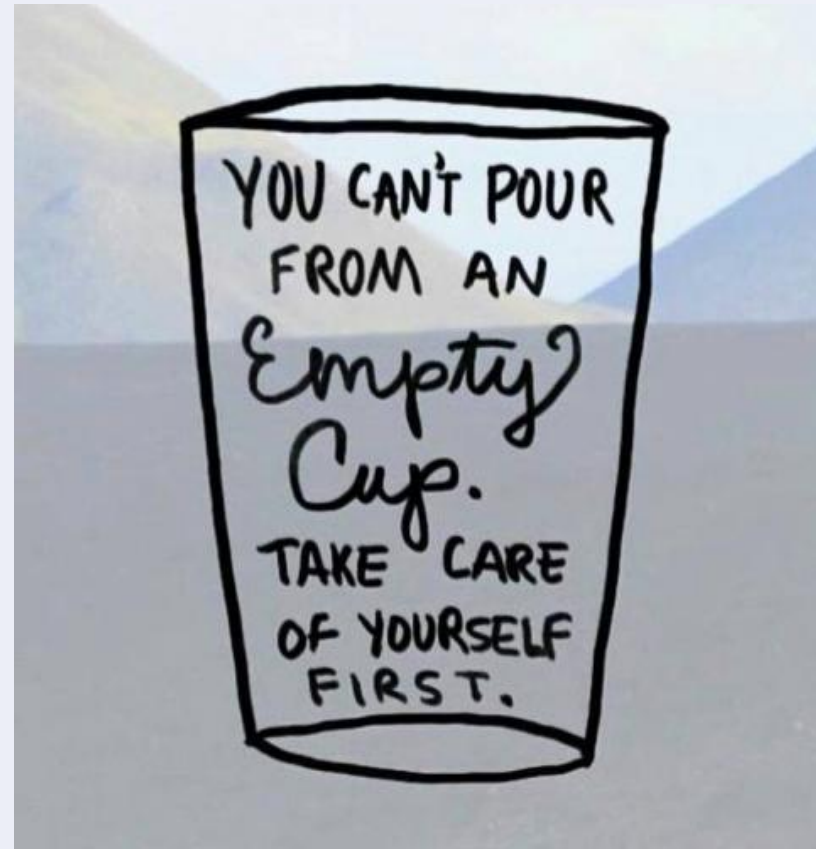
Movement

Connection

Self-Reflection

Whenever possible, lessen the exposure





YOU CAN'T POUR
FROM AN

Empty
Cup.

TAKE CARE
OF YOURSELF
FIRST.


BURNOUT RECOVERY

@BLESS+HEMESSY

 GET ENOUGH SLEEP
BUT SERIOUSLY, 8 HOURS, FOLKS!


 CONNECT
EVEN JUST A TEXT.
CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE
WE LOVE KEEPS US GROUNDED.

 DRINK WATER

 TAKE INVENTORY OF
WHERE YOU'RE HOLDING
STRESS IN YOUR BODY

 SET BOUNDARIES
WITH YOURSELF, WORK
& OTHERS.

 RITUALS/PRACTICES
HEALING YOUR SPIRIT & MIND
JOURNALING, MEDITATION, GRATITUDE,
MINDFULNESS, POSITIVE SELF TALK

 UNPLUG/DISCONNECT

 PRIORITIZE FUN

 REST
NO MINDLESS SCROLLING!

 SUPPLEMENTS
IT'S NOT MY PLACE TO ADVISE
IN THIS AREA BUT I DO THINK
IT WORTH EXPLORING, RESEARCHING
& TALKING TO YOUR DR ABOUT
WHAT YOUR BODY MIGHT NEED.

NOURISH YOURSELF

NATURE. GET OUTSIDE EVERY DAY WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

OBSERVE YOUR BREATH. BE MINDFUL OF YOUR EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS. PRACTICE GRATITUDE.

UNITE WITH OTHERS. ENGAGE IN VIRTUAL HANGOUTS. STAY CONNECTED WITH FRIENDS, FAMILY, RESOURCES, ETC.

REPLENISH WITH HEALTHY FOOD. REMEMBER TO EAT FROM ALL THE FOOD GROUPS AS YOU ARE ABLE. FOCUS ON PROTEINS, FRUITS, AND VEGETABLES.

INITIATE MOVEMENT. TALK A WALK. DO STRETCHES, USE APPS FOR YOGA AND EXERCISE.

SIT IN STILLNESS. ALLOW TIME FOR QUIET, READING, MEDITATION, SPIRITUALITY, ETC.

HARNESS CREATIVITY. CREATE TIME FOR PAINTING, COLORING, READING, GARDENING, DANCING, MUSIC, ETC.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT WORK FOR YOU OR YOUR ORGANIZATION?



RESOURCES

www.healthcaretoolbox.org

www.proqol.org/ - Professional Quality of Life Scale

www.tendacademy.ca/ - Psychological PPE (resources for professionals)

<https://traumastewardship.com/>

www.chcs.org/topics/trauma-informed-care/

[Every Opportunity - YouTube](#)

[Trauma Stewardship - YouTube](#)



Questions? Comments?

THANK YOU FOR COMING!

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