TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES FOR ALL TREATMENT COURT TEAM MEMBERS

John Collins

DISCLAIMER

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Understand trauma and the impact of trauma on behavior

Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma

"Trauma Focused" vs. "Trauma-Informed" - Identify the 4 R's

Identify the 6 fundamental principles and key components of trauma informed care

Develop trauma-informed responses

TRAUMATIC EVENTS

Traumatic events are events that involve overwhelming threat, that may or may not result in a trauma response (Mansfeld, 2017)

- Violence
- Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
- Childhood neglect
- Living with a family member with mental health or substance use disorders
- Poverty
- Racism, discrimination, and oppression
- Violence in the community, war, or terrorism

DEFINING TRAUMA

- **Trauma** is the **response** to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope, causes feelings of helplessness, diminishes their sense of self and their ability to feel a full range of emotions and experiences. (ILS, 2022)

- **Vicarious trauma** is the emotional residue of exposure to traumatic stories and experiences of others through. work; witnessing fear, pain, and terror that others have experienced; a pre-occupation with. horrific stories told to the professional (American Counseling Association, 2016)

RESPONSES TO AND SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA

Emotional signs

- sadness
- anger
- denial
- fear
- shame

Psychological Symptoms

- nightmares
- insomnia
- difficulty with relationships
- emotional outbursts

Physical symptoms:

- nausea
- dizziness
- changes in appetite
- headaches
- gastrointestinal problems

Psychological disorders may include:

- PTSD
- depression
- anxiety
- dissociative disorders
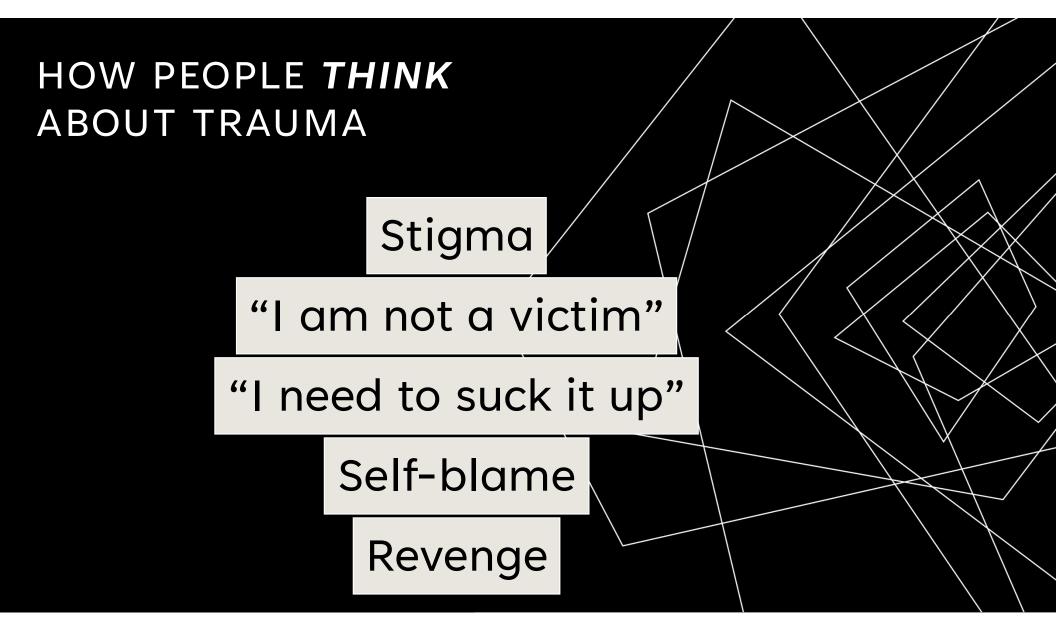- substance abuse problems

Behavior

=

Survival

LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF TRAUMA

Difficulty concentrating.

Anger, irritability, mood swings.

Anxiety and fear.

Guilt, shame, self-blame.

Withdrawing from others.

Feeling sad or hopeless.

Feeling disconnected or numb.

Deceased ability to engage in programs and long-term recovery.

Increased rates of relapse and recidivism.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

- Resiliency vs Risk

- Community Trauma

- Historical and

  Intergenerational Trauma

HOW PEOPLE *THINK* ABOUT TRAUMA

Stigma

"I am not a victim"

"I need to suck it up"

Self-blame

Revenge

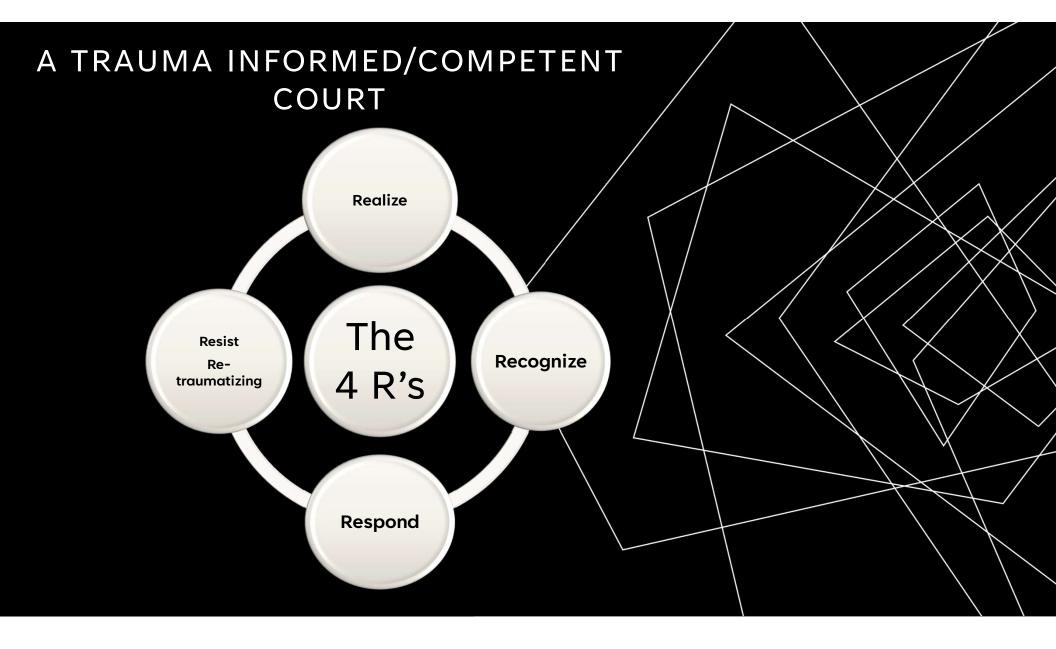# TRAUMA AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE POPULATION

❑91% of women in Drug Courts experienced traumatic events

❑94% of defendants in drug court have been exposed to trauma

❑>50% in-custody SUD treatment participants have PTSD

TRAUMA FOCUSED   VS   TRAUMA INFORMED

A TRAUMA INFORMED/COMPETENT COURT

Realize

Resist
Re-
traumatizing

The
4 R's

Recognize

Respond

Realize

that trauma:
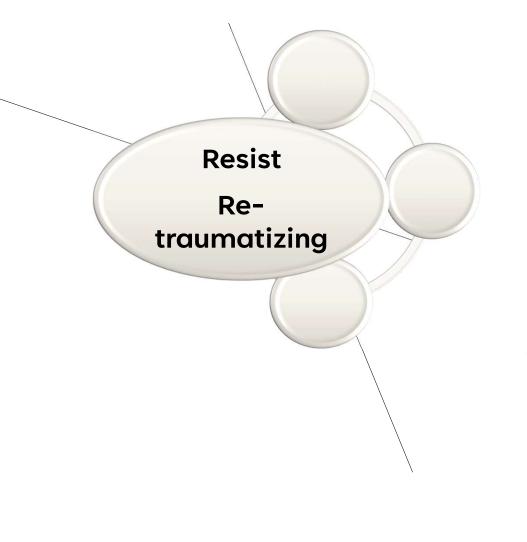- ✓ Affects Individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- ✓ impacts and obstructs SUD and MH
- ✓ Is Integral to all human service sectors

Recognize

- ✓ Screening and assessment
- ✓ Supervision practices
- ✓ Workforce development
- ✓ Employee assistance

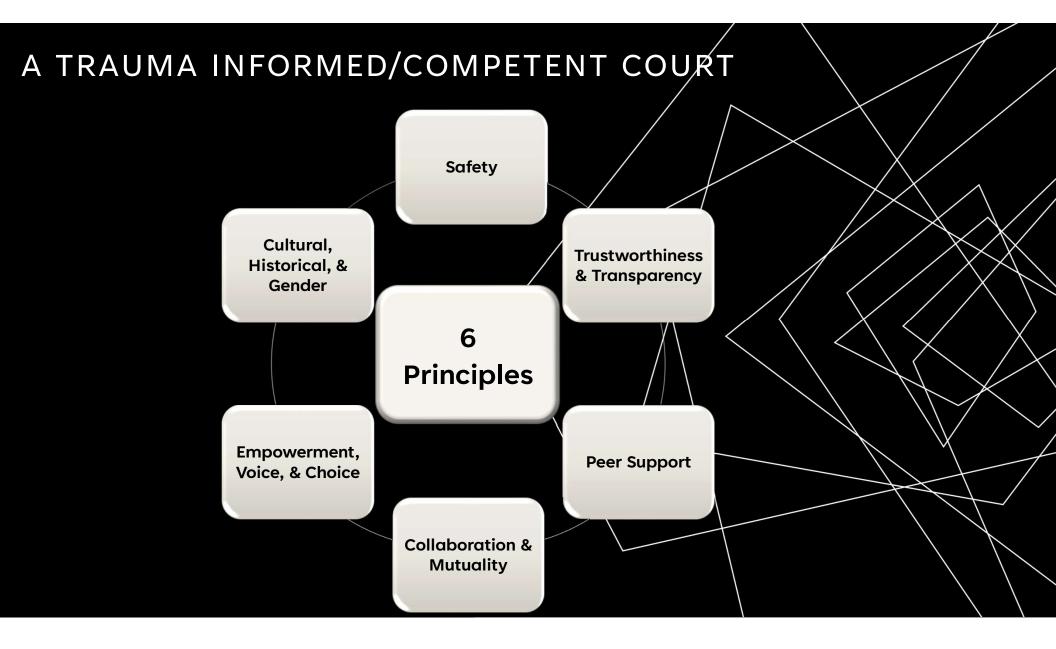**Respond**

✓Policy and Procedures
✓Staffing
✓Culture
✓Psychologically and physically safe environment
✓Trauma informed treatment

Resist

Re-traumatizing

Avoid :
- ✓ stressful or toxic environments
- ✓ practices that re-traumatize
    - ✓ Restraints
    - ✓ Seclusion
    - ✓ Flash incarceration

A TRAUMA INFORMED/COMPETENT COURT

SAFETY

- People who do not feel safe will not fully engage
- Both physical and emotional safety
- Avoid
  - Overreacting
  - Power struggles
  - Aggressive behavior and language
  - Approaching or touching

TRUSTWORTHINESS & TRANSPARENCY

- ✓ Promote mutual trust
- ✓ Describe the process step-by-step
- ✓ Slow, calm, and clear
- ✓ Avoid
  - ✓ false promises
  - ✓ faking interest or concern

PEER SUPPORT

- Lived experience
- Speak their language
- Trained and skilled in pathways to recovery
- Helping people to self-advocate
- No judgment

COLLABORATION & MUTUALITY

- ➢ Recognize the power differential

- ➢ Partners in case and treatment planning

- ➢ Be flexible with consequences

- ➢ Active listening

EMPOWERMENT, VOICE, & CHOICE

- Look for opportunities to:
  - Empower participants to make decisions
  - Give them a voice in their recovery
  - Encourage input on their treatment goals, choosing their own recovery support system/meetings

RECOGNIZING CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, & GENDER ISSUES

- Recognize that you may not be the one
- Provide access to clinical and recovery support services that are responsive to their cultural, racial/ethnic, and gender needs
- Be aware of cultural differences

COMMON ERRORS

- Do Not
  - Expect immediate abstinence from traumatized people
  - Expect immediate trust
  - Order NA/AA attendance
- Courtroom structure
- Ongoing training
- Language use

CHANGING THE QUESTION FROM "WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?" TO "WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?"

Don't Say	Do Say
You are an addict/schizophrenic	Person with a Substance Use Disorder/who has schizophrenia
You're dirty/Your screen was dirty	Your urine showed the presence of drugs
You should know better	These are our expectations
Compliance/noncompliance	Adherence/nonadherence
You violated your contract	You did not meet the terms of your contract
You have a Borderline Personality Disorder	You have frequent difficulty regulating your emotions
You let us down/disappointed us	I am concerned that you….

TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES – SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

	Primary Care PTSD Screen (PC-PTSD -5)	PTSD Checklist—Civilian Version (PCL-C)	Stressful Life Events Screening Questionnaire—Revised (SLESQ-R)
Length	5 items (5 minutes)	17 items (5-10 minutes)	13 items
Cost	FREE (Developed by VA)	FREE (Developed by VA)	FREE
Training	One page instruction sheet	5-page manual - Interpretation should be made by a clinician	Minimal Training Required

TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES – TREATMENT

❖ Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

❖ Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

❖ Seeking Safety

❖ The Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM)

TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES – SELF ASSESSMENT

- Does our Physical environment promote safety and calm?

- Can participants provide feedback?

- How do we promote self-care for staff and participants?

- Does the agency address gender and race-based needs?

- Are collaborative partners trauma-informed/cross-trained?

- What types of training and resources are provided to staff?

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE PROJECT SELF ASSESSMENT:

WWW.TRAUMAINFORMEDCAREPROJECT.ORG

QUESTIONS?

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REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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