# Trauma-Informed Care Training Handout *(Accessible Version)*

## 6 Principles of Trauma-Informed Care

### Awareness

* + Building an understanding of how common trauma is and some responses to trauma

#### Strategies:

* + - Participating in interactive workshops to watching webinars or reading about trauma
    - Don’t expect people to share their trauma story
    - Don’t pathologize someone or define their experience as traumatic or not
    - Self-reflect and if needed, find opportunities for your own healing
    - Grounding

### Looking at trauma through the eyes of each individual

* + People can experience trauma differently
  + When trying to understand how trauma has impacted an individual it’s important to consider “How can I best understand this person?”

#### Strategies:

* + - Benefit of the doubt
    - Shifting Attitudes
      * "What is wrong with this person?" to "What has happened to them that might be causing them to act this way?"
    - Increasing emotional literacy

### Create safety and trust

* + Individuals who have experienced trauma can feel unsafe in spaces that are new or unfamiliar
  + Create physical and emotional safety to build trust

#### Strategies:

* + - Use active listening
    - Cultivate mindfulness to increase awareness of your own emotions and triggers
    - Increase cultural competency
    - Be transparent about expectations and decision making
    - Being reliable

### Choice and collaboration

* + Trauma survivors often feel powerless and/or out of control
  + Include students in decision-making where possible

#### Strategies:

* + - Shift from holding power over to sharing power with others.
    - Provide clear information of what a student can expect and what their options are. Provide students with time to voice questions or concerns, make decisions, and feel empowered.
    - Intentionally invite equity-deserving voices and those with less organizational power to share their perspectives
    - Learn about students’ expectations and tailor the relationship and support process accordingly.
    - Reflecting on how you are taking up and sharing space with students.
    - Reflecting on your social location and the power that comes with privilege.

### Focus on strengths

* + Focusing on a person’s strengths helps survivors see that they have the skills necessary for success

#### Strategies:

* + - Highlight strengths. This can be done verbally or in written form.
    - Support students in identifying their strengths and successes.

### Empowerment

* + With the right support, those who have experienced trauma can make the necessary changes to manage the impact of trauma on their day-to-day lives

#### Strategies:

* + - Use a student’s language preferences, pronouns, and word choices to strengthen the relationship where appropriate.
    - Share why you are providing constructive feedback.

## Self-Regulation and Self-Care Practices

* Incorporate deep breathing exercises into your day/when you feel overwhelmed (478 breathing technique: breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, release for 8 seconds, repeat)
* Taking a short walk/moving your body
* 5-4-3-2-1 method: name 5 things you hear, 4 things you see, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste
* Use numbers, count backwards from 100, go through multiplication tables in your head
* Recite a poem/quote/song that you enjoy in your head
* Use an anchoring statement (this can look different for everyone), ex. “I’m Full Name. I’m X years old. I live in City, Province. Today is Friday, June 3. It’s 10:04 in the morning. I’m sitting at my desk at work. There’s no one else in the room.”
* Practice self-kindness by repeating kind and compassionate phrases to yourself ex. “I am trying hard and doing my best, that is enough”
* Listen to music you enjoy
* Visualize a place/person/pet/activity you love, and focus on how that makes you feel
* See a counsellor/therapist
* Mindfulness practices:
  + Meditation
  + Journaling
  + Savoring food/drink, think about how what you’re consuming tastes/smells, and taking small sips/bites
  + Putting your hands in water/holding ice, focus on the sensations, how the sensations change, where do you feel the sensations
  + Feel your body and listen to your surroundings, focus on how your body feels, and focus on what sounds you can hear

## Intention Sheet

Look at the list of Self-Regulation and Self-Care Practices above.

Pick two strategies you intend to use in moments where you feel overwhelmed.

Pick two strategies you intend to use after stressful situations to build resilience.

## Where to Get Support

### Students:

Student Wellness: <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/news/mental-health-supports-programs-f23-resources>

Good2Talk Postsecondary Helpline: 1-866-925-5454

International Students: <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/GuardMe>

### Staff and Faculty:

Human Resources – Mental Health Awareness: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/managers/mental-health-awareness>

Human Resources – Occupational Health and Wellness: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/occupational-health-and-wellness>

## Additional Training Opportunities & Literature

### Trainings:

Alberta Health Services. (2022). Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) e-Learning Series. Alberta Health Services. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page15526.aspx>

Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. (2024). Trauma-Informed Care Online Workshop. Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. <https://omssa.com/online-workshop-trauma-informed-care.php>.

Yale University. (2024). Managing Emotions in Times of Uncertainty & Stress. Coursera. [coursera.org/learn/managing-emotions-uncertainty-stress](http://coursera.org/learn/managing-emotions-uncertainty-stress)

### Readings:

Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health. (2024). Trauma-Informed Practice & Care: A Whole-Campus Approach. <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CICMH-TraumaInformedPracticeCare-Toolkit_v1.pdf>

Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute. (2024). Trauma-Informed Schools. Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute. <https://ctrinstitute.com/topic/trauma-informed-schools/>.

Johnson, Nicole and Gianvito, Ida. (2022). Cultivating Trauma-Informed Spaces in Education: Promising Practices Manual. Trauma-Informed Education. 1. <https://source.sheridancollege.ca/centres_sgg_2023_trauma_education/1>

Van der Kolk, B. (2014). The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma. Penguin Books.

### Assessments:

CTRI Trauma-Informed Workplace Assessment <https://ctrinstitute.com/trauma-informed-workplace-assessment/>