

Plenary II: Strengthening Immigrant Survivors and Working with Immigrant Clients in Crisis – Trauma Informed Approach

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Introductions

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this training , you will be better able to:

- Learn how to identify the effects of trauma on survivors
- Develop effective strategies to support your clients experiencing trauma
- Incorporate trauma informed approaches to your advocacy in order to better assist your clients

How many of you have experienced working with survivors that have gone into crisis while you are providing services?

Why is it important to establish a trauma informed approach when providing services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other violent crimes?

What is Trauma?

Developing A Trauma Informed Approach To Our Work

- Understanding types of trauma
 - Individual trauma
 - Community trauma
 - Historical and generational trauma
- Building trust
- Understanding the importance of cultural considerations

Developing A Trauma Informed Approach To Our Work (cont' d)

- Healing and our role in the healing process
- Empowerment to the survivor and not dominance or privilege
- Limited English proficiency (LEP) language access programs
- Be aware of our roles and the impact we may have

Types of Trauma

- Individual Trauma
 - Physical violence and abuse
 - Psychological abuse
 - Sexual violence and abuse
 - Coercive control
- Community trauma/violence
- Socio/political violence and abuse
- Indigenous trauma (discrimination)

Types of Trauma Informed Interventions or Tools for Trauma Informed Care

- Grounding tools
- Validating concerns and experiences while showing positive aspect of it
- Ensuring access to a support system after meetings

Building Trust

- Take a trauma informed approach that is sensitive to the survivor's trauma history
- Have a nonjudgmental attitude
- Remind survivors of confidentiality in your relationship and in others
- Explain VAWA confidentiality protections for immigration applications
- Be mindful of non-verbal cues
- Have awareness of the differences in language
- Be culturally sensitive

Understanding the Importance of Cultural Considerations

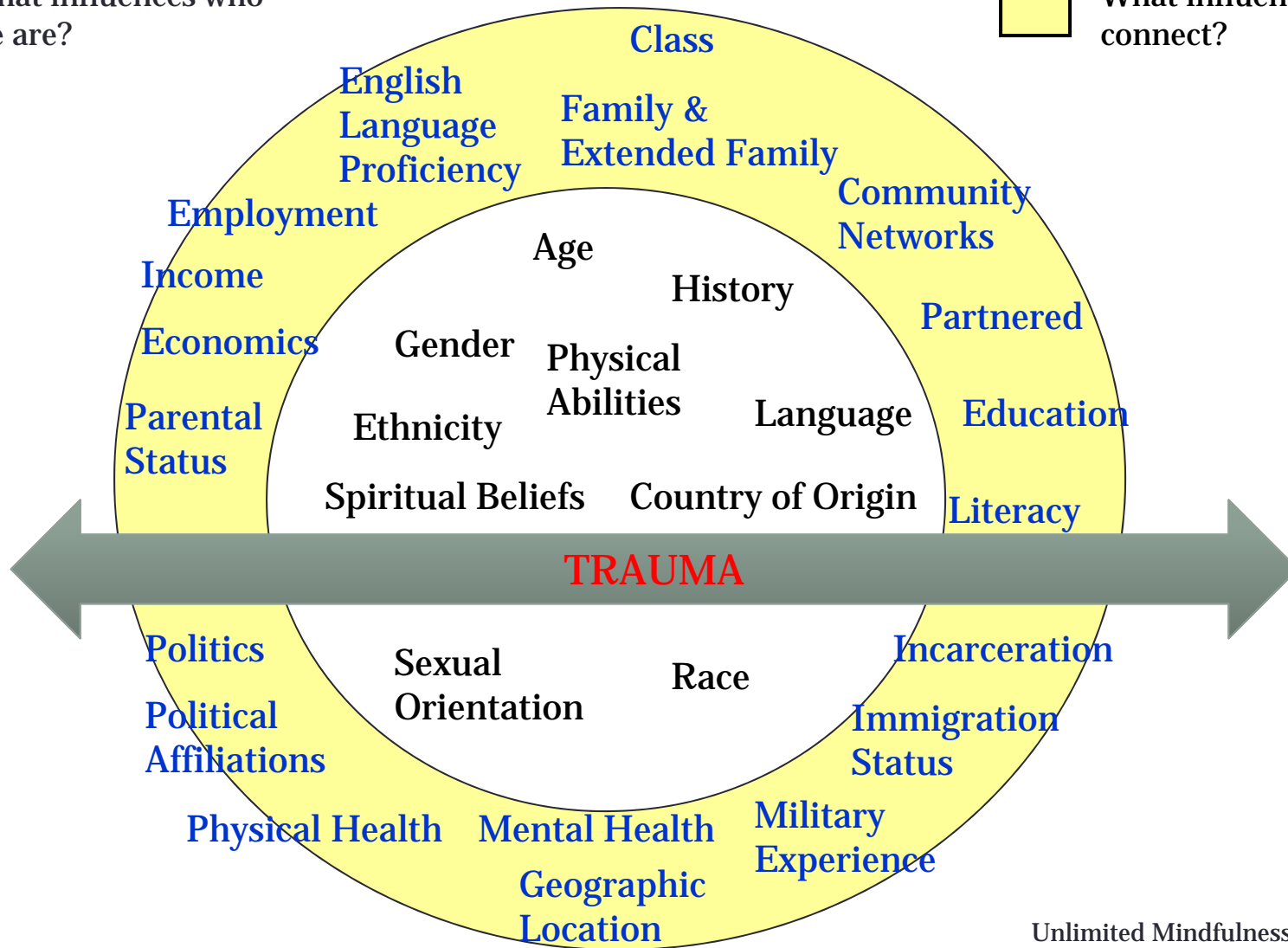
“Culture refers to shared experiences that develop and evolve according to changing social and political landscapes. It includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, immigration, location, time, and other axes of identification understood within the historical context of oppression.”

Sujata Warrior, Culture Handbook

□ What influences who we are?

□ What influences how we connect?

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Unlimited Mindfulness, 2010

Identification of Traumatic Experience

- Principles
 - Recognize that many survivors may not have previously disclosed traumatic experiences to anyone
 - Disclosing trauma can trigger emotions, memories of the historical trauma, and traumatic reactions
 - Know how to manage emotional dysregulation

Language Access

- Are you able to communicate effectively with the client?
- Is anything lost in translation?

Empowerment and Support

- Cultivate presence
- Client-centered approach
- Empathy and compassion
- Nonjudgment

What Role Do We Play?

- Know why you are interested in identification of trauma: What will you do with the information?
- Details of traumatic experiences may be helpful to other advocates or system providers assisting the client, even if they may not be necessary in your case

Collaborative Relationship with Client: Build A Supportive Connection

- Attention to safety and ongoing risks
- Building a relationship
 - Non-judgment and validation of the survivor's expertise and life experience – including cultural, social, and political context
 - Honor your own expertise and experience
 - Acknowledge your limitations

Collaborative Relationship with Client: Build A Supportive Connection (cont'd)

- Human Connection
 - Establish empathic and warm connection
 - Attunement to client “where she/he is,” nonverbal, body language cues
- Establish clear, but not rigid, boundaries
 - Explain confidentiality of client information, not only within your relationship, but also explain VAWA confidentiality protection for immigration applications

Opportunities for Collaboration with Other Service Providers

- Attorneys
 - Family/Civil
 - Immigration
 - State Attorney (criminal)
- Advocates
 - Systems Advocates
 - Community Advocates
- Law Enforcement

Collaborations and Our Roles

- Family/Civil Attorneys
 - Can suggest client write and maintain a journal
 - This helps client to remember facts and at the same time helps client write down her story
 - Story can be used for other providers without having to relive all traumatic experiences over and over again

Collaborations and Our Roles (cont'd)

- Immigration Attorneys:
 - Client story is an integral part of the immigration application packet
 - A trauma informed approach will strengthen an immigration case by obtaining the details of trauma in establishing
 - “Battery or extreme cruelty” or “substantial harm”
 - Tool: Structured Interview Questionnaire

Strengthening Your Ability to Support Survivors Through This Process

- Be aware of your own emotional reactions to the stories you are hearing
- Take breaks and care for yourself during the process
- Be aware of the client's body language cues and emotional reactions to your questions

How Do We Prepare?

- Prepare ahead of time
 - Read the file
 - Review what has been reported by client during a previous session
- Begin session prepared to be with **THIS** client
- Know the limits, in order to manage expectations
 - Time
 - Agenda
- Explain things in advance

Process of Obtaining the Client's Story with a Trauma-Informed Approach

1. Recognize the client as a whole human being and as a survivor
2. Support client's self-regulation
3. Understand client's behavior through a trauma lens
4. Titrate client's exposure to traumatic memories
5. Recognize the impact of exposing the trauma and its effects
6. Use techniques for grounding and soothing
7. Validate completing the process as success
8. Collaborate with trauma services, or be prepared to refer to a provider as needed

Benefits of Trauma Informed Approach for Survivors in Crisis

What are the benefits to you of providing trauma informed services to survivors in each of your roles?

Tools for Self-Care

- Physical activity
- Adequate sleep and rest
- Good nutrition
- Nurturing relationships
- Tending the mind



Conclusion

- We make up an important part of our clients' finding their strength to overcome trauma
- These tools help us to better understand trauma and support our clients
- A trauma informed approach benefits both our clients and victim service providers

Technical Assistance and Materials

- Power Point presentations and materials for this conference at www.niwap.org/go/NOLA2015
- **NIWAP Technical Assistance:**
 - Call (202) 274-4457
 - E-mail niwap@wcl.american.edu
- Web Library:
www.niwaplibrary.wcl.american.edu

Questions



Evaluations



Thank you!

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