

OVERCOMING STRESS AND TRAUMA: CREATING A SAFE LEARNING SPACE

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AGENDA

1. DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES
2. TRAUMATIC AND TRAUMA
3. OBSTACLES TO CREATING A SAFE LEARNING SPACE
4. RESILIENCE, ATTACHMENT, AND LEARNING
5. TRAUMA-INFORMED TEACHING
6. STRATEGIES AND EXAMPLES





TRUST

TRAUMA, STRESS AND SHAME



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DEFINITIONS

TRAUMA

STRESS

POST-TRAUMATIC

STRESS

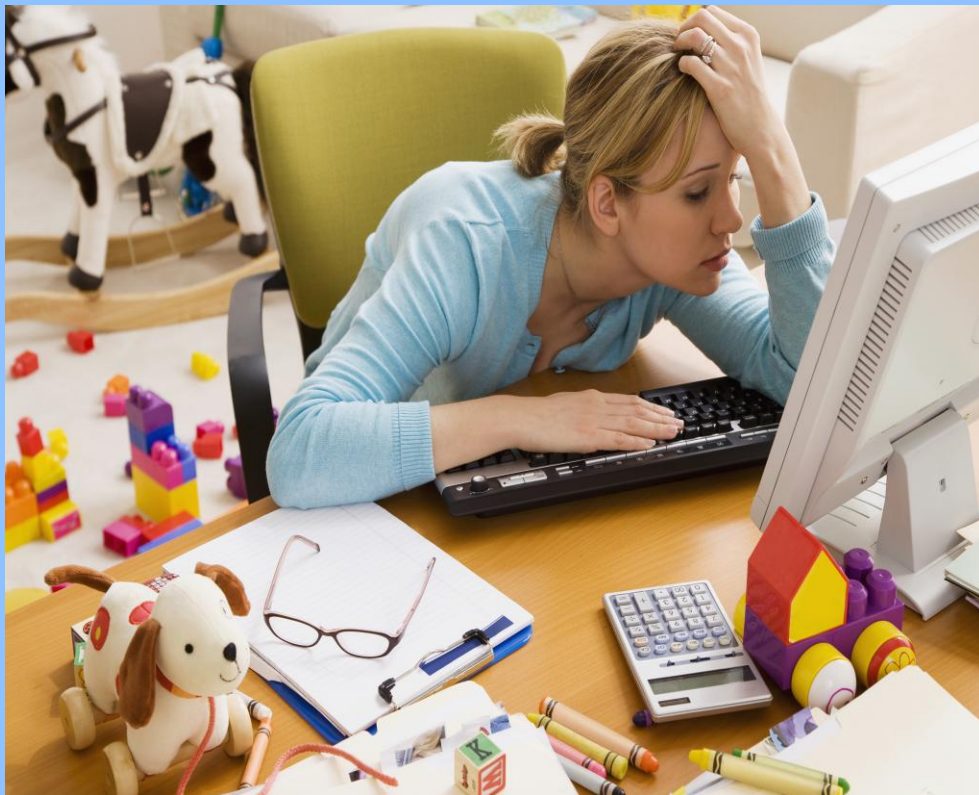
SHAME

TRAUMA

TRAUMA” HAS LASTING EFFECTS ON THE INDIVIDUAL’S FUNCTIONING AND PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, OR SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING. IT AFFECTS THE CAPACITY TO CONCENTRATE, TO FORM TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS AND EVEN TO FEEL AT HOME IN THE BODY.”

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma by Bessel van der Kolk.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)



INTRUSIVE MEMORIES

AVOIDANT BEHAVIORS

NEGATIVE CHANGES IN MOOD
AND THINKING

HYPERAROUSAL

SELF-HARMING BEHAVIORS

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS

AN APPRAISAL OF EVENTS OR EXPERIENCES AS THREATENING OR CHALLENGING, GIVEN THE ABILITY OF ONE'S RESOURCES TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGE.



SHAME



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PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL
RESPONSES TO THREATS TO
ONE'S WORTH AND SAFETY.

1. Attack self
2. Attack other
3. Withdrawal
4. Avoidance



STRESS AND TRAUMA AFFECT THE BRAIN

FEAR

LOSS OF
CONCENTRATION

ANXIETY

FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE

LOSS OF FOCUS

BODY ILLS

OBSTACLES TO BUILDING TRUST

A. CULTURAL/PERSONAL

1. ACCEPTING HELP
2. *I'VE* BEEN THE HELPER
3. SHAME. TRAUMA, POOR SCHOOLING, LOW ACHIEVEMENT



LEARNING
ENGLISH IS
HARD!

“I before e”?

WEIRD!



RESISTANCE TO SELF- DISCLOSURE

History of trauma

Ashamed of life
choices

Learning problems

Mental health issues

Slow progress

HOW ARE YOU FEELING?



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AMERICAN CULTURE

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

PUNCTUALITY, LATENESS

TOUCH

INTERNET OVERSHARING

FOOD, FOOD WASTE

SLANG

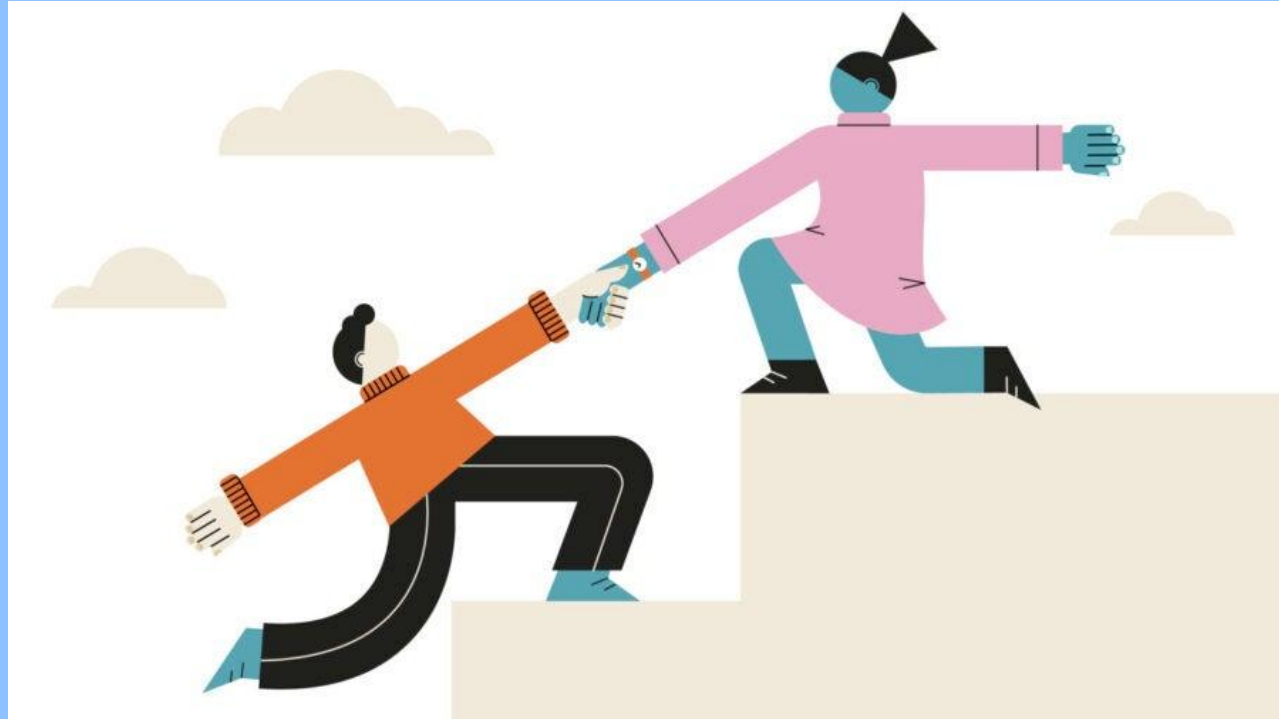
FROM TRAUMA TO LEARNING



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COPING WITH TRAUMA: RESILIENCE

RESILIENCE: A PERSON'S ABILITY TO COPE WITH STRESSFUL OR TRAUMATIC EVENTS WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL EFFECTS.

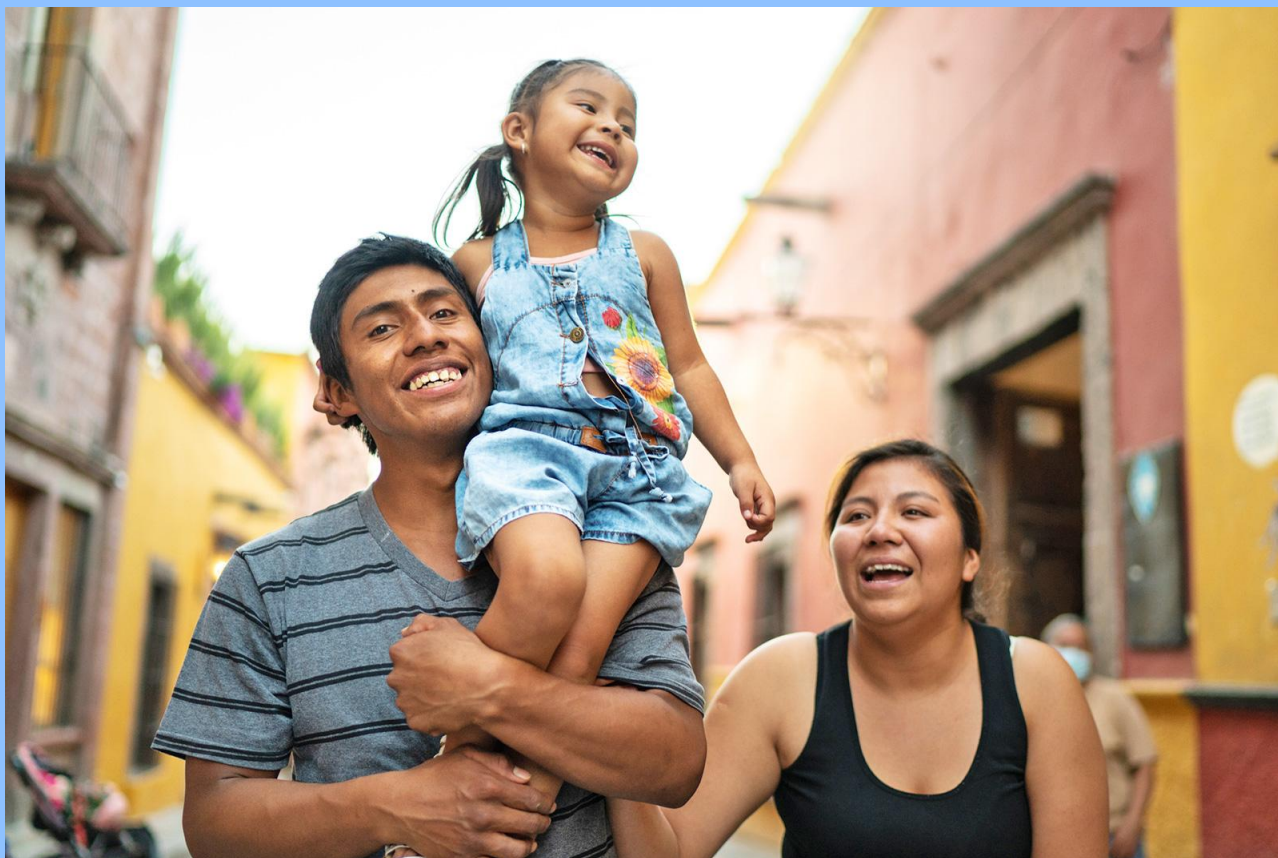


RESILIENCE IS
INFLUENCED BY

HISTORY WITH TRUST
AND BETRAYAL

ABILITY TO ASK FOR
HELP

PHYSICAL AND
MENTAL HEALTH



RESILIENCE IS
INFLUENCED BY

PREVIOUS COPING
SUPPORT SYSTEM

FINANCIAL STABILITY

WILLINGNESS TO
ACCEPT HELP

FAITH

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

REALIZING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA

ASSESSING THE SYMPTOMS

AVOID RE-TRAUMATIZATION



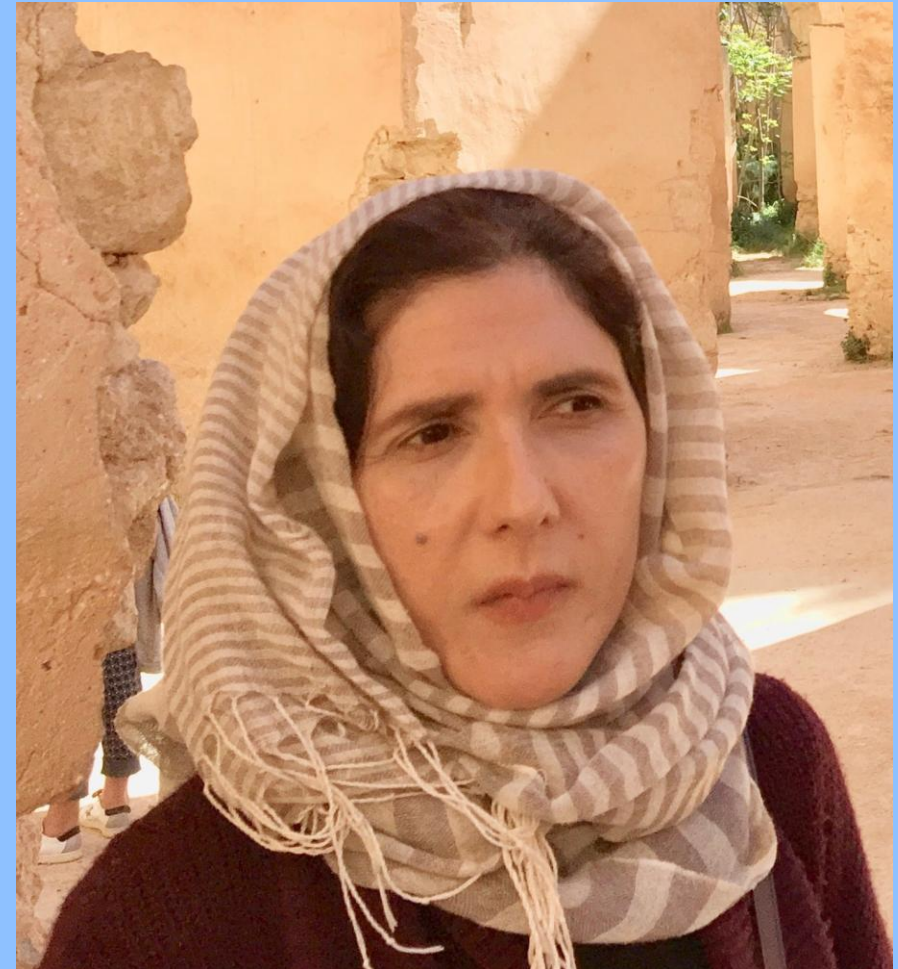
4 TYPES OF ADULT ATTACHMENT

1. SECURE
2. ANXIOUS-PREOCCUPIED
3. FEARFUL-AVOIDANT
4. DISORGANIZED

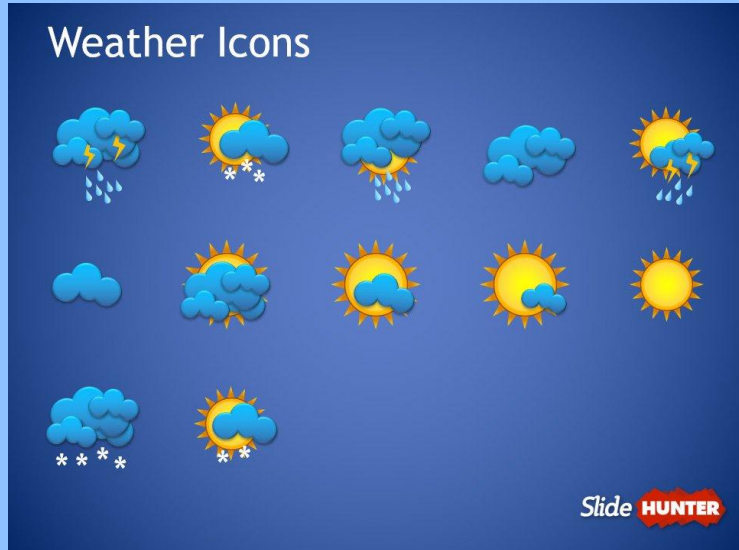
TYPES AFFECT ABILITY TO TRUST AND LEARN

TRAUMA-INFORMED TEACHING

1. CREATES SAFETY AND TRUST
2. IS CULTURALLY RESPECTFUL
3. PROMOTES RESILIENCE AND HEALING
4. COLLABORATES AND EMPOWERS



1. SAFETY: SECURE ATTACHMENT EARLY MEETINGS



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TALK ABOUT THE
WEATHER, FOOD,
HOBBIES.



STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING TRUST AND SAFETY

LEARN ABOUT YOUR
STUDENT'S HOME
COUNTRY.

LIMIT PERSONAL
QUESTIONS.

2. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND EMPOWERMENT



PERSONAL QUESTIONS
TOUCH, EYE CONTACT
REACTION TO CORRECTION
GENDER ROLES
ADJUST CONTENT
INTROSPECTION OKAY?

CULTURAL RESPECT: STRATEGIES

LEARN ABOUT HOME

COUNTRY

SHARE POSITIVE MEMORIES

GRATITUDES

ASK PERMISSION

BE AWARE OF REACTIONS



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WHAT ABOUT
US?

ASSESS OUR OWN
HISTORY OF
STRESS, LOSS AND
TRAUMA.



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3. PROMOTE RESILIENCE, HEALING AND LEARNING

ENCOURAGE SELF
RELIANCE

REINFORCE THEIR
COURAGE

TUTOR, NOT SOCIAL
WORKER

TRAUMA AND CONCENTRATION DIFFICULTY

STRATEGIES

1. Assess for sleep, diet, exercise and drug side effects.
2. Divide lessons into chunks. Take breaks.
3. Teach breathing and calming techniques.
4. Be explicit about learning new material: repetition, mnemonics, manipulatives.
5. Use lessons suited to student's needs and background.



4. MUTUAL COLLABORATION

STUDENT INPUT

FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

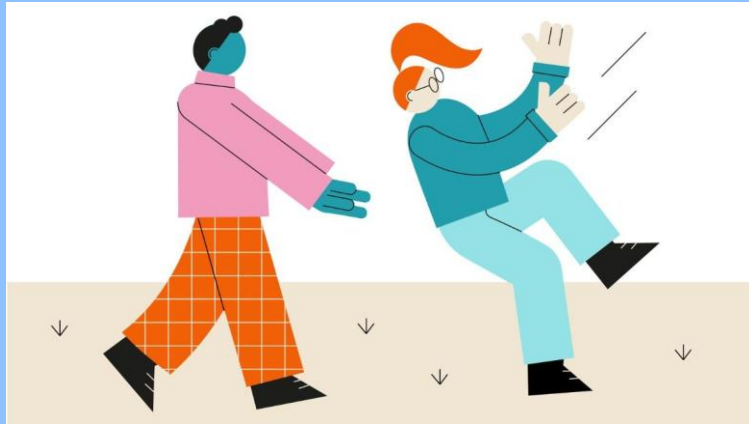
VALIDATE PROGRESS

STRENGTHS

PRAISE EFFORT



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



LV WORKSHOPS: CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Handout from training: “Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity”

2019 TUTOR RETREAT

“Culturally Responsive Communicative Teaching” by tutor Menna Youssef’

2/19: “Cultural Adjustment”

12/18: “Cultural Adjustment”

RESOURCES

“Trauma-Informed Care: A Primer for Refugee Service Providers” from the [Switchboardta](#) website.

“Trauma-Informed Practice and Adult Literacy”, Rochelle Galeski,

“Psychological Stress in Adult Learners with Low Literacy”, ProLiteracy Newsletter, Fall 2024.

What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing. By Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey.

“Trauma-Informed Care: What’s All the Fuss About?”, VLARC, Volume 22, 2022.

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, by Bessel van der Kolk, 2014.