

A hand holding a glowing orb against a bokeh background. The hand is positioned at the bottom of the frame, with fingers slightly curled around a bright, glowing yellow and orange orb. The background is a dark, warm-toned bokeh with several out-of-focus light spots in shades of orange, yellow, and green. The overall mood is hopeful and nurturing.

Trauma Informed Supervision

For Public Sector Professionals

October 2023



About the Presenter

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Public Health
Mental Health
Child Welfare
Foster Parent
Grandma

Agenda

- Themes of Supervision
- Overview of Trauma
- Trauma Informed Organizations
- Strategies to Respond





Themes of Supervision

Clinical Supervision

Administrative Supervision

Growth & Retention

Managing Liability & Risk

Clinical Directive Supervision

- 1:1 or small group with an experienced staff guiding
- Training and development
- “How To” with a teacher and learner
- Feedback ¹



Clinical Reflective Supervision

- How are you doing with the work
- The support of the person
- Helps manage feelings ¹
- Authenticity influences the relationship greatly ³
- There is specialized reflective training in some fields
- This training isn't needed to be a supportive supervisor





Administrative Supervision

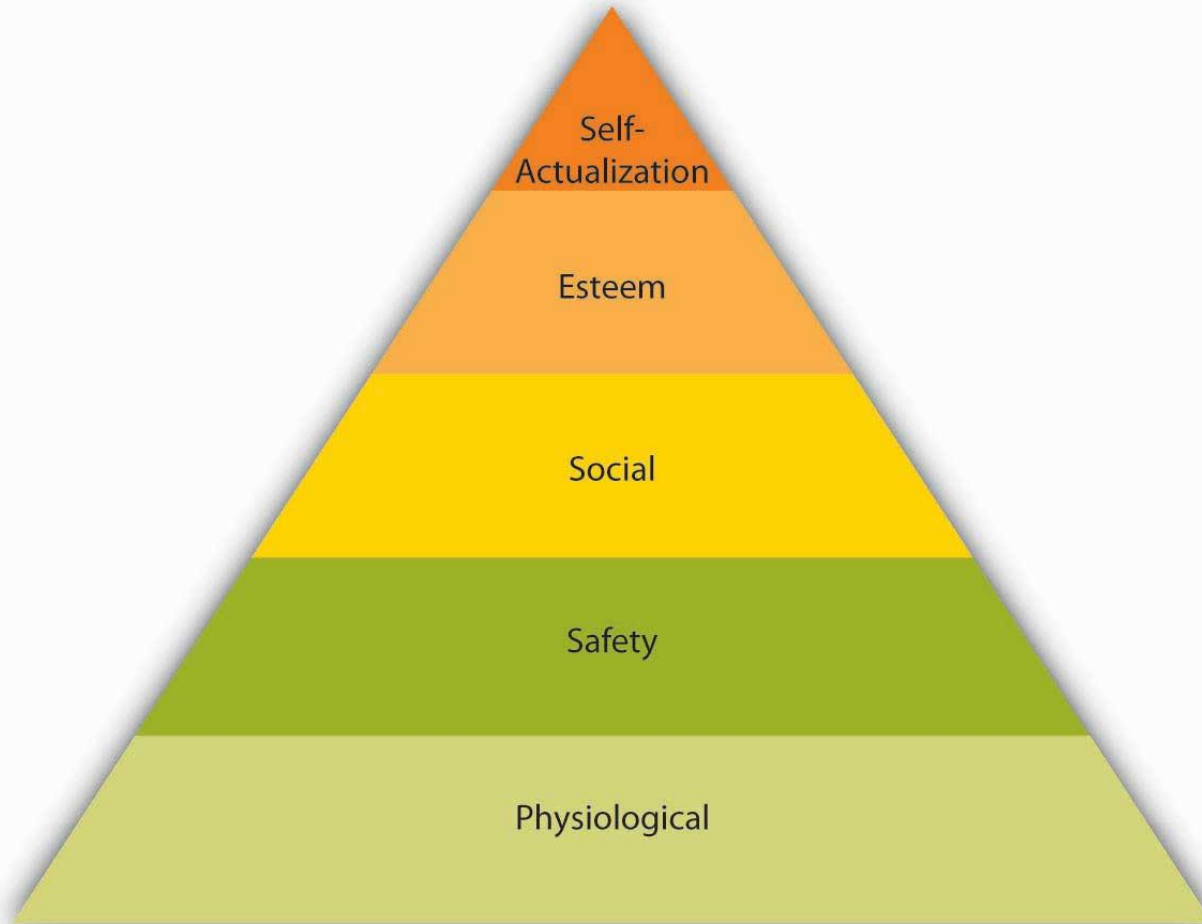
- Policies & procedures
- Non-staff related tasks
- The paperwork

Staff Growth & Retention

- People (and their labor) are the biggest assets & costly to replace
- Being fulfilled at work improves longevity
- Training opportunities increase performance ⁴



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the Workplace ⁶



- Fully using potentials/abilities
- Recognition
- Acceptance/Belonging
- Free from threat/danger
- Space, tools & pay

A person wearing a light blue suit and black shoes is walking a tightrope. The tightrope is a thick red line that runs diagonally across the frame. The person's right foot is on the rope, and their left foot is just behind it. The background is a plain, light grey wall. In the bottom right corner, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several short, curved yellow dashes.

Managing Organizational Liability & Risk

TRAUMA :

What, Who, Where & How



Trauma Defined

Individual trauma results from an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and has lasting adverse effects on the individual's function and physical, emotional or spiritual well being.

- The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration



Trauma Simply Stated

- 'A traumatic experience is an event that falls completely outside the scope of your normal life. The experience does not fit within your image of how the world should be put together and how you should function within it. It is an event that provokes very strong emotions, such as fear, rage or powerlessness'. (Scholte, www.warchild.nl)
- Trauma is a very [severe](#) shock or very [upsetting](#) experience, which may cause [psychological damage](#). (Collins Dictionary)
- A deeply distressing or disturbing experience. (Google)





Raise Your Hand If...

- You or someone close to you has been in life threatening or life altering situation such as:
- Car accident
- Natural disaster
- Health crisis (physical/mental)
- Domestic violence
- Assault
- War zone
- Sudden loss



TRAUMA IMPACTS EVERYONE





TRAUMA DATA

- Most will experience at least one traumatic event. Estimated 5.2 million American adults, or approximately 3.6 percent of people in a given year, have PTSD¹⁰
- Those with co-occurring challenges (i.e.: homelessness, substance use, intellectual & developmental disabilities) are disproportionately represented¹¹
- As the number of traumatic childhood experiences (ACES) increase, so does depression; alcoholism; drug abuse; suicide attempts; heart and liver diseases; pregnancy problems; high stress; uncontrollable anger; and family, financial, and job problems.¹²
- Low estimates indicate that at any time there are 8 million children who have a trauma-related neuropsychiatric disorder such as PTSD/RAD⁸

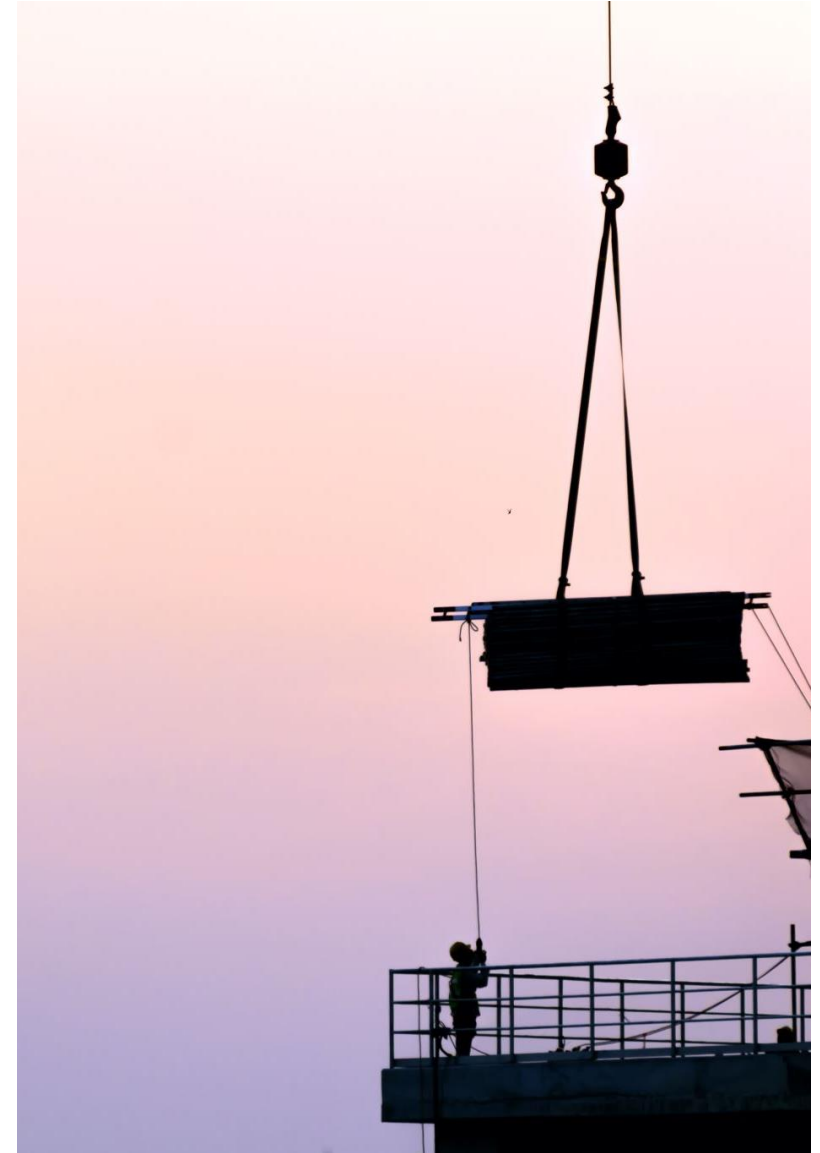
WHERE DOES TRAUMA COME FROM

Nature/Natural Disasters

People: Accidents/Mechanical
Catastrophes

People: Intentional Acts

The Human Experience ¹³





TYPES OF TRAUMA

Single Trauma

- A single trauma is limited to a single point in time

Chronic Trauma

- Repeated/Sustained traumas (i.e.: DV, childhood abuse, etc.)
- Tends to wear down resiliency⁷

Complex Trauma

- When individuals experience multiple traumas, prolonged and repeated trauma during childhood, or repetitive trauma in the context of significant interpersonal relationships⁹

Secondary Traumatic Stress

- The psychological distress that comes from hearing/observing the traumatic experiences of another
- The emotional toll that comes from listening to the trauma experiences of others that negatively impacts functioning⁹



A black and white photograph of a person in a dark suit sitting on a carpeted floor, leaning against a wall. The person's face is partially visible, looking down. A large, dark, octagonal object is on the floor to the right. The text 'Vicarious Trauma' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Vicarious Trauma

When the secondary trauma impacts the worldview and functioning of the helper

When the experiences of secondary traumatic stress are prolonged⁹

Burnout Defined

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), occupational burnout is a syndrome resulting from chronic work-related stress, with symptoms characterized by "feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and reduced professional efficacy."





Risks to Public Service Professionals



Workers Bring Trauma

An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is visible above the water surface, while the much larger, jagged base is submerged below. The sky is blue with some clouds, and the water is a deep blue. The overall image serves as a metaphor for hidden trauma.

Own History of Victimization

Family Stressors

Financial Strains

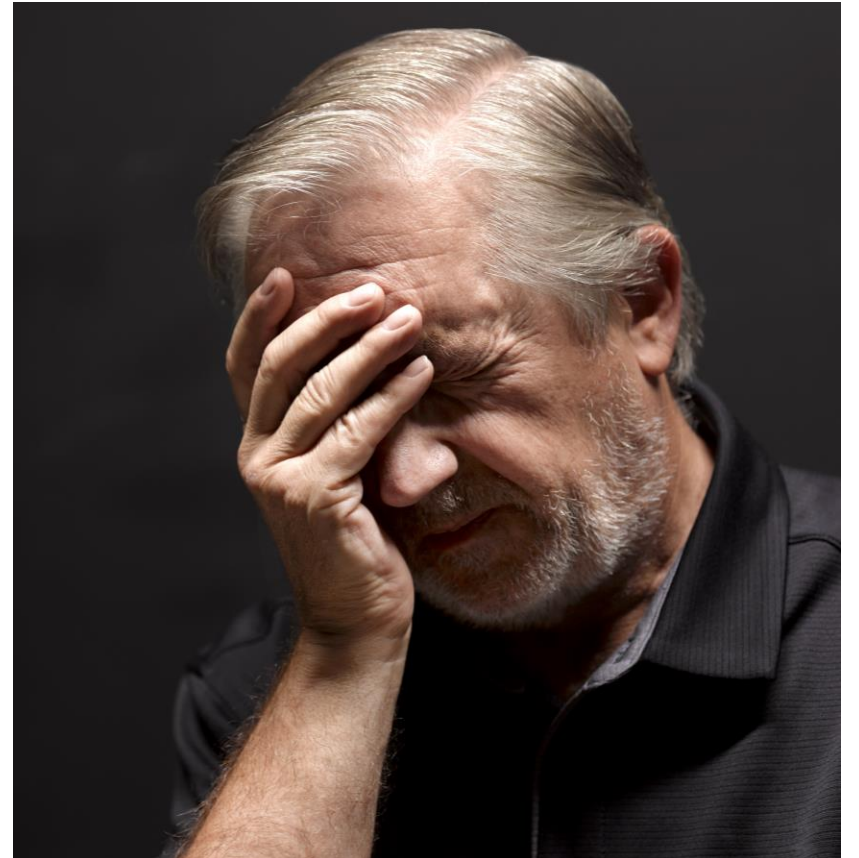
Caregiving/Relationship Demands

Unmet Self Care Needs

Bias From Systems

Work Related Traumas

- Unsafe/overwhelming work or community environments
- Hostile encounters
- Witnessing violence or aggression
- Observing vulnerable children
- Exposure to substances/disease
- Navigating oppressive systems



Customers & Clients Face Traumas

- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Mental/Physical Health Crisis
- Environmental Disparities
- Economic Challenges
- System Inequalities
- Limited Supports
- Community/Cultural Traumas



Trauma Impacts Organizations

- Collective intensive events
- Challenging systems demands
- Negative staff morale
- Turnover



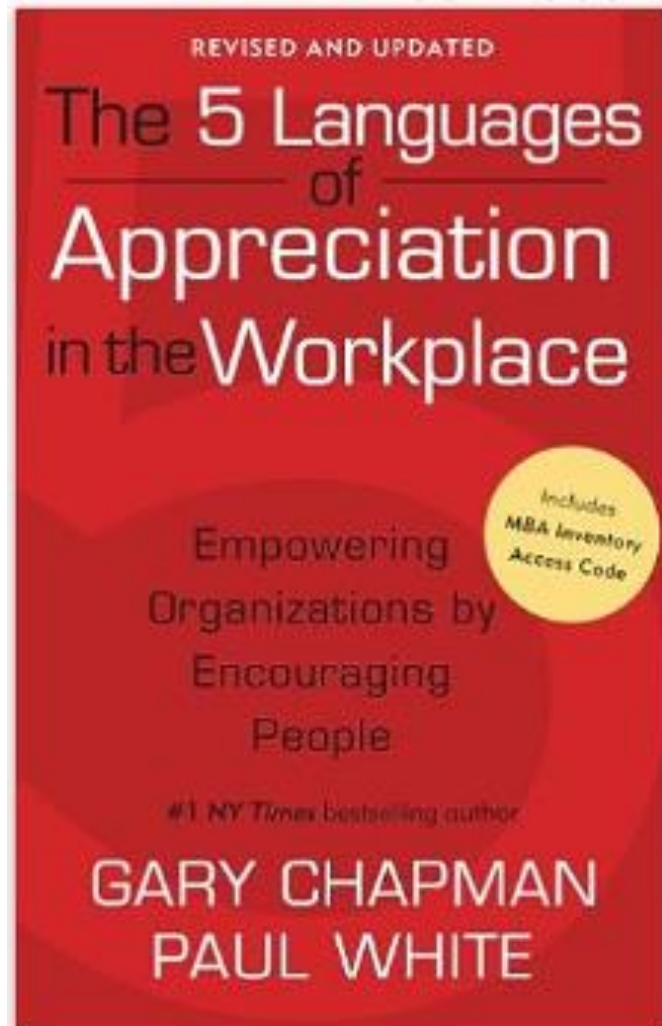


Coping with Traumas

Proactive Organizational Strategies

- Normalize The Experience of Trauma & Secondary Stress ⁷
- Encourage use of time off
- Balance workloads
- Support Opportunities for Professional Development
- Reward with affirmations that match the person





Activity: Language of Appreciation



Training for Supervisors

- Supervisors & leaders needs to be culturally competent
 - Recognizing the traumas of different people groups ⁷
 - Be aware of the subjectivity of trauma
 - Our lens is not the only lens
- Supervisors & leaders need to have effective listening skills
 - Recognizing the differences in communication styles
- Supervisors & leaders need to be open to feedback ¹

Ways Organizations Can React

- Psychological First Aid ⁹
- Person Centered Solutions ⁷
- Controlled Debriefing ⁹



An aerial photograph of a dense forest with various shades of green foliage, occupying the left half of the slide.

Trauma Informed Organization

- It's an ongoing process due to ongoing nature of ever changing experiences, prevalence's and types of traumas
- Regularly reassesses it's trauma responses
- Has to be promoted from the top down ⁷

Benefits of Trauma Informed Workplace

- Work Satisfaction
- Reduced Turnover
- Less Burnout
- Increased Productivity¹⁴



Trauma Informed Supervisor

- No specific mental health degree
- Compassionate and in tune with the weight of the work
- Recognize the “big” trauma that may occur in your field
- Plan & prepare for Secondary Trauma
- Offer applicable tools and resources for coping (including EAPs)
- Uses the parallel process
- Promotes Compassion Satisfaction





Compassion Satisfaction

Joy associated with helping
others ¹⁵

Celebrates successes

Grow what we give attention

Empathy: Brené Brown Video



Ways Supervisors Can React Immediately

- Walk: Movement produces endorphins
- Breathe: Takes us from emotional to rational brain
- Engage Senses: Smell lotion, chocolate melting, lemon drops
- Chewing: Oral stimulation is calming
- Music: Coping Playlist



Breathing Apps/Activities



App Store

“STOP, BREATHE & THINK”

FREE APPS





Open Door Is Not Enough

- Staff need regularly scheduled opportunities to process the weight of the work ²
- Open Door only promotes a reactive rather than reflective response to crisis/traumatic events in the workplace ²
- Some workers will never seek out the open door
- Other workers need to know they have a regular “dumping ground”
- Crisis review or critical incident debriefings examine the matter when there has already been an adverse event.
- In contrast, trauma informed supervision is a strengths-based approach that takes place regularly in a safe setting. ²
- Monthly is sufficient ¹
- 60 minutes is perceived as more effective ¹

Business Case for Regular 1:1 Supervision

- Relationship with a supervisor is key determinate in employee dissatisfaction ²
- Regular supervision = retention ¹
- Regular supervision = positive outcomes ¹
- Effective supervision = improved customer/client care ¹
- Regular supervision = greater compliance ¹



Supervisors Carry Trauma

- Personal Experiences
- Staff Experiences
 - Staff Personal Experiences
 - Staff's Secondary Trauma
- Family Experiences
- Program Pressures



What Are You Modeling

- What is your internal response to workplace stressors?
- Do you know what symptoms occur in your body when stressed?
- What is your observable response to workplace stressors?
- How do you know when you are triggered?
- What is your immediate and proactive response?
- Do you practice self care?

Self Care Plan

- Maintain a sense of personal control
- Personal professional development plan
- Pursuit of purposeful meaningful non-work activities
- Make healthy lifestyle choices



Assessment Tools

- PROQoL-Measures the professional quality of life as it relates to one working in the helping field.
 - <http://proqol.org>
- PHQ-9-Measures depression
 - <https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/images/res/PHQ%20-%20Questions.pdf>
- GAD 7-Measures anxiety



Caution with Tools

- These tools are not a substitute for professional intervention
- Concerning results should be shared with a professional
- Counseling/mental health interventions should be promoted as a positive means of self care (use EAPs)





People do not care how much you know
until they know how much you care.

-John C. Maxwell (and several others)

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