

# How Being Trauma-Informed Improves the Criminal Justice System Overview

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*SAMSHA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation, operated by Policy Research Associates, Inc (PRA), is known nationally for its work regarding people with behavioral health needs involved in the criminal justice system.*

# AOIC Program Unit Initiative

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GOALS



#  
CURRENT  
TRAINERS



# STAFF  
TRAINED



LENGTH  
OF  
TRAINING



COPE  
APPROVED

# Why learn about trauma?

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- Individual trauma rates are high, especially with people involved with the justice system.
- Develop understanding and awareness
- Recognize signs of trauma responses
- Learn how to respond
  - Increase safety
  - Reduce recidivism
  - Promote recovery

# What is Trauma?

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**EVENT**



**EXPERIENCE**



**EFFECT**

# Potential Traumatic Events

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## **Abuse**

- *Emotional*
- *Sexual*
- *Physical*
- *Domestic violence*
- *Witnessing violence*
- *Bullying*
- *Cyberbullying*
- *Institutional*

## **Loss**

- *Death*
- *Abandonment*
- *Neglect*
- *Separation*
- *Natural disaster*
- *Accidents*
- *Terrorism*
- *War*

## **Chronic Stressors**

- *Poverty*
- *Racism*
- *Invasive medical procedure*
- *Community trauma*
- *Historical trauma*
- *Family member with substance use disorder*

# Vicarious Trauma

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*The emotional residue of exposure to traumatic stories and experiences of others through work; witnessing fear, pain, and terror that others have experienced; a preoccupation with horrific stories told to the professional (American Counseling Association, 2016)*

First Responders

Law Enforcement Officers

Court Personnel (judges, attorneys, clerks, baliffs)

Correctional Officers/ Jail Staff

Juvenile Detention Officers

Probation/ Parole Officers

Behavioral Health Providers

Vicarious  
Trauma:  
Who is  
affected?



# Impact of Trauma

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The effect of trauma on an individual can be conceptualized as a normal response to an abnormal situation

# Impact of Trauma: Problems OR Adaptations?

**Fight**

**“Non-compliant, combative”  
OR  
Struggling to regain or hold onto personal power**

**Flight**

**“Treatment resistant, uncooperative”  
OR  
Disengaging, withdrawing**

**Freeze**

**“Passive, unmotivated”  
OR  
Giving in to those in power**

# Impact of Trauma: Signs of Trauma Responses

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## **Additional Signs**

- Flashbacks or frequent nightmares
- Sensitivity to noise or to being touched
- Always expecting something bad to happen
- Not remembering periods of one's life
- Feeling emotionally numb
- Lack of concentration
- Irritability
- Excessive watchfulness, anxiety, anger, shame or sadness



*Trauma Shapes  
how we see the  
world*

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# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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Understanding

Safety

Trustworthiness  
and  
Transparency

Choice

Collaboration  
and Mutuality

Empowerment

# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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Understanding

Gain an understanding  
through training, listening  
and empathy

# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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## Safety

Clients- maximizing control  
over their lives/ feeling of  
safety

Providers- maximizing control  
over the environment  
minimizing risk

# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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Trustworthiness  
and  
Transparency

Meaningful sharing  
of information,  
authenticity and  
consistency.



# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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## Choice

Individuals' strengths and experiences are recognized. Organizations foster a belief in resilience and support self-advocacy.

# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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**Collaboration  
and Mutuality**

**Relationship  
building, meaningful  
sharing of power in  
decision making**

# Principles of Trauma Informed Care

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**Empowerment**

**Build on and  
validate a person's  
strengths, build  
peer support**



# Individualized Experiences

## RESILIENCE

**Family ties**

**Strong primary relationship**

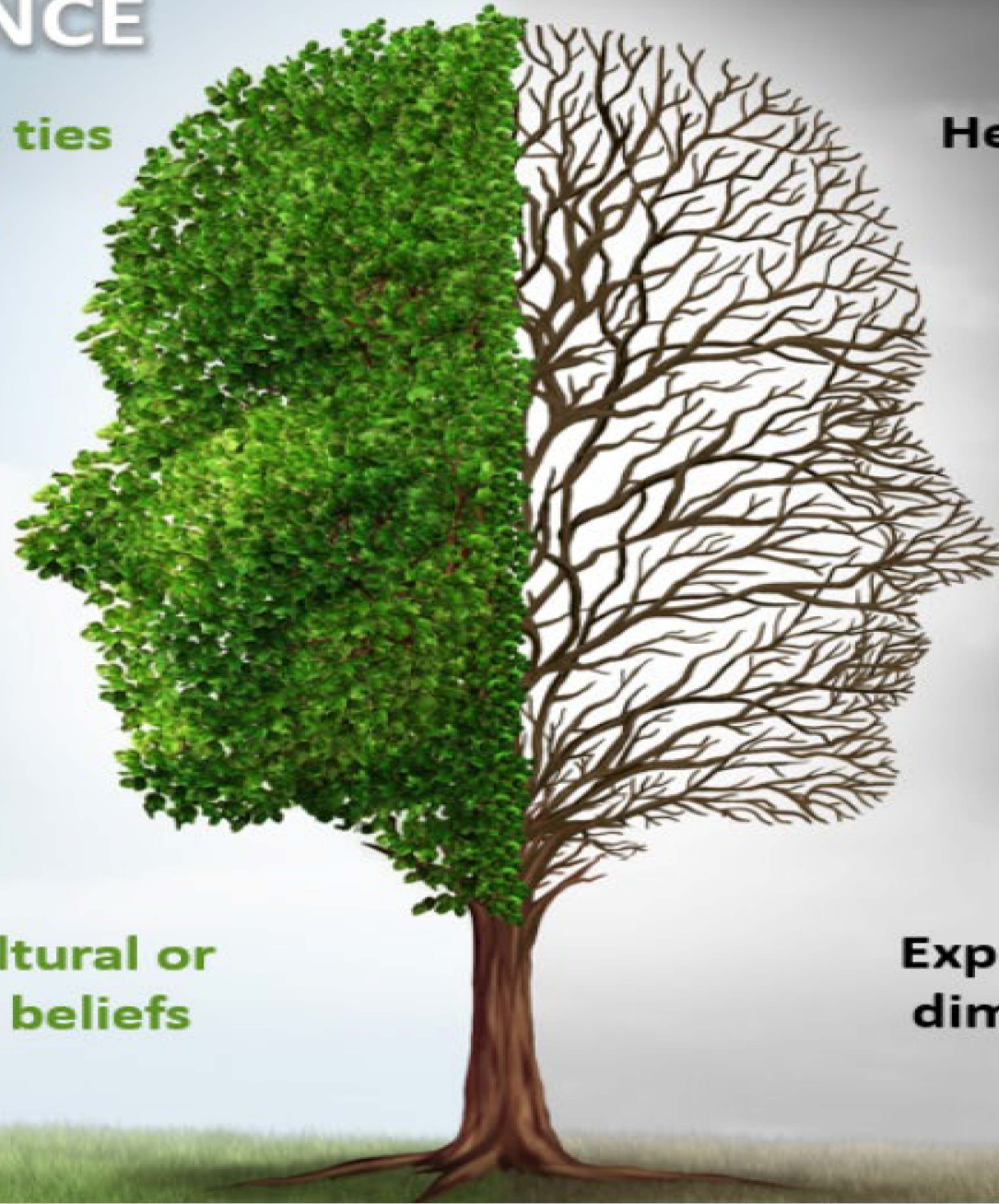
**Connection to community**

**Employment**

**Biology**

**Meaningful activity**

**Strong cultural or religious beliefs**



## RISK

**Health issues**

**Pre-existing mental health problems**

**Severity of trauma**

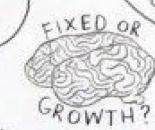
**Proximity to trauma**

**Biology**

**Numerous traumas**

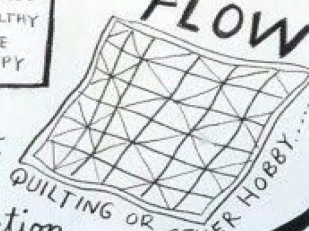
**Experiences that diminish coping capacity**

OPTIMISM  
 ABC'S & ABCDE'S  
**POSITIVITY**  
 Broaden & Build  
 SELF-COMPASSION  
 FORGIVENESS  
 WIRED FOR NEGATIVITY  
 learner vs. judger  
 GRATITUDE  
 DEAR BOB



SAVORING UMM...  
**ENGAGEMENT**  
 MAXIMIZERS & SATISFICERS  
 CHOICE  
 MINDFULNESS HERE & NOW  
 self regulation  
 FLOW  
 QUILTING OR OTHER HOBBY

I AM AT EASE  
 I AM HEALTHY  
 I AM SAFE  
 I AM HAPPY



Character Strengths  
 USE THEM DON'T OVERUSE THEM

OTHER PEOPLE MATTER



HERE LET ME HELP!

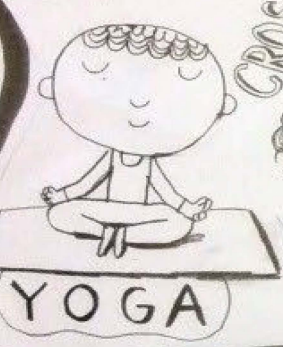
**RELATIONSHIPS**

laughing HA! HA! HA!



**RESILIENCE** =

NATURE  
 HIKING  
 ZZZZZZZ  
**VITALITY**  
 AGING WELL  
 CROSSFIT  
 YOGA



RITUALS

**ACHIEVEMENT**

COACHING  
 GOAL SETTING  
 GRIT  
 HOPE  
 change theory

WORK AS A CALLING

CREATIVE



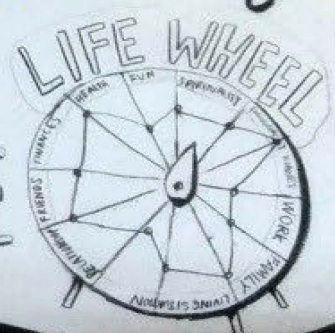
**MEANING**

PASSION

helping

Spirituality

PURPOSE





If you are interested in hosting a training, please contact the AOIC training unit.

[Probationtraining@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:Probationtraining@illinoiscourts.gov)



# Thank you

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