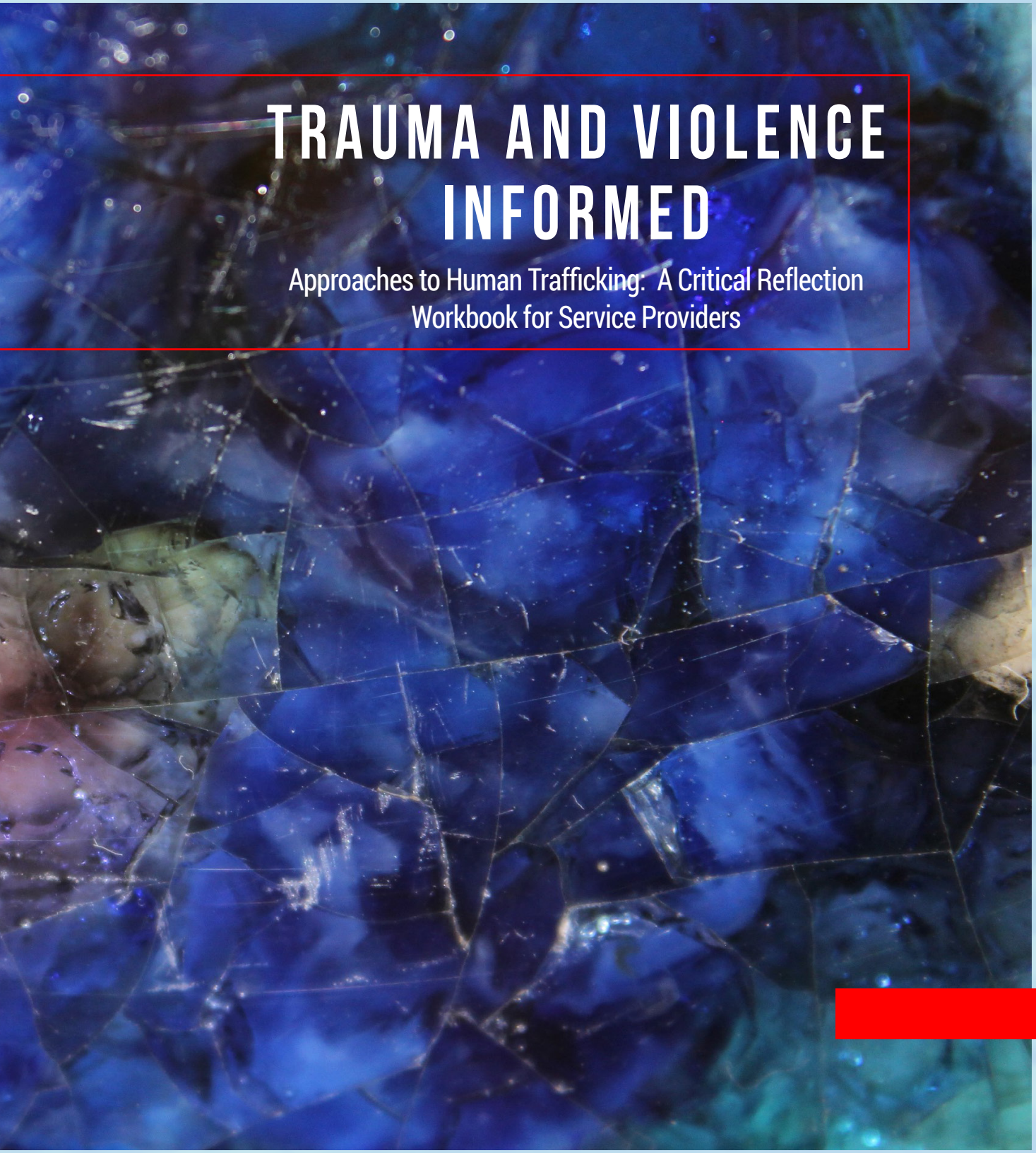


TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED

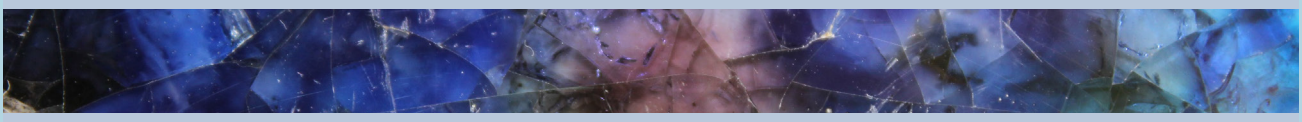
Approaches to Human Trafficking: A Critical Reflection Workbook for Service Providers

NORAHT
Northeastern Ontario Research Alliance on Human Trafficking

FRONT COVER IMAGE

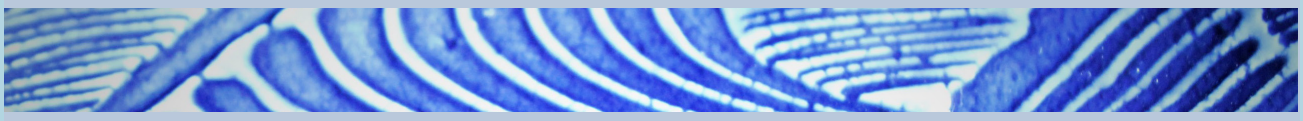
Images by Brenda Quenneville

The image of one of Brenda's potted bowls, is fused glass encased in pottery. It was chosen to represent not only the complexities associated with human trafficking, but highlights the possibility of transformation and resilience. In this pottery technique, coloured pieces of broken glass are layered on the bottom of a thick walled clay form. When the glass goes through the kiln within the pottery, the glass melts, fusing together in beautiful swirls of colour and texture resembling crystals. There is no absolute control in this process, it is up to the materials to transform and choose to revitalize. The resulting glass is stronger than it was before, as this new shape embedded in pottery asserts its identity. Through resiliency it is able to maintain its core purpose and integrity even in the face of dramatically changed pressures and circumstances.



WAVES IMAGE

The image of the waves is another piece of Brenda's pottery, this time a plate. The imprint of the waves are rolled onto a flattened piece of clay. The clay is then stretched to size and placed on a mould to shape it as it dries. The imprint is very delicate, and can be flattened easily. However, once it goes through the firing process, and glaze is added, the subtleties of the transformation emerge. When Brenda works with this motif, she often thinks how, "Happiness comes in waves."



Recommended citation: Quenneville, Brenda, Gina Snooks, Donna Debassige, Kathleen Jodouin, Rosemary Nagy, Rebecca Timms, Lanyan Chen and Sydnee Wiggins. "Trauma and Violence Informed Approaches to Human Trafficking: A Critical Reflection Workbook for Service Providers." North Bay: Northeastern Ontario Research Alliance on Human Trafficking, 2020.

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INTRODUCTION AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Elder Donna Debassige (Anishinaabe-kwe), of the Giigoonh Clan from Mnidoo Mnising (Manitoulin Island) who guides our research according to Anishinabek knowledge and traditional practices, has taught us the importance of beginning each journey in a good way. This requires us to introduce ourselves and our research, as well as to acknowledge the lands upon which we live and work, in order to let readers know who we are and why we care about the work that we do.

We are the Northeastern Ontario Research Alliance on Human Trafficking (NORAHT). Our work is primarily located in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land that we gather on is the traditional territory of the Anishinabek people, specifically the Nipissing Nation. Our home base is in North Bay but our research takes place across northeastern Ontario within Anishinaabek and Mushkegowuk territories and we acknowledge the First Peoples and ancestors of these lands, as well as the diverse Indigenous peoples who live in our urban centres.

The research partners in NORAHT are Nipissing University, the Anishinabek Nation, Victim Services of Nipissing District, and Centered Fire Counselling and Consulting. We thank past partners Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre of Nipissing and the AIDS Committee of North Bay and Area. The research is generously supported by a Partnership Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). NORAHT's core team consists of two Indigenous and six settler women who are scholars and community-based practitioners. We began this research project because our community-based partners had suspicions about human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in our region. Yet, we wondered if service providers had the knowledge and tools to address human trafficking in our region. From 2013-2020 we worked together with community-based practitioners and persons with lived experience to determine gaps in services in our region and to build awareness about how to best support persons who have experienced human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation as well as other forms of violence and abuse in the sex trade.

NORAHT believes that service providers play an important role in human trafficking.

Yet, we learned that service providers are not always prepared with the knowledge and tools necessary to address human trafficking in their communities. In some cases, this can be due to lack of training. But this can also be due to lack of funding and/or resources to implement programming specifically designed to support trafficked persons. Other issues include lack of support

within organizations (such as lack of support from supervisors and/or mandates that limit the kind of work service provides can do on the ground) and lack of support from communities at large. We know that service providers are doing the best they can to support persons who have experienced human trafficking, particularly within the limitations previously mentioned. Yet, we also learned from persons with lived experience that systems and practices designed to support persons can be retraumatizing. For these reasons, NORAHT advocates for trauma and violence informed approaches to both service provision and program and policy design.

In particular we offer the three following recommendations:

1. Ensure that all policy makers, programmers and service providers have the knowledge and tools to develop a deep understanding of interpersonal, complex trauma specific to human trafficking, and to deliver holistic services;
2. Program mandates and organizational operating policies and procedures should emphasize trauma and violence informed models of care at all levels of service provision. Thus, policies and procedures should be evaluated by persons with advanced knowledge of human trafficking, and especially by persons with lived experience who are paid members in the circle of care;
3. Ensure that service providers working with persons who have experienced human trafficking are supported to remain healthy by their peers, supervisors, and organizational policies and mandates.

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED PRACTICE IN CONTEXT

Trauma and violence informed practice is limited by the environment in which we provide service. For example, most service provision is delivered through provincially funded organizations and is therefore dependent upon government funding. Yet, there has been a systematic erosion of social services for decades. This has resulted in service users with higher, more complex needs as prevention measures or earlier, less complex issues go unresolved, thereby compounding and wreaking more havoc in a person's life. The reality is that we, as service providers, are asked to provide comprehensive services to a highly complex issue like human trafficking with access to only band-aid solutions and stretched resources (e.g., our shelters are beyond maximum capacity, case workers are overwhelmed). These issues make it very difficult to provide trauma and violence-informed services, and we call attention to these needs as a way to begin addressing this issue.

NOTE ON LANGUAGE

We use the term human trafficking throughout this workbook in order to align with terminology commonly used by service providers. However, it should be noted that through our research NORAHT has moved away from using the term human trafficking in order to promote each woman's right to name the violence she has experienced in her own terms, which we advocate

promotes self-determination and respects human dignity (key principles of trauma and violence informed practices). NORAHT takes a critical anti-trafficking approach and we explicitly understand human trafficking to be distinct from sex work. We propose that moving away from using the term human trafficking allows for more nuanced understandings of violence, exploitation and abuse experienced in the sex trade. This is important because our research indicates that the manner in which human trafficking is defined by service providers, and legally, impacts service provision. In particular, women who do not define the violence they have experienced as human trafficking can be denied access to support when service provision is conceptualized through limited definitions of what constitutes human trafficking and what does not. In other words, there is a risk for women who request help to fall through the cracks (not receive the support they ask for) when their experiences cannot be neatly organized into checkboxes.

NORAHT encourages service providers to critically reflect on their own usage of the term human trafficking and to consider how that term shapes their service provision.

WHO IS THIS WORKBOOK FOR?

This workbook is intended for anyone providing services to persons who have experienced human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. We use the term "service provider" in a broad manner to include anyone who is supporting persons who have experienced trafficking. Peers with lived experience in human trafficking, sex worker alliances, persons working within grassroots initiatives, and community-based organizations are included in this broad definition. We also include professional practitioners whose interaction with trafficked persons might be brief, such as: emergency responders, hospital workers and frontline workers, and spiritual advisors/mentors. The term service provider, further, includes professionals who are supporting persons on their healing journeys, such as: counsellors, social workers, and psychotherapists.

We know that there are many different people providing support for people who have experienced human trafficking. Some of you may have lived experience and are therefore peer professionals. Some of you may have secondary, post-secondary or graduate-level educations. Some of you are affiliated with publicly funded not-for-profit social service organizations, some of you may be from privately funded systems, and others may be working with grassroots movements. Maybe some of you are in law enforcement, while others are in academia. Given this diverse audience, we hope that this workbook has something in it for everyone.

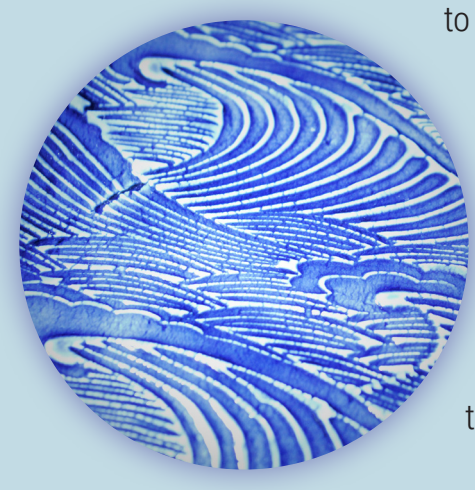
Although this workbook is designed with service providers in mind, policy makers at all levels can benefit from completing the exercises in this workbook. After all, NORAHT advocates that all policy makers, programmers, and service providers have the knowledge and tools to develop a deep understanding of interpersonal, complex trauma specific to human trafficking, and to deliver holistic services.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

The purpose of this critical reflection workbook is to gain a greater awareness about how our ideas and practices inform our approaches to anti-violence work in the sex trade. Although this workbook is designed to address human trafficking specifically, principles of trauma and violence informed systems of care and the critical reflection exercises presented here can be used by service providers working in anti-violence service provision more broadly. In doing so, service providers can gain an understanding of which approaches are working well and which approaches need improvement. In practice, this requires service providers to examine their own biases and awareness about human trafficking. Further, it is important to examine the policies, mandates, and operations of the organizations within which service providers work. Finally, in order to provide trauma and violence informed care, it is necessary to analyze the social, cultural, and political dimensions that shape personal and organizational ideas, beliefs, and practices. As we explore more thoroughly in the sections that follow, trauma and violence informed approaches necessitate understanding the content in which trauma and violence occur and how experiencing trauma and violence affect peoples' lives. In other words, we need to understand the whole story.

We appreciate that service providers are busy with the day-to-day work of supporting people who have experienced human trafficking and may not have large amounts of time all at once to engage in critical reflection and learning. For this reason, we have designed this workbook to be used in short sessions. For example, you can take a few minutes between appointments to complete one exercise at a time. NORAHT recognizes that theory and practice go hand-in-hand. As such, in this workbook we provide theoretical background alongside practice exercises to prompt critical reflection about human trafficking and service provision.

That said, the focus of this workbook is on the "why" and "how" to practice trauma and violence informed systems of care with regard to supporting persons who have experienced violence, exploitation and abuse in the sex trade, including human trafficking. For more information on the theory of trauma and violence informed strategies please see the list of references at the end of this booklet. Finally, we wish to note that critical reflection and education are ongoing processes. Thus, we encourage service providers to return to this workbook from time-to-time to reassess their ideas and practices.



The exercises in this workbook are designed to inspire service providers to critically reflect upon their own ideas, biases and practices. There are no right or wrong answers, per se. Rather this workbook provides an opportunity for service providers to assess strengths, weaknesses and room for improvement in their own practices. This critical reflection work might feel uncomfortable for some folks, but we encourage you to engage in the process because it is often in those uncomfortable places that we learn the most about ourselves.

BACKGROUND

In 2013 the Northeastern Ontario Research Alliance on Human Trafficking (NORAHT) formed with a mandate to examine human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in northeastern Ontario. At the time, community partners in our alliance suspected that human trafficking was happening in our communities, but was little known about how it was happening and what resources were available to address the issue and to support persons who had been trafficked. Grounded in Indigenous, decolonial and feminist paradigms, we used participatory action research (PAR) to identify the needs, gaps, and barriers for persons who have experienced human trafficking in our region. In the spring and fall of 2017, we conducted community engagement sessions with service providers and persons with lived experience in human trafficking and the sex trade in eight northeastern Ontario communities: North Bay, Sudbury, Timmons, Sault Ste. Marie, Manitoulin, Cochrane, Kirkland Lake, and Dokis First Nation.

Participants in our community engagement sessions identified a need for trauma and violence informed toolkits that are cognizant of the diverse Indigenous cultures in our region. Thus, this workbook was designed with these recommendations in mind.

EXERCISE 1: UPON WHOSE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES DO I LIVE & WORK?

We began this workbook with a land acknowledgement. The purpose of a land acknowledgment is to show respect for the First Peoples of these lands and their relationship to their home territories. Territorial acknowledgements have been part of some Indigenous cultures for a long time (centuries). So, a land acknowledge is not simply about announcing where we are but also acknowledging Indigenous ways of knowing, which is important in the context of Canadian history and also in terms of decolonial practices. But, because we often hear land acknowledgements without an explanation of the purpose, some have come to see it just another box to check — we want to avoid that.

Where do you live and work? In the space below take some time to consider your relationship with these lands.

Resources:

https://apihtawikosisan.com/aboriginal-issue-primers/

https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/home/

www.nctr.ca (National Center for Truth and Reconciliation – Residential Schools) testimony

Critical Reflection:

- What do I know about the histories of the First Peoples of the area in which I live?
- What do I know about the histories about Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples' relationships in this region?
- What do I know about intergenerational and historic trauma?
- What do I know about Indigenous peoples' resiliency?
- How might these histories be part of the bigger picture of human trafficking in my region?
- How can I learn more about Indigenous peoples' cultures and histories in my region?

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

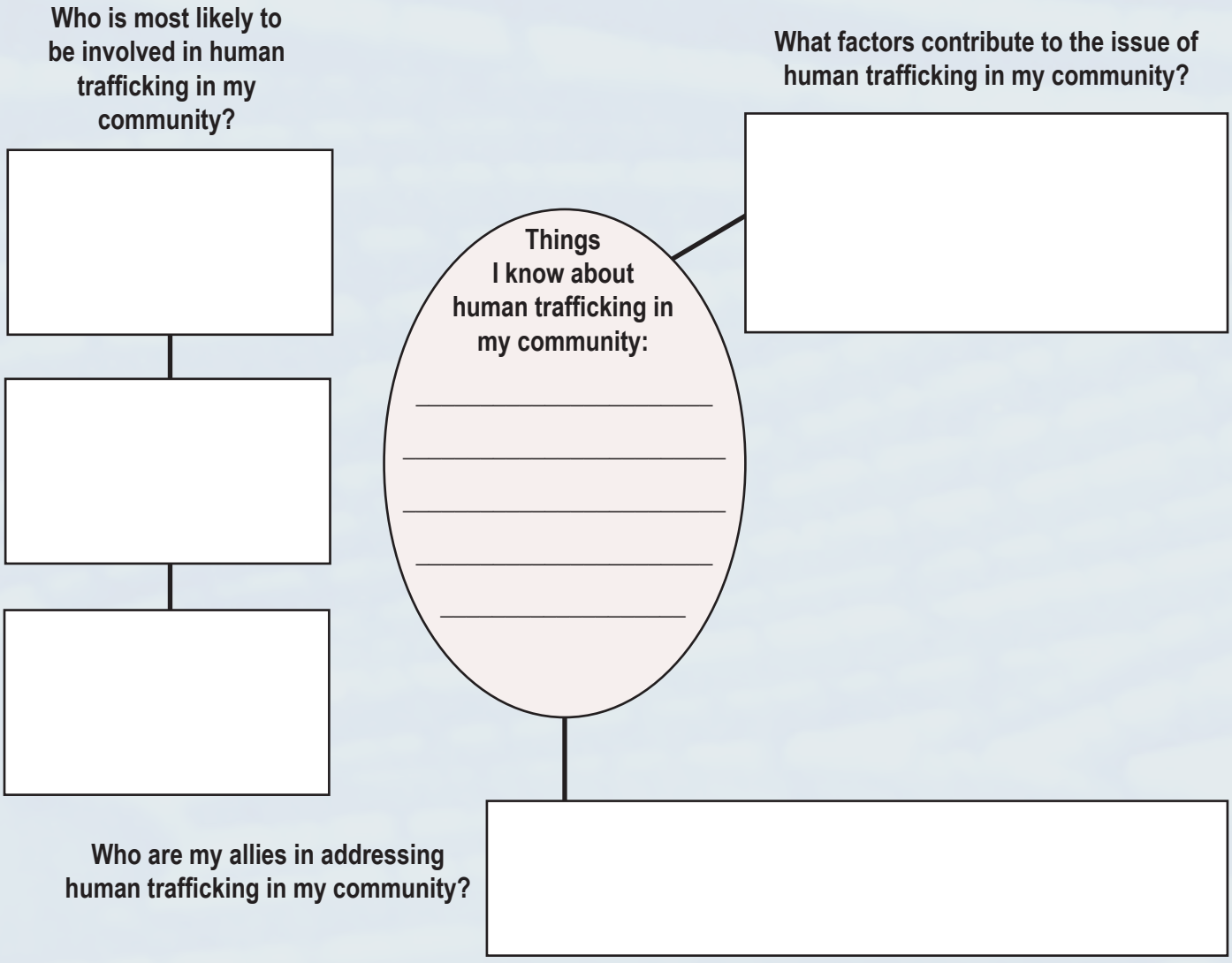
According to the Criminal Code of Canada, human trafficking is defined as the "recruiting, transporting, transferring, receiving, holding, concealing or harbouring of a person" or "exercising control, direction or influence over the movements of a person, for the purpose of exploiting them or facilitating their exploitation" (279.01). However, "the ambiguity of 'sexual exploitation' means that how one defines human trafficking is widely contested and complex" (Nagy et al. 2020). To be clear, NORAHT takes a critical anti-trafficking approach and we recognize that human trafficking is distinctly different than sex work because human trafficking involves coercion and lack of consent, whereas "sex work is a chosen form of labour" (Nagy et al. 2020). "That said, it is important to acknowledge that coercion and consent are not simply opposites, but that both occur along a fluid spectrum." As we have written elsewhere, "Rather than viewing trafficked persons as abject victims who have no agency, we argue that people experience 'situational coercion' and make 'reluctant choices' that are 'often relational' in the face of considerable restraints'" (Hoyle qtd. in Nagy at al. 2020). Moreover, as one person who had experienced human trafficking explained, "even within the most coercive and violent situations there is a sufficient degree of agency and autonomy to ensure survival and self-preservation" (Cojocaru qtd. in Nagy et al. 2020).

NORAHT advocates for critical anti-trafficking approaches that respond to violence, exploitation and abuse in the sex trade with an emphasis on recognizing and respecting human dignity, agency, self-determination, resistance, and resiliency of persons who have experienced human trafficking. We also emphasize the importance of acknowledging the self-determination, resistance, and resilience of Indigenous peoples and communities.

The ways in which you conceptualize human trafficking and your beliefs about sex work will inevitably shape the way you approach anti-violence work in the sex trade. As such, the exercises in this book are intended to help you think critically about your own ideas and biases in order to understand how they shape the work that you do in supporting persons who have experienced human trafficking. Again, the intention here is not to determine right or wrong answers, per se. Rather, the exercises are designed to inspire critical reflection.

EXERCISE 2: WHAT DOES HUMAN TRAFFICKING LOOK LIKE IN MY COMMUNITY?

Use the concept map provided here to brainstorm all of the things you know about human trafficking in your community. Make note of everything that you can think of and use the space around this template to add your own ideas



EXERCISE 3: UNPACKING MY IDEAS ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Fill in template below on the topic of human trafficking. Do not attempt to filter your thoughts, rather respond as quickly and honestly as possible. Once you have filled in the template, take some time to critically reflect on what you wrote.

When it comes to human trafficking, I believe that_____.

But some members of my community believe that human trafficking_____

_____.

Some of the issues my community faces in terms of addressing human trafficking are_____

_____

_____.

Some people believe that sex workers should be at the forefront of addressing violence, exploitation and abuse in the sex industry, including human trafficking. I believe_____.

For this reason, I align my work with _____. I believe that the work I do is important because _____.

In the space below jot down your thoughts about the paragraph you completed above. What does the completed paragraph tell you about your beliefs about human trafficking? How might your beliefs impact the way you approach your work?

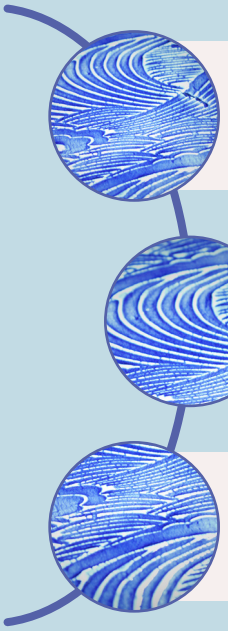
TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED APPROACHES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING: IN A NUTSHELL

Trauma is a response to having experienced harm. Traumatic experiences can affect how a person understands themselves and how they view the world. Experiencing harm can have physical, emotional, psychological, behavioural, and spiritual and/or cultural dimensions.

Trauma and violence informed systems of care acknowledge that trauma and violence are pervasive, and that trauma and violence can happen to anyone regardless of gender, sexuality, age, culture, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of lived experience. In a nutshell, trauma and violence informed approaches to service provision:

- Attend to and actively name the root causes of trauma, including experiential (personal), organizational, and societal (structural) dimensions that influence surviv ors' experiences of human trafficking and their interactions with service providers;
- Understand that trauma and violence are multifaceted;
- Approach trauma and healing through each person's unique perspective and lived experiences;
- Aim to do no harm (avoid retraumatizing persons).

Key principles of trauma and violence informed approaches to human trafficking are self-determination, relationality and decolonization.

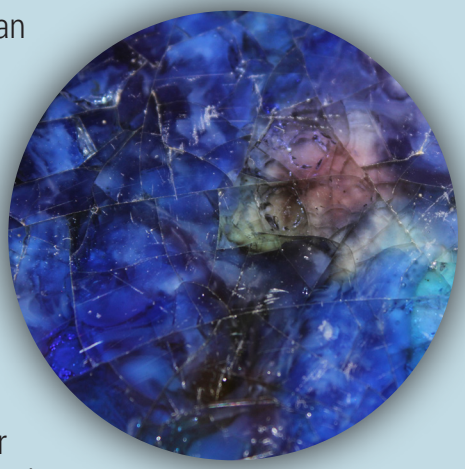


Self-determination: support persons to make own choices; respect human dignity & human rights; root services in harm reduction strategies.

Relationality: understand context of human trafficking; understand links between individual experiences (personal) and organizational & social structures; understand the important of building trust & ongoing relationships between service providers and persons assessing services.

Decolonial: root services in holistic pardigms; make space for multiples ways of knowing; unsettle Eurocentric paradigms (cultural awareness); recognize the ongoing impact of settler colonialism.

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED SYSTEMS OF CARE IN PRACTICE



In order to support persons who have experienced human trafficking without causing further harm, we need to understand the whole story of human trafficking and the whole story of how trauma and violence affects peoples' lives. This means understanding trauma and violence in the context of each person's life specifically and also within the broader context of structural violence. In other words, we need to understand the personal and structural dimensions that impact a person's life. This requires us to be attentive to the multifaceted and intersecting ways in which people have experienced harm in order to avoid causing them further harm. This includes being attentive to the context in which people experience harm before and after they have been trafficked. It is important to understand the context in which each person has experienced human trafficking in order to provide individualized support. However, because trauma and violence informed practices aim to avoid retraumatizing persons, it important to create a safe and relational container within which people can disclose any details of the violence that they have experienced at their own pace. Pressuring people to disclose the details of their experiences when it is not safe (physical, emotional, psychological/mental and spiritual/cultural safety) is in itself a form of violence. This is because persuading people to disclose experiences of trauma and violence when they do not feel safe to do so can dismantle any containment and framing mechanisms that they have developed in order to survive. For example, if the person who has been trafficked identifies the trafficker as their boyfriend and/or intimate partner if service providers, who are not their peers, reframe that relationship by describing that person as a trafficker, and not an intimate partner, they risk retraumatizing that person because that reframing contradicts how they understand their sense of self, their relationships and their experiences in a way that they did not consent. Therefore, undermining their right to self-determination which, in turn, can alienate them from the service provider.

As with any other diagnosable mental health concern, there is a lot of debate surrounding traumatic stress and trauma. Our perceptions of trauma may be influenced by these debates, which may then impact the way we work with people who have experienced human trafficking. For example, diagnostic criteria for PTSD in the DSM-IV and DSM-V are rooted in "event specific" conceptualizations, wherein they outline what sorts of events are likely to cause PTSD. Indeed, in the DSM-V, those qualifying events have been narrowed as compared to the DSM-IV. While there is also a healthy acknowledgement of trauma reactions to be assessed in diagnosing PTSD, many trauma and violence informed advocates suggest that "event specific" approaches are limited, and that the focus of conceptualization ought to "reaction specific." Afterall, what may be a traumatizing event to one person, may not be traumatizing to another.

Critical Reflection:

- Where on the "event specific" / "reaction specific" continuum do you tend to fall in your conceptualization of trauma? How does that inform your approach? Use the space below to record your response.

Fostering Relationships

In practice, providing trauma and violence informed systems of care requires service providers to develop relationships with persons who been trafficked. Experiencing trauma can affect how a person feels about themselves, but service providers cannot assume that every person who has been trafficked will be affected in the same way. It is especially important that service providers' behaviors and organizational policies and program design not mimic violent, exploitative, and abusive strategies employed by traffickers. For example, policies that require service users to do one thing (e.g. attend programs) in order to receive another (e.g. to qualify for shelter) can be perceived as coercive and controlling. Coercion and control are tactics used to exploit persons in the sex trade and are part of what defines human trafficking (as defined above). Therefore, such strategies may be perceived as mimicking the behaviours of abusers.

Tips for Service Providers: Respect service users' human dignity, do not speak over persons who have experienced human trafficking when they share their experiences, be compassionate, listen attentively, do not assume that you know what is best for persons who are accessing service, ask them how you can support them, be honest about your own biases and how those biases might impact the services you provide, build strong and supportive collaborations.

EXERCISE 4: TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED CHECKLIST FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Here is a checklist of trauma and violence informed strategies. Take some time to identify which of these strategies you are already using well in your practice, which of your approaches can be improved upon, and which strategies you have not yet implemented but can see how they will be useful in your practice. This exercise might also inspire you to think of other ways in which you could approach your anti-violence work in trauma and violence informed ways.

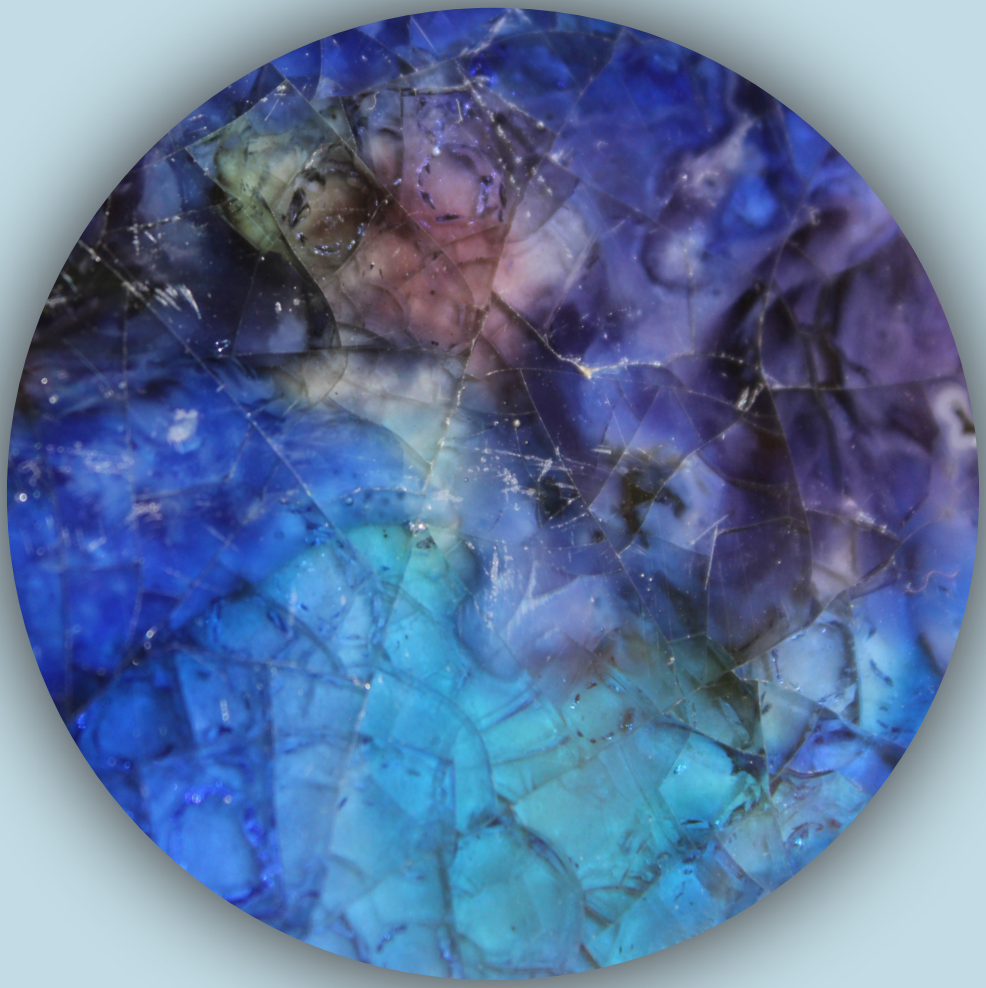
We wanted to give you lots to think about, but also hope that it is not overwhelming. It can be a difficult balance and there may not be opportunities for you to practice each of these in every encounter. But that is not necessarily the goal of this checklist. Instead, we offer different items for you to think about as you prepare to engage with a person who has been trafficked, or to use as a tool to reflect on an encounter you have had.

✓	What you can do?	Why it's trauma & violence informed
	Be genuine	People with a history of trauma tend to be quite sensitive to authenticity. Particularly for people who may have had childhood abuse (like many of the people we interviewed), interacting with a person whose attitude is over the top sweet and kind can be triggering and/or be perceived as ingenuine. Be your own imperfect yourself.
	Foster making choices	Offering choices is also a way we can help someone experience self-determination and agency in a safe way. For example, the choice of where to sit in the room or choosing between what flavour of juice box being offered can help shift established relational dynamics for persons who experienced being controlled and manipulated by others. Keep in mind too, that choice is a foundational principle of feminist practice which is the foremother of trauma and violence informed practice.
	Foster empowerment by respecting decisions	Even if their decision is not one that you agree with, you found a way to hold your own fears and anxiety. That's not easy at all – maybe take a moment for self-care to soothe your own reactions.
	Made a meaningful connection, regardless of how small	Human trafficking work requires intensive collaboration. When service users have a good experience at your organization those encounters can open a door for them to consider trusting or trying another organization down the road. So even a short-lived connection that goes well has the potential to develop later on.
	Try to not walk, sit, or stand behind them	Being in plain sight helps to establish a sense of safety – literally there is no one behind them. Sensing someone behind them could be a trigger, so you should be working to anticipate triggers and mitigate them.

	Look beyond behaviour and don't get caught up in reacting to it	Survival and attachment-based behaviours may include (but certainly are not limited to) controlling, rigidity, people-pleasing, need for constant contact, hypervigilance, isolating, offensiveness, defensiveness, active passivity, self-loathing, and helpless behaviours, etc.
	Look beyond behaviour and recognize the emotion that is beneath	Behaviours are a language, and you are open to deciphering that language. For example, are they pushing you away, challenging you, yelling at you? Rather than reacting to that behaviour, maybe you considered how they may be feeling (fear, distrust, triggered, etc)?
	Look beyond difficult or seemingly inappropriate emotional expressions (anger, laughter……) and don't get caught up in reacting to it	Staying calm and non-reactive to difficult emotions and behaviours is critical to trauma and violence informed work, and it can be very difficult to do. If you were able to stay calm while you were being challenged in this way, consider that a success!
	Meet people where they are at on their journey.	Foster relationships with people that allows them to lead their own journey forward based on their life circumstances at this time. This helps people to feel in control of their experiences and recognizes their human dignity and right to make their own choices.
	Be honest.	Be honest about the ways that you can support people and what your limitations are.
	Acknowledge that people are likely doing the best they can to cope and to heal.	Be patient if people do not move forward on their journey as quickly as you hope and/or that your program mandates.
	Recognize when a defense mechanism was employed and decide if you are invited to gently encourage them to explore the root of that resistance OR if their defensive behaviour was a necessary coping strategy for them in that moment and should be kept in place.	For example, are they using humour or switching topics when things are getting too "dangerous" and/or uncomfortable for them to talk about? How did you respond? Did you try to persuade them to move beyond their comfort zone when there was consent to gently encourage? Or did you follow their need to switch, sensing that it was important to do so?

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED PRACTICES: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Critical self-reflection is a process of analyzing our ideas, practices and identities. In this context, the purpose of critical reflection is to understand how our own ideas, practices and identities inform the work that we do as service providers who are supporting persons who have experienced human trafficking. The following exercises are designed to prompt critically thinking about how your own identities and experiences might influence your ideas about human trafficking. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers here, rather these are exercises are intended to inspire critical self-awareness.



EXERCISE 5: WHAT'S MY STORY?

A. Quickly jot down the five things about yourself. Do not overthink this exercise, simply write what comes to mind. Five things about me are:

I _____

I _____

I _____

I _____

B. Critically reflect on what you wrote. Did you identify characteristics; such as, good listener, thoughtful? Or did you note aspects of your identity such as your gender, ethnicity, et cetera? In the space below, write about how the five things you identified about yourself play a role in how you perceive human trafficking and how you support trafficked persons. Again, do not censor your thoughts, the point here is to gain a self-awareness, not to criticize yourself.

C. Arts-based practices allow us to think outside the box (so to speak) and to engage in non-linear thinking, which aligns with holistic ways of knowing. With this in mind, in the space below draw an image of yourself in the centre of the page — do not worry about your drawing skills, you can draw a stick person if you like. From this starting point, tell a story, in words and/or in images, about who you are and what your role is in addressing human trafficking in your community. The point of this exercise is to critically assess the ways in which your ideas, practices and identities shape the work you do. The story you choose to tell though this process is entirely up to you. Thus, we are purposely vague in providing instructions in order to encourage creative thinking.

EXERCISE 6: WHAT ARE MY SKILLS & STRENGTHS?

Challenging ourselves to explore beyond our foundational conceptualizations of trauma and violence can be a really difficult exercise. We offer to you, as an aid or platform for your own brainstorming, a list of ways in which trauma and violence may impact a person on a physical, cognitive/psychological, emotional, behavioural and spiritual/cultural level in Appendix A in this workbook. You may want to refer to Appendix A in doing this exercise.

PART ONE:

Sometimes it is helpful to objectively take stock of what level our skills are, so we know where we might want to focus our development. We all have aspects of our skills that we feel need more development. It's a part of being a conscientious service provider — always looking to learn more and do better. The most dangerous service provider is the one who thinks they are a master of their work and there is no need for improvement. That said, it is equally important that self-assessment exercises encourage service providers to acknowledge their own strengths and to name what they do well in their work. Take a moment to identify your top strengths.

My top five strengths are:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

A number of skills and knowledge are needed to effectively support people who have experienced human trafficking, exploitation and abuse, which of the following skills and knowledge do you already use in your practice? Which skills might you improve upon? Are there skills listed here that you are unfamiliar with, if so, how can you learn more about these skills?

- Active listening
- Service linkage & case management
- Crisis intervention
- De-escalation
- Assessment: Needs; Hyperarousal-hypoarousal; Risk; what approach to use (for example, if the risk is higher, with imminent harm, and the person seems to be a in a state of hypoarousal, communication may need be more direct and concrete, simple to follow directions, short questions).

- Recognizing when and how a person has been triggered
- Recognizing when a person is being flooded by emotions, memory, sensations, etc., and how to ground and contain reactions
- Recognizing when a person is employing defense mechanisms, and when to leave those defenses intact, and when you may be invited to gently push them (always with consent)
- Understanding, communicating, and addressing the structural components to human trafficking
- Vicarious introspection (weaving together empathic cues, theory, and use of self to imagine how another may make sense of their experiences)
- Building therapeutic alliances/relationship building, including relational dynamics like peer compatibility or attachment theory
- Cross cultural competency
- Motivational interviewing and assessing interest/readiness for change
- Brief solution-focused interviewing
- Recognizing distress tolerance (our own and others')
- Recognizing vicarious trauma

What are some other skills you find yourself using in your practice that we didn't identify?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Where did you learn these skills? Did you have a mentor that you would mimic or talk with? Did you have a particular model (role model, theory, trainer, lived experience, etc.) that you learned from?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART TWO:
For each of the competencies listed above that you have personal experience with, or knowledge of, complete one of these charts for each (adapted from Rolfe, Jasper & Freshwater, 2011). Here we use the example of building a therapeutic alliance:

Descriptive level of reflection: What…	Theory and knowledge-building level of reflection: So what…	Action-oriented (reflexive) level of reflection: Now what…
In this section, we are invited to give a description of the issue. So, using therapeutic alliance I may write:	**In this section, we are invited to reflect on what we know from theory and knowledge. So again, using therapeutic alliance as my example, I may write:**	**In this section, we are invited to merge the first 2 columns into actionable next steps. I may write:**
I have an open mind and a willingness to understand the experiences of people who have experienced human trafficking.	*Although I like to think that I have an open mind, I also know it is impossible to not have some biases.*	*I need to talk to other people about human trafficking who may not share my perspective so closely, or I may want to read more of the research. This will possibly help foster other ways of thinking.*
I do my best to listen without interrupting.	*I learned my active listening skills from school, but I also know that there is much more to communication than not interrupting. Plus, there is all the non-verbal communication to consider too.*	*There is so much happening in these encounters with people who have been trafficked. I wonder if I could take notice of something small and achievable: Maybe my eye contact? Maybe soften my facial expression?*
I am careful to not to make comments or ask questions that may feel judgmental, particularly when I am working to build the relationship at the outset.	*I need to consider my role and expectations in my own human trafficking work. There is an expectation that I help people identify the risks that they are exposed to in this relationship and offer them help.*	*How will I know that my relationship is strong enough to start asking some of these harder questions? Can I also articulate to my organization to value the contacts made vs outcomes?*
I work to be as calm as possible, so they can maybe feel my calmness.	*What I know from cognitive models of trauma, I need to stay calm too, so that I can brainstorm options to help and help make sense of what is happening. Considering the energetic aspects of interpersonal communication, maybe I am opening myself up to other holistic ways to support.*	*There are other ways of knowing. I wonder what my own thoughts, feelings, impressions, counter-transferences and dreams are indicating to me? Maybe I can jot these other ways of knowing down to track and analyze.*
I also see that the relationship is the foundation for any of the work we can do together, so investing the time and effort to establish that is top priority.	*I wonder if there is a theory that would help me in thinking about how relationship patterns grow (hint: attachment theory may be a good place to start). Maybe violence has been a part of this person's life before trafficking. My own attachment patterns are primarily secure, how can I foster a secure attachment with this person who may not be familiar with secure attachment?*	*I need to work on learning more about attachment theory so I can see how it impacts relationships and how I can use that knowledge with this population.*

Your turn! Choose a skill and try breaking it down using this chart. Maybe it will give you some thoughts on potential next steps in refining your skills!

Descriptive level of reflection: What…	Theory and knowledge-building level of reflection: So what…	Action-oriented (reflexive) level of reflection: Now what…
In this section, we are invited to give a description of the issue.	**In this section, we are invited to reflect on what we know from theory and knowledge.**	**In this section, we are invited to merge the first 2 columns into actionable next steps.**

THREE PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED APPROACHES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There are three principle approaches to providing trauma and violence informed services this workbook; these are: self-determination, relationality and decolonization. In this section, we briefly discuss these key principles and provide critical reflection prompts for you to analyze how you are applying these principles to your own trauma and violence informed service provision as well prompts for considering how you might apply these principles to your work moving forward.

Self-determination approaches are rooted in harm reduction and feminist trauma discourse. These strategies aim to empower people to lead their own healing journey supported by services providers, rather than service providers setting the tone and/or mandate for others' healing. Such strategies, therefore, challenge service providers to really meet people where they are at on their journey. This means encouraging clients to define their own experience and how to move through their healing process and supporting them to the best of our abilities. This means that persons accessing services are able to consent to the services they choose to use without being coerced and/or manipulated. This links to human dignity and respecting that people are the experts of their own experiences, and that they have the capacity to choose what is best for themselves. As our research indicates, even in very violent situations women have a degree of self-determination and autonomy to ensure self-preservation.

Some service providers may struggle to acknowledge sex work as a valid occupational choice, perhaps because they believe that all forms of commercial sex are exploitative. They may (problematically) see all prostitution as human trafficking. Sex-working persons may experience violence, exploitation or abuse, and seek supports, but they may not identify their experience as trafficking, and they may not want to "exit" the sex trade, but only their abusive situation. It is important to recognize sex workers' rights to self-determination and their ability to act as autonomous agents.

Critical Reflection:

- What is my personal position on sex work and how will this impact how I support persons who are engaged in sex work? Do I think all forms of sex work are exploitative? For example, if my intention is to encourage people to exit sex work, how can I best support persons who choose not to exit sex work?
- How might my position impact my working relationships with other service providers who may not hold the same view?
- Is my goal to remove trafficked persons from the situations in which they being exploited?
- How am I transparent and honest about my intentions in assisting persons who are being trafficked? How do I make sure that there is informed consent for my work with this person?
- How do I respond when my ideas about human trafficking and sexual exploitation are challenged? Am I able to support people with different views and objectives?

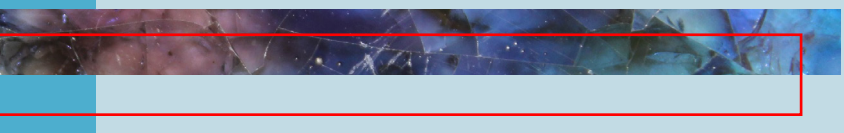
Relational approaches to human trafficking consider the relational aspects of service provision. Relational aspects include your relationship to the work you do as service provider and your relationship with the persons who access your services. Further, in the context of human trafficking, relational approaches consider how working to support persons who have experienced human trafficking can impact service providers on a personal level (within ourselves) and can shape interpersonal relationships with the persons to whom we are providing support. In terms of therapeutic relationships, relational approaches recognize how therapeutic relationships are influenced by organizational mandates, policies, and practices. Further, relational approaches recognize how organizations are part of the larger systems in culture and society, and that all of these factors shape one's experiences of human trafficking as well as their pathways to healing.

In terms of relational approaches, it is also imperative to be aware of boundaries. When service providers are dedicated to assisting persons in need of support, it can be easy for service providers to blur their own boundaries. For example, service providers might blur their own boundaries by doing things that are beyond the scope of their role or allowing their own anxieties about the situation to allow them to slip into "rescue" mode, which might infringe upon trafficked persons' self-determination and agency. Another example might be trusting that other organizations will pick up where we leave off in terms of providing services.

The following critical reflection questions are designed to encourage service providers to consider their role in addressing human trafficking. Here we ask you to consider your professional training and practical skill sets. Reflecting on these questions can help service providers to understand their own roles and, by extension, highlights the need for collaboration among service providers in addressing human trafficking in their communities.

Critical Reflection:

- What is my role in addressing human trafficking and/or in assisting persons who are being trafficked? For example, a police officer's role in addressing human trafficking will occur within the confines of law enforcement whereas a social worker might be called to provide counselling and/or crisis support, and a peer (someone with experience in the sex trade) will be able to offer first hand insight that other service providers are not privy to in their own roles.
- Is my role to provide psychotherapy? If so, what are my qualifications to do so?
- Do I provide practical support? For example, providing transportation to appointments or providing support during appointments?
- What are the limitations of that role? For example, am I qualified to provide practical support but not psychotherapy? If so, do I know how to help persons access psychotherapy? Am I able to provide counselling but not legal advice? If so, do I know how to help persons access legal support?



Decolonial approaches are grounded in an awareness that contemporary trauma discourse and practices are largely rooted in Eurocentric, psychoanalytical and biomedical paradigms that may not meet the needs of persons across diverse Indigenous cultures. Eurocentric paradigms centre European histories and cultures in such a way that "normalize" these ways of knowing while simultaneously erasing the histories, cultures and knowledges of diverse Indigenous peoples. Thus, decolonial approaches unsettle the central focus of Eurocentric ways of knowing in order to make space for multiple ways of knowing as equally valid. One of the ways in which Eurocentric ideas about trauma have become embedded in trauma discourse is through the emphasis on psychoanalytical and biomedical approaches.

By contrast, many Indigenous cultures understand trauma and healing through holistic paradigms which emphasize the interconnectedness between physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of trauma. Moreover, holistic approaches are attentive to the cultural, social, and historical contexts in which trauma and violence occur. In doing so, holistic approaches emphasize the relational aspects of trauma and violence rather than focusing on individual experiences in isolation of cultural, social and historical contexts. Holistic approaches consider how each individual can experience trauma and violence in unique ways while also considering how these experiences occur within broader contexts. Decolonial approaches, therefore, highlight the importance of practicing culturally competent systems of care. In the context of addressing human trafficking in northeastern Ontario, decolonial approaches are especially attentive to the diverse Indigenous cultures in our region and honour traditional Indigenous knowledges and healing practices. For example, as previously mentioned, NORAHT's research takes place in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land that we gather on is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek people, specifically the Nipissing Nation. While our home base is in North Bay, our research takes place across northeastern Ontario within Anishinaabek and Mushkegowuk territories. Thus, NORAHT's decolonial approaches include a commitment to acknowledging and honouring the First Peoples and ancestors of these lands, as well as the diverse Indigenous peoples who live in our urban centres, and we are committed to integrating Indigenous ways of knowing into our practices, policies, and procedures.

Further, decolonial approaches are attentive to the ongoing impact of settler colonialism for Indigenous peoples in terms of, for example, socioeconomic gaps, systemic racism, over-incarceration, and sexualized, racialized violence. Decolonial approaches also aim to unsettle the many ways in which colonial thinking and systems have become normalized within our ideas about trauma and healing. For example, non-Indigenous Canadians sometimes focus on dysfunctions within Indigenous communities as a way of denying Indigenous capacities for self-determination and without acknowledging the role of genocide and residential schools (Million 2013; Episkenew 2009). In practice, taking a decolonial approach may require service providers to critically analyze our own knowledges and the ways in which we came to know what we know and/or believe what we believe. Moreover, it requires that we analyze the ways in which our programs, polices and procedures may be reinforcing Eurocentric paradigms, which may occur unintentionally at times.

Following this logic, culturally competent services are integral to decolonial systems of care. Indeed, as Elder Donna Debassige reminds us, it can be beneficial for service providers to enrol in Indigenous studies and/or cultural sensitivity training in order to expand their knowledge

about Indigenous cultures and decolonial strategies. Thus, it is not necessary for service providers to share common cultures and/or beliefs with service users. Rather, it means that service providers have adequate knowledge about service users' cultures and beliefs in order to support people in appropriate ways. It also requires that cultural knowledge and practices are guided by persons within those specific cultures and not by outsiders. For example, it would be acceptable for a non-Indigenous person to attend a sacred fire that is being tended by an Indigenous person within a specific tradition, if they are invited to do so. But it would be disrespectful for non-Indigenous persons to appropriate Indigenous cultural and/or spiritual practices. Indeed, cultural appropriation is a form of colonial violence.

Decolonial approaches are holistic and, therefore, attentive to the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual and/cultural dimensions of trauma and violence. Whether or not you consider yourself to be a spiritual person, how you perceive others' spirituality will impact the services you provide. The critical reflection below prompts you to consider the role of spirituality in service provision. (We discuss holistic approaches to service provision in depth in the sections below).

Critical Reflection:

- What is my own connection to spirituality?
- How do I perceive spiritual paths that differ from my own?
- Am I comfortable supporting persons whose concept of reality and how they understand the world is different than mine? For example, if I do not believe that prayer can alter reality, am I able to support persons who do?
- Am I comfortable participating in cultural and/or spiritual practices that are not my own, when invited to do so? If so, how do I demonstrate this? If not, how do I respond when asked to participate in practices that make me feel uncomfortable?

ACTIVELY SEEKING WHAT WE DON'T KNOW BY ENGAGING OTHER WAYS OF KNOWING

PART ONE: THE SEARCH

When working to develop a new lens, like a trauma and violence informed lens, it is important to actively seek the knowledge that you don't yet know. The paradox is – how could we even know what to look for when we don't know what we don't know?!

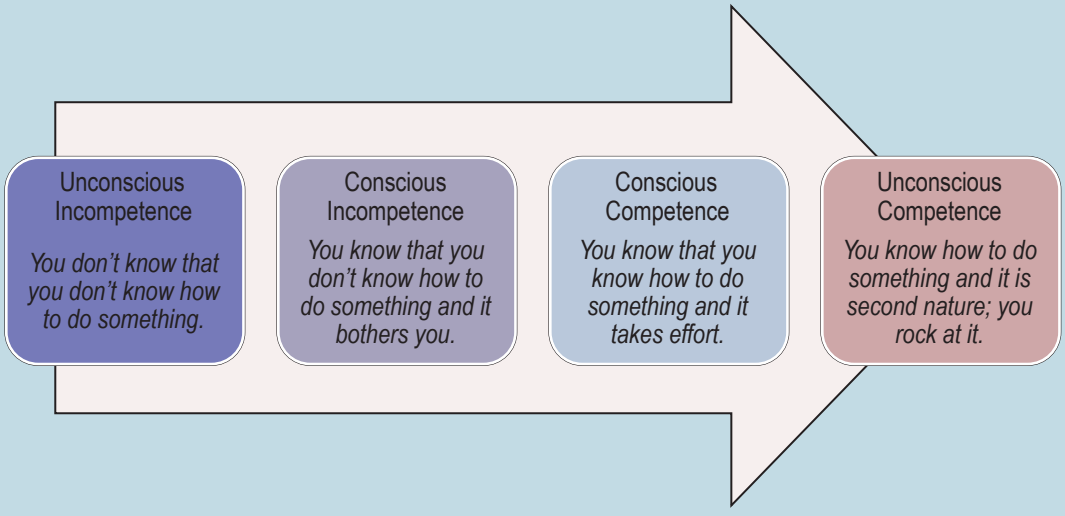
This process can be described in the model below. What we are aiming for is to move knowledge from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence. I (Brenda) will use an example from my own lived experience to help illuminate this concept.

Unconscious incompetence: I was a new graduate practicing in a setting where trauma and violence was not considered within the case conceptualizations for the people to whom I was providing service. I had no idea that trauma and violence would be something to consider. Therefore, I was completely incompetent in applying a trauma and violence lens, and I had no idea that it was even an issue.

Conscious incompetence: I moved to a different workplace that was trauma and violence focused. I learned very quickly that I had a gap in my knowledge, and that I was incompetent with it. I knew I had a lot of work to do to fill that gap in my knowledge.

Conscious competence: I worked really hard, for many years, studying, getting training, practicing with the best supervision I could find, to understand the complexities of a trauma and violence informed lens. Although I believe I have more competence, I continue to practice with quality supervision and consultation and a lot of careful self-reflection and thought.

Unconscious competence: Today, I apply a trauma and violence informed lens to everything I do, read, and work with. It has been absorbed into my being and I don't even have to think about how to apply that lens now. That does not mean that I am complacent – I continue to work on my skills and knowledge. There is always more to learn!



Where do you think you land in this process model in developing your own trauma and violence-informed lens?

PART TWO: CONNECTING WITH THE BODY

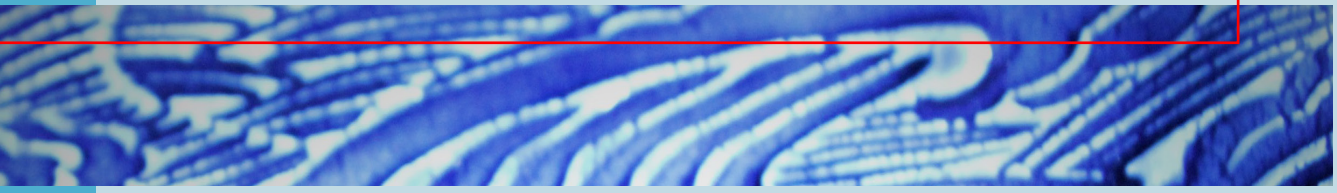
Another way to access other ways of knowing is to pay close attention to our bodies and the body language of those we are providing service to. Have you ever walked into a room and had the hair on your arm stand up before you even had any idea what was happening? That's because our bodies can pick up on energy in the room much faster than our minds can. The trick is in interpreting it.

Further, have you ever yawned when another person yawned, or rubbed your own arm when someone else bumped their arm? We have "mirror neurons" that are the neurobiological root of empathy. It helps us to feel what another is feeling so we can respond in a supportive manner. Just as a note: those of us working in this field likely have well-developed mirror neurons. While this helps us in our work, it can also leave us particularly vulnerable to vicarious trauma. So be sure to attend to processing your body-based reactions as well as your thoughts and emotions in your self-care.

Our bodies can communicate all sorts of information to us: the trick is to figure out what is "ours" and what is someone else's, because they can get mixed up, thanks to these mirror neurons. Here is an exercise that may help you in 1) connecting your body, and 2) deciphering what is yours and what isn't.

Here is a list of words that can used to describe various feelings, emotions, and psychological responses. These words can be used in the exercises below to describe your embodied responses to various experiences. This is just a brief list to help your own creative juices flowing; we encourage you to add to list.

Bruised	Bubbly	Congested	Hollow
Tender	Spacey	Thick	Heavy
Sensitive	Sweaty	Light	Knotted
Achy	Calm	Smooth	Hot
Shaky	Pounding	Fluid	Warm
Prickly	Wooden	Numb	Draining
Open			



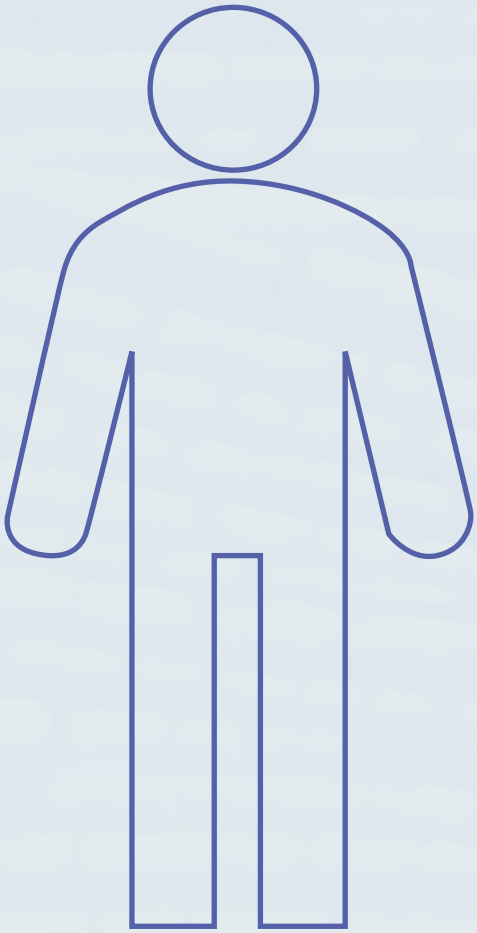
EXERCISE 7: BASELINE BODY SCAN

Please note: We suggest completing exercises 7-12 together as a set.

For this part of the exercise, you need to be calm and relaxed. This is to help establish a working baseline.

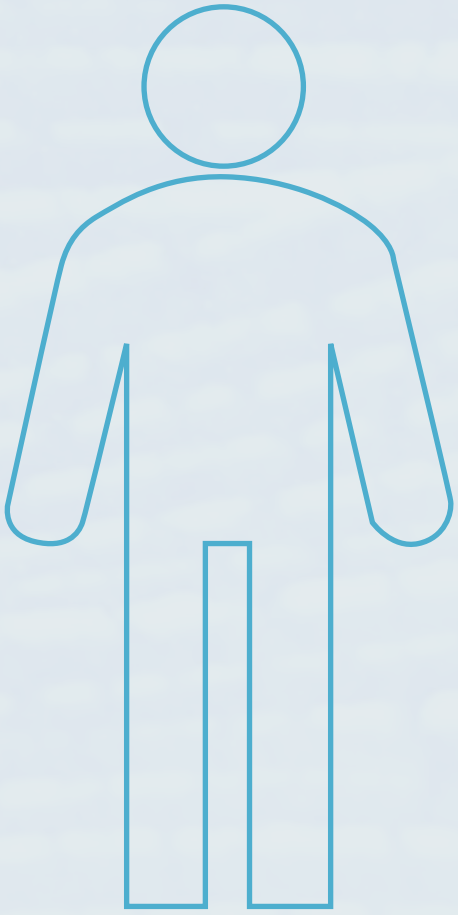
Take your time, trying to connect with each part of your body, one part at a time.

Use this outline of a body to draw and/or write how your body feels when it is calm and relaxed. If it helps, perhaps use some of the words in the list above.



EXERCISE 8: ANTICIPATORY ENCOUNTER BODY SCAN

Do this part of the exercise right before you are about to go into an encounter with a person with lived experience. Note how your body is feeling, knowing that there is an impending encounter. Use this image to draw and/or write any sensations you are feeling.



EXERCISE 9: NOTICING BODY LANGUAGE

For this part of the exercise, see if you can notice how a person accessing your service speaks with their body language. The key here is just to notice - not to make assumptions about what it means. What does their posture look like? How do they move while talking? Is there a shift in their body when they talk about something different? Do they mention anything about their body specifically?

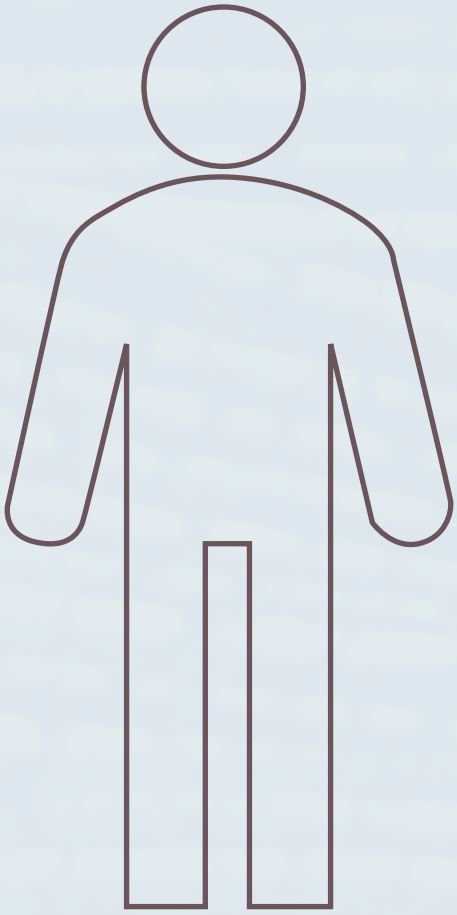
Again, use this image to draw/write what you noticed:

EXERCISE 10: MY BODY IN ACTION

Now try to track how your own body felt while interacting with a person accessing your services. We realize that this could be asking a lot, so please do not let your attention be completely diverted from the important work at hand. However, it is good to know how your own body is speaking to you, so you can begin to learn how to use this information. For example, I (Brenda) know that I can trust my right shoulder to tell me when I am getting stressed in an encounter - it's like an early warning sign to me. I know to take a breath, and ground so I can pay better attention to what is happening. I find that information to be quite valuable. After an encounter with a person seeking your services, use this image to draw and/or write any sensations you noticed.

EXERCISE 11: POST-ENCOUNTER BODY SCAN

Finally, now that an encounter with a person accessing your services is over, take a moment to reflect on how your body is feeling now. Use this image to draw and/or write any sensations you are experiencing.



EXERCISE 12: BODY SCAN CRITICAL REFLECTION

Take some time now to critically reflect upon the body scan exercises that you have completed (exercises 7-11).

- What changes did you notice between the "Anticipatory Encounter Body" to the "My Body in Action" body scan?
- Is there any overlap between what you sensed from the client and what you felt in your own body? Do you think maybe you felt some of their sensations (activation of the mirror neurons)? If so, how do you think you could use that information in your work? Keep in mind that your interpretation of sensations may be different than another's interpretation, but we can note it and think about how it may apply or not.
- Are there any residual sensations that you noted in the "Post-Encounter Body Scan" that will need processing? For example, are you feeling jittery? Maybe give yourself some time for a good stretch, a run, or other kind of grounding. While processing physical reactions, perhaps thank your body for being such an important part of the work you do. A supportive mind/body/spirit connection is central to overall health and wellbeing.
- How can you help yourself return to baseline? Can you do this before you leave work? Some people find breathing exercises helpful to ground themselves. Here are two examples of breathing exercises you may like try:

    - Sit in a comfortable position. Soften or lower your gaze or close your eyes if it feels safe to do so. Feel the backs of your legs and seat connected to the chair. Perhaps your back is also connected to the chair. Notice that the weight of your body is supported by the chair. Breathe as you naturally would but bring awareness to your breath. Notice any movement inside your body when you inhale. Then notice any different movement in your body when you exhale. Count your breath, while focusing on the movement you notice for a count of 10. For example, inhale (1), exhale (2), inhale (3), exhale (4) until you reach 10. If you notice your mind wandering, simply gentle return to the breath and counting.
    - This exercise can be done relatively quickly, and while we are "on the go." Our breath is an express route to our autonomic nervous system, which is the part of our central nervous system that controls our sympathetic and parasympathetic systems (van der Kolk, 2014). Overactivation of the sympathetic system is where our fight or flight responses come from. Overactivation of the parasympathetic system is where our freeze response comes from. When we inhale, we are engaging our sympathetic system. Depending on the way we inhale, we communicate the presence or absence of threat. For example, a sharp, short inhale, tells our sympathetic system there is a threat, which could trigger fight or flight response. Conversely, a deeper, slower inhale, communicates calm (or at least the absence of threat). When we exhale, we engage our parasympathetic system which is also our key to our natural calming system. In this exercise, we want to draw in a deeper breath than we would normally, and slowly exhale through slightly pursed lips (as if you are gently blowing the stress out of your body), extending the exhale in length so it is longer than our inhale. Breathing in this way calms our nervous system, which calms our body in general.

HOLISTIC APPROACHES & TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE INFORMED PRACTICE

NORAHT advocates for holistic approaches to services and support provided to persons who have experienced violence, exploitation and abuse in the sex trade, including human trafficking. Holistic paradigms create space for multiple ways of knowing and, by extension, more diverse practices which may be better suited to meet the needs of persons across diverse cultures and experiences. Based on the concept of holism, holistic paradigms emphasize connection at the "micro, mezzo, and macro levels" (Dunn 2019, 10). For example, personal experiences of interpersonal violence, such as human trafficking, are inseparable from structural violence, such as settler colonialism, particularly for Indigenous women. Holistic approaches are, therefore, attentive to the multifaceted ways in which personal experiences of trauma and violence are linked to social, cultural, and political dimensions.

There is no single definition of what constitutes holistic practices; however, one common principle is the belief that physical, emotional, mental (psychological) and spiritual aspects of personhood are interwoven and inseparable (Dunn 2019). Another way to think of this is mind, body, and spirit connection. According to Peter Dunn, "Holistic healing (sometimes called natural healing) attempts to restore balance and harmony and can be done by oneself and/or with the help of others to deal with health, trauma, loss and other concerns" (2019, 14). Thus, healing is not thought of in pathological terms of curing an ailment but rather repairing disharmony and restoring balance. How balance and harmony are restored can manifest in different ways depending on one's cultural and/or spiritual background.

For example, Indigenous persons who draw on traditional healing practices might incorporate sweat lodge and/or moon ceremonies into their healing practices. That said, it is important to keep in mind that there are many diverse Indigenous cultures across Canada, which may share similar experiences and belief systems but are unique in their own way. We should not assume that Indigenous practices are universal. Further, decolonial approaches to trauma and healing include the revival and/or reclaiming of traditional practices for the purpose of healing and empowerment (Reidel Brown and Darewych 2019).

Other forms of holistic practice might include energy work such as Reiki, breathwork, yoga, meditation. Holistic approaches also include expressive arts such as pottery, photography, dance and so forth, which can be helpful in the processes of understanding traumatic experiences. This is because the creative process itself can help us to grapple with the ways in which trauma and violence affect a person's sense of self without having to name those experiences per se. These acts of creativity can be cathartic, empowering and healing for some. That said, these practices can also be triggering and/or retraumatizing, which is why it is important that they be grounded in trauma and violence informed approaches.

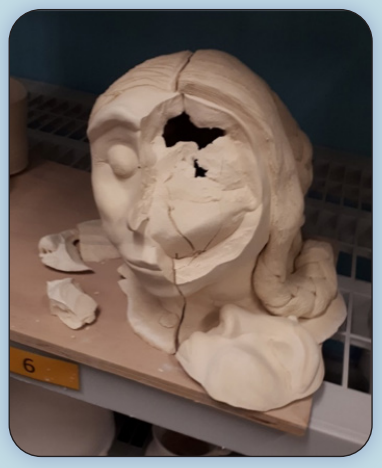
EXPRESSIVE ART AND/AS HOLISTIC APPROACHES

With every framework of understanding, like trauma and violence-informed perspectives, there are new concepts, theories and implications that are very complicated and nuanced. How do we even know where to start, or where to find the next piece wherein we are unconsciously incompetent? Perhaps this next exercise would be helpful in your exploration.

Part of working from a holistic framework is embracing the idea that knowledge comes from a myriad of different avenues. Some people work to encourage knowing to shift from unconscious to consciousness; some draw knowledge from spiritual realms through ritual or ceremony; some check in with their intuition – there are countless ways in which different persons across different cultures access other ways of knowing.

FOLLOWING A SPLIT PATH

By Brenda Quenneville MSW, RSW



I find it helpful to allow my creativity to take the lead as one way of accessing other ways of knowing. It is about engaging in the process of art making that is most fruitful – not so much the outcome, as you will see.

I am an intermediate level clay artist who is exploring sculpture. I wanted to work on a sculpture that depicted trauma, particularly the concept of splitting, so that I may understand the concept on a deeper level. I planned to create a sculpture that had 2 heads: 1 younger (historical self) and 1 older (present self) to represent splitting in time. The process of sculpting this piece offered so many other avenues to explore that I never could have anticipated.

First, there was an actual trauma (for the sculpture, not me). The sculpture exploded in the first firing. All of the care and attention (not to mention hours!) I put into sculpting the form felt lost.

Recovery from the acute symptoms of loss, grief, frustration, anger took some time. I made note of all the feelings I experienced and thought of how they may work as a part of that broader "splitting" concept. That was a fruitful exercise, particularly when thinking about how each of the selves' may experience the emotions, based on their developmental stages, their life experiences, and other factors.

After collecting all the pieces, I took a good look at the sculpture, to listen to what it was saying to me. Among some other messages, I realized that I assumed the splitting was only in the way in which I had conceptualized it - a split between the historical self, and the present self. The sculpture was inviting me to think about a left-right split as well. It wasn't until I was patching together the right side of her head, that I was inspired to learn more about how trauma impacts the right brain in particular.

I found a webinar (presented by the National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine) that looked at the neurobiology of attachment and learned how the right brain is shaped by early attachment, social, and emotional experiences. When there is interpersonal trauma early in life, there can be a shift in the development of the HPA axis, and an overall mis-attunement to the right brain. The effectiveness of talk therapy, which disproportionately engages the left brain, is further limited with the under-developed right brain. Therefore, relational attachment and attunement strategies are recommended therapeutic approaches as they can help heal these right brain (emotional and social) injuries. The primary message for me as a social work therapist is to stay present, and to stay connected in the session with the people I am providing service to.

Although I now have a pretty beat up sculpture that isn't overly aesthetically pleasing, I very much value the insights I gained through the process, and I find myself revisiting the sculpture from time to time to find other hidden messages that I missed before.

EXERCISE 13: FREE-FLOWING CURIOSITY

You can do this activity in the space provided, or you can use a larger piece of paper (maybe flip chart paper). Think about a concept, issue, or any aspect of human trafficking that you want to explore deeper. Set a timer for 5 seconds. Set your pencil, pen, marker or whatever you are using on the page. Start the timer. Close your eyes. Scribble for the full 5 seconds, allowing your hand and arm to move in whatever ways it wants. When the 5 seconds are up, spend some time looking at the image that was created, and see if you can find shapes, pictures, or particular lines that call out to you. Maybe try turning the page around to see if something emerges from a different orientation. Once you find something, use a different colour to outline or complete the drawing.

Critical Reflection:

- What does the drawing tell you?
- Is it a metaphor for you to consider?
- What thoughts and feelings are you aware of?

EXERCISE 14: PHOTOGRAPHY AS CRITICAL REFLECTION

In this exercise you will create a photograph as a way to critically reflect on your own embeddedness in settler colonialism, regardless of whether you are an Indigenous person or a settler on Turtle Island. The emphasis here is not on your photography skills but rather on the message you are portraying. Thus, your photograph can be simple and can even be made with the camera on your cell phone, if you have one. For example, you could take a photograph of your shoes or you can photograph an item that is symbolic for you or you could photograph a landscape or urban space and describe your relationship to that space.

Before you create your photograph think about message you would like to portray and how it relates to your embeddedness in settler colonialism.

Critical Reflection:

- What is the story that your photograph tells about settler colonialism?
- What does your photograph reveal about your own embeddedness in the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism, including colonial violence?
- How can you connect the story that your photograph tells to decolonial approaches to trauma and violence?
- How does your photograph help you to understand and/or explain the links between settler colonialism and human trafficking in your community?

THE SPIRIT PLATE: A CRITICAL REFLECTION

By Brenda Quenneville MSW, RSW

Though we believe in the importance of decolonizing our approaches to service provision, we recognize that this is a personal and ongoing journey for settlers like the majority of NORAHT members. We certainly do not have this figured out and could not (and would not) even begin to give "how to" tips. However, I do offer this other bit of personal disclosure to help highlight part of my own decolonial journey in our research context.

NORAHT as a group, is comprised of settler and Indigenous cultures. We were hosting our first focus group in the spring of 2017. We had a buffet lunch set up for all of the participants, and when the time came to eat, everyone on the room headed to the buffet to gather their lunch. Elder Donna said a prayer prior to everyone eating and indicated that she would be gathering food from the buffet to create the ancestral spirit plate. It was a way of acknowledging the presence and support of the ancestral spirits who, only a few short hours ago, we had prayed to join in our work together.

The next day, as we debriefed as a team, we learned that gathering our own food prior to the creation of the ancestral spirit plate was very disrespectful. Elder Donna had welcomed the ancestral spirits to join us for the day, and to stay for the meal, yet we thought of our own food before attending to the needs of our most honoured guests. In our own homes, we wouldn't think of inviting someone over for dinner, then have them fetch their own food last!

This was such a valuable cross-cultural learning opportunity. At the next focus group (this time in Sudbury), we were able to give direction to the group about the spirit plate, and the importance of Elder Donna in creating the ancestral spirit plate before we gather our own lunch. Often Rebecca Timms, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Girls/Men/Boys/2 Spirit Coordinator with the Anishinabek Nation and member of NORAHT, would see to the proper return of the ancestral spirit plate to the earth. When we held an information sharing session in Timmins in November 2018, Rebecca was unable to join us. Elder Donna entrusted me to return the ancestral spirit plate to the earth. I had no idea how to do this in a respectful way and asked for guidance. Elder Donna explained that in an ideal setting, there would be a sacred fire that the contents of the plate could be added to. In the absence of a sacred fire, she taught me that I should find a body of water on my way home and use the water to bring the food back to the earth. I drove all the way home (about 4.5 hours, passing many bodies of water) with the plate. Something was telling me that I really needed to take it to a body of water that I felt a connection to. It felt important to do it this way.

I brought the plate to Lake Nipissing, said a prayer, thanking the ancestral spirits for supporting our work. I placed the food in the lake and sat with the spirits for a few extra minutes. It was more than the act of returning the spirit plate to the earth, it was an opportunity to connect with my own spirituality, and to weave it into the work that I was engaged in not only that day, but every day moving forward. I learned from this teaching, that asking the ancestors and spirits to support the work doesn't have to be limited to an opening and closing prayer. There is an invitation to connect with the spirits throughout the day, and to pay attention to their guidance. This is a part of my own decolonizing journey.

EXERCISE 15: WHO'S ON MY TEAM?

Working to support persons who have experienced complex trauma and violence, such as people who have experienced human trafficking, can affect service provider's own sense of self and their well-being in unanticipated ways. Working in fields that support persons who have experienced human trafficking can be emotionally difficult, and it is not uncommon for service providers to experience vicarious trauma. For these reasons, it is important that organizations have policies and procedures in place to support workers' physical, emotional, mental/psychological, and spiritual well-being. This can include:

- Mandatory and regular supervision in which service providers have the opportunity to reflect on their practices;
- Regular opportunities to participate in debriefing practices such as regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings with supervisors and regular staff meetings with opportunities for knowledge sharing;
- Policies, procedures and leadership that encourage self-care;
- Resources to practice self-care such as access to professional counselling services and funds dedicated to staff.

Critical Reflection:

- Who's on my support team?
- What does my ideal team look like?
- Do I need to add members with different skills to my team?
- Do I feel supported by my peers and supervisors?
- Can I identify a time when I felt unsupported in my workplace? What do I think could have been done differently?
- If I am a team leader, do I regularly check-in with my team in ways that invite open and genuine dialogue about the ways that their work may be adversely affecting them? Does my team feel comfortable sharing with me? Does my team feel welcome in my space/office? What are some signs that I need to make changes in the way that I lead my team?
- Who can I turn to when I need to talk to someone about difficult emotions that come up for me when I am supporting others?

Photo by: Linda Roy, Ireva Photography

On World Water Day, we continue to pray for our access to clean water for all of our communities. As Anishinabek Nation Chief Water Commissioner, I will continue to use my voice to advocate for our sacred waters and for the ones who need clean drinking water.

We are in a critical time right now with the impact of the Coronavirus 2019 pandemic. A part of me thinks that Mother Earth is hearing our prayers because with all of the isolations and lessened activity, there is evidence that she can breathe. Mother Earth is just showing us how powerful she is. Polluted skies are cleaning, waters are self-cleaning in some countries and carbon footprints have been reducing, leaving some positive impacts. In this critical time, keep safe, help one another, check-in on each other, keep praying and always keep Mother Earth as our priority so we can have a future.

- Autumn Peltier
Anishinabek Nation Chief Water Commissioner

CLOSING

In closing this journey with you, we thank you for engaging in this process. It is our sincere hope that you felt supported and inspired as you dug deeper into what you already knew, or perhaps learned something new. We hope you have new tools for continued critical self-reflection because, as we all know, this is an ongoing process.

We thank you for your commitment to providing the best possible service you can to folks who have experienced exploitation, coercion and abuse within the sex trade, including human trafficking. Collaboration is an important component to supporting folks who have these experiences, and we hope that you are inspired to consider other partnerships beyond the ones you traditionally work with (for example, Indigenous communities, peer professionals and sex work advocates).

We recognize too, that this process may have felt quite uncomfortable from time to time. Please know that this is a normal reaction! We want you to know that we encourage exercising self-compassion and self-care.

Thank you for the work you do and your dedication to ongoing development. We are honoured to be a small part of your journey.

Warmly,

Brenda, Gina, Donna, Kathleen, Rosemary, Rebecca, Lanyan and Sydnee.

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APPENDIX A: TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE REACTIONS

Emotional:

- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Shame
- Rage
- Blank/Hollow
- Phobias
- Anxiety/agitation
- Panic attacks
- Depression
- Abrupt mood swings
- Limited or inability to identify emotions or broad range of emotions
- Fearful
- Altered ability to love, nurture or bond with others
- Frustration
- Irritability

Physical:

- Blood memory
- Being triggered by internal bodily sensations, movements, positions
- Unsafe relationship with the body (dissociated from body, cutting, substance use)
- Hyperarousal: constriction, bracing, narrow vision, holding breath, tensing of large muscles, increased heart rate, heart palpitations, chest pain, general/chronic pain, dizziness
- Hypo-arousal: spacey, dizziness, numbing, shallow breathing, visceral constriction of digestive sphincters
- Changes in sleep (increase or decrease), exhaustion, chronic fatigue, low physical energy
- Disruption to sleep cycles, often waking in the night, sleeping in the day
- Exaggerated startle response
- Immune system and certain endocrine problems like thyroid dysfunction
- Decreased appetite or cravings for simple carbs
- Headaches, neck and back problems
- Changes in ability to feel the body (pathways of interoceptive awareness)
- Sensitivity to light and sound
- Changes to libido (increase or decrease)

Spiritual / Cultural: *As per Elder Donna: Indigenous persons are born with trauma (intergenerational trauma, blood memory) *

- Change in sense of self
- Change in worldview
- Isolation and social disconnection
- Soul wounds
- Change of sense of safety in the world or in other people
- Disconnection with purpose and place in Creation
- "living dead," depersonalization
- Change in connection with Creator, Mother Earth and Father Sky
- Disruption in connection with culture
- Loss of ability to co-regulate with safe others
- Confusion about self
- Externally assembled[1]
- Sense of not belonging to the human family as a whole

1. Idea that in order to survive, we have needed to become what those around us need us to be – similar to being a chameleon – with the world losing out on who we are and the unique gifts we bring to the world

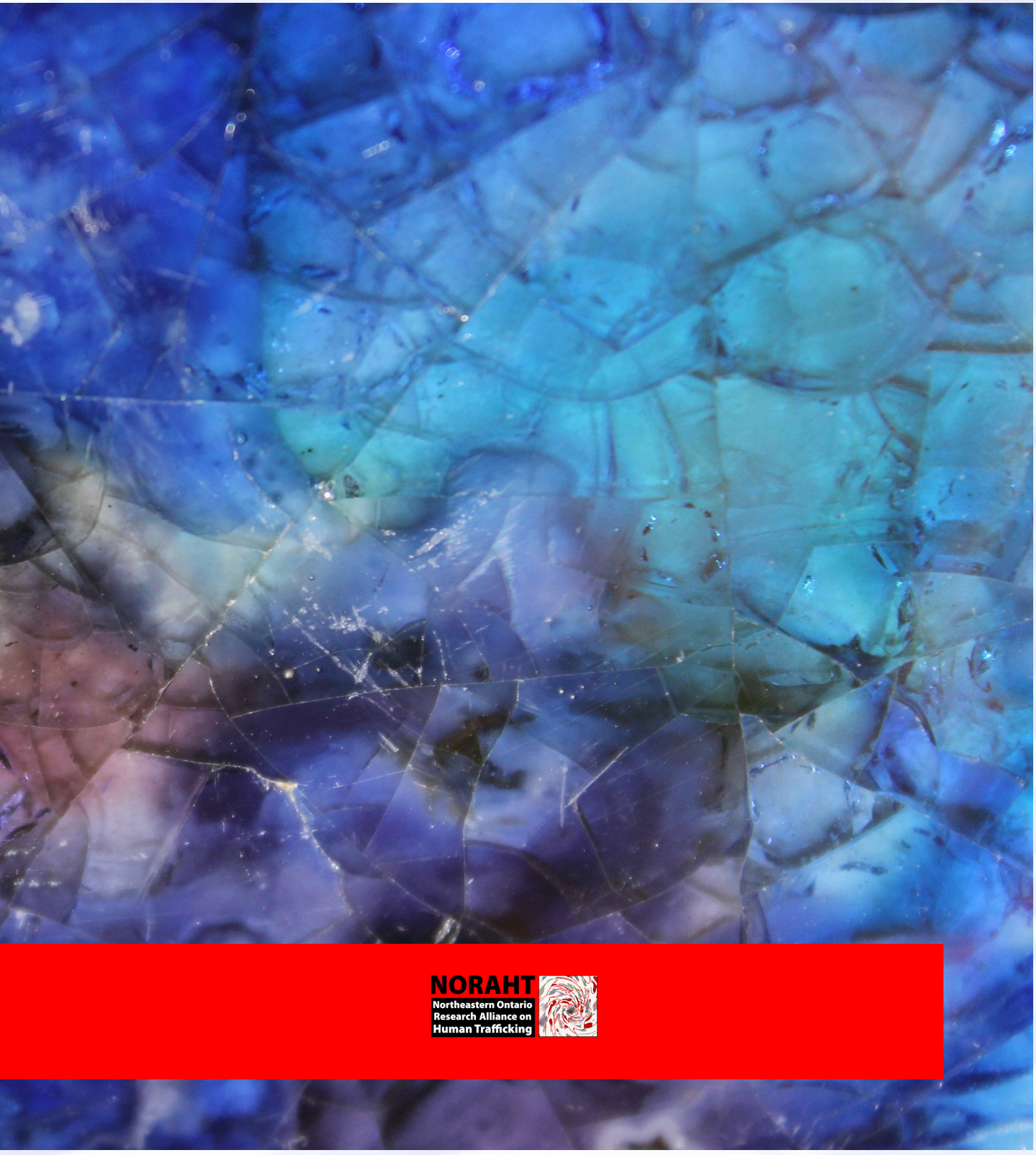
Psychological / Cognitive

- Splitting and advanced compartmentalization
- Negative schemas
- Cognitive distortions
- Defense mechanisms
- Lack of narrative integration
- May not seem "rational" as frontal cortex may not be fully engaged
- Disruptions in memory formation and retrieval (gaps in memory)
- Forgetfulness
- Intrusive memories, thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares
- Sensory-based memories
- Ruminating thoughts
- Suicidal thoughts
- Narrowed window of tolerance for distress; everyday stressors perceived as insurmountable or personal attacks
- Over activated fight/flight response; highly reactive
- Difficulty making plans, problem solving, concentration and other executive functioning
- Dissociation, mental blankness or spaciness, excessive day dreaming, dissociative fugues
- Difficulty identifying and meeting needs[2]
- Avoidance of thinking or talking about difficult experiences
- External locus of control

Behavioural:

- Distrustful
- Avoidant attachment behaviours (withdrawing, isolating, increased need for control, possible increase in rigidity)
- Anxious attachment behaviours (reassurance seeking, trying to please the other, need for constant contact, fear of abandonment)
- Hypervigilance with safety (over protection of children, locking/re-locking doors/windows, limiting social activities/interactions)
- Self-fulfilling prophecies[3] (related to negative schemas, cognitive distortions and shaped by attachment patterns)
- Excessive shyness or opposite – excessive defensiveness / offensiveness
- Helpless behaviours, active passivity
- Picking or other compulsions
- Exaggerated or diminished sexual activity
- Attraction to dangerous situations and activities
- Re-enactments
- Hyperactivity and/or hypoactivity
- Testing and hypersensitivity to any perceived negative cue (related too, to self-fulfilling prophecies)
- Substance use as a means to cope with trauma reactions
- Significant isolative behaviours
- Development of sleep patterns that are the opposite of circadian rhythm; falling asleep when the sun rises as they begin to feel safer with the coming of dawn and sleep through the day
- General avoidance behaviours (over working, not keeping appointments, difficult to reach)

2. When emotional data and physical data are inaccessible, it is difficult to identify needs and how to meet them. For example, if I are unable to identify that I am lonely, I can't recognize the need to reach out to safe others.
3. It can be difficult for a safe other in the world to support us in a way that is needed, when our internal and external messages are disorganized or cryptic, and difficult to make sense of or express. When our needs are unmet, it feels like a profound rejection.



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