



Tips to Creating a Trauma-Informed Space

Whether it is your organization, employee resource group, book club, studio, and more, trauma-informed care principles can be widely applied across many different settings. Trauma-informed care leads with the acknowledgment that experiences of trauma are prevalent, and thus, our work and community spaces should actively work to resist re-traumatizing people and actively contribute to creating a welcoming space for all.

* Create a welcoming space for diverse backgrounds and life experiences

This can look like intentionally hiring and collaborating with diverse leaders, correctly pronouncing people's names, asking for gender pronouns, asking before offering physical touch, hosting events in ADA-accessible spaces, offering translation services, offering tiered pricing or scholarships, and offering both in-person and virtual gatherings.

* Practice a culture of empathy and centering people

In trauma-informed care, we prioritize our people's needs over a specific agenda of "getting things done" in a specific way. This means, if a conflict arises in a space or there is a topic that requires us to slow down...we do so. Moving through conflict and misunderstanding and modeling feedback and learning is a part of the work!

* Educate staff and partners on the impact of trauma and how trauma shows up

It's so important that everyone on your team- from your administrative assistant to the CEO is trained in trauma-informed care. Learning how to recognize the impact and signs of trauma, and more importantly, how to respond in a sensitive and informed way can make all the difference for survivors of trauma.

* Invitational language versus "should" language

Creating options for people to opt-in, choose, and intentionally be present in the space creates a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all. Virtually, this could be creating opportunities for people to unmute, write in a chat, or share feedback through a virtual document or jamboard. In person, we can invite people to multiple types of activities and offer alternatives for activities to account for multiple learning styles. For example, build in activities that create space for pairs, small groups, large groups, and solo time.

* Practice growth mindset and a culture of feedback

Create measures and anonymous ways that staff and clients can share feedback about what is working well and what could be improved. Create specific policies and measures to address discrimination and what happens if someone is harmed in your space. Seek out support from partner organizations, violence prevention agencies, and community restorative justice centers if you need deeper support.