



Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care

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8/30/22

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Being Trauma-Informed Means:

Understanding the physical, psychological and social effects of trauma

Acknowledging past trauma can be triggered in the present

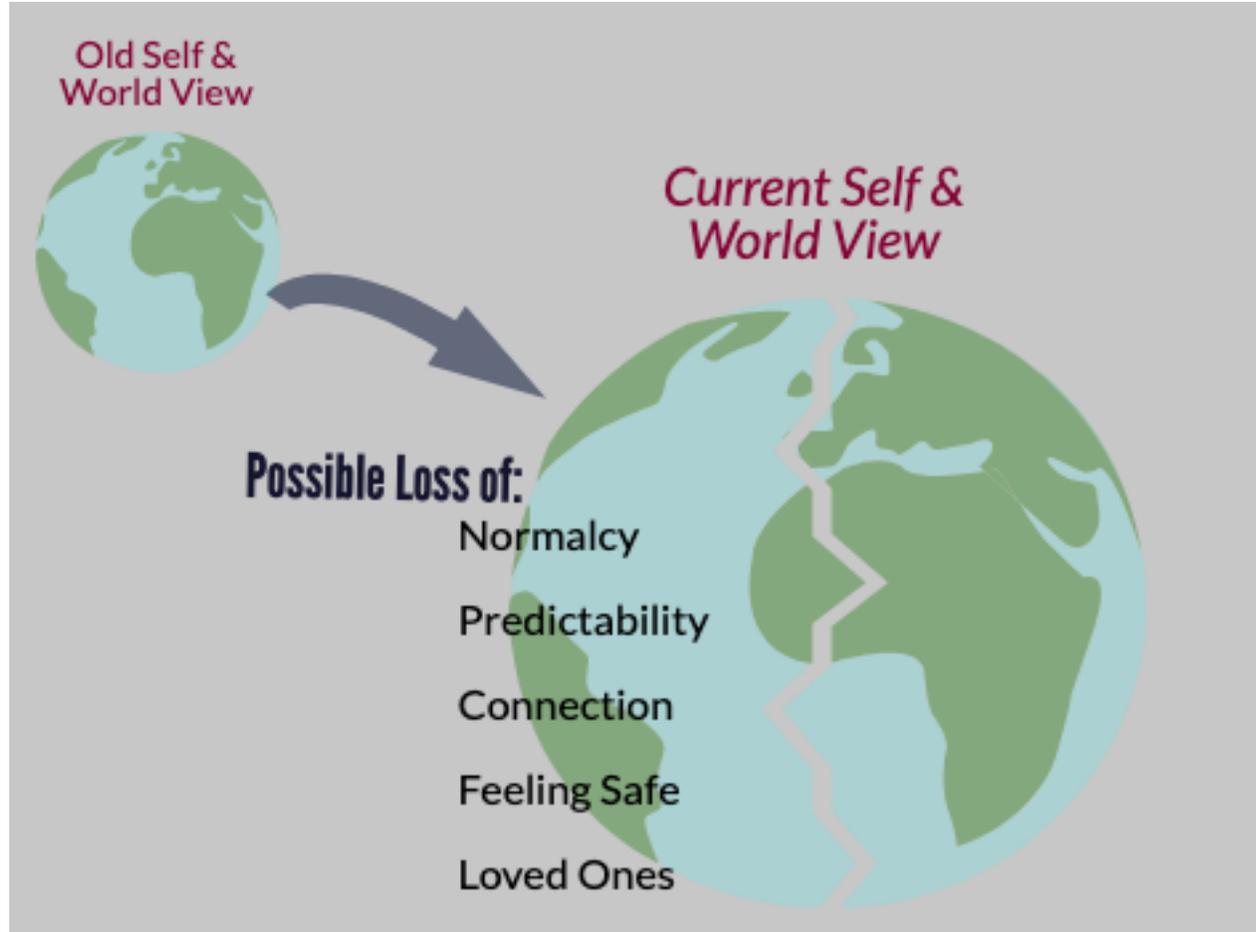
Responding intentionally in ways that reduce the potential for re-traumatization



Self & World View



Noticing the Here and Now



Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (2021)

(Berinato, 2020 & Weir, 2020)

Trauma, Re-Traumatization, Systems of Care

Take a moment to consider life experiences...

- Self
- Colleagues
- Individuals/Community
- System



What is Trauma?



“Three E’s” of Trauma

Events or Circumstances

Individual’s *Experience*

Long-lasting *Effects*



Types of Trauma

Complex Trauma: Exposure to multiple traumatic events and the long-term impact of such exposure

Historical Trauma: Experienced collectively by people who share a group identity (e.g., religious affiliation, nationality, ethnicity) and the subsequent impacts across generations.

Racial Trauma: The stressful impact or emotional pain of one's experience with racism and discrimination

Systemic Trauma: The contextual features of environments and institutions that give rise to and maintain trauma



Trauma Impacts...



Physical & Mental Health

- **What You Might See Now:** Depression, fatigue
- **Long Term Impact:** Flashbacks, sleep disturbances, aches and pains



Relationships

- **What You Might See Now:** Hostility, arguments with others
- **Long Term Impact:** Inability to maintain close relationships, social withdrawal



Emotion Regulation

- **What You Might See Now:** Anxiety, mood swings
- **Long Term Impact:** Panic attacks, shame, emotional detachment



Cognitive Functioning

- **What You Might See Now:** Memory lapses, altered sense of time
- **Long Term Impact:** Poor academic performance, inability to concentrate, difficulty making decisions



Perceptions & Beliefs

- **What You Might See Now:** Distrust of authority figures
- **Long Term Impact:** Feeling vulnerable, hopeless



Behavior

- **What You Might See Now:** Impulsivity, substance use
- **Long Term Impact:** Dissociation, self-harm, unsafe sexual practices, excessive risk taking

Survival Response

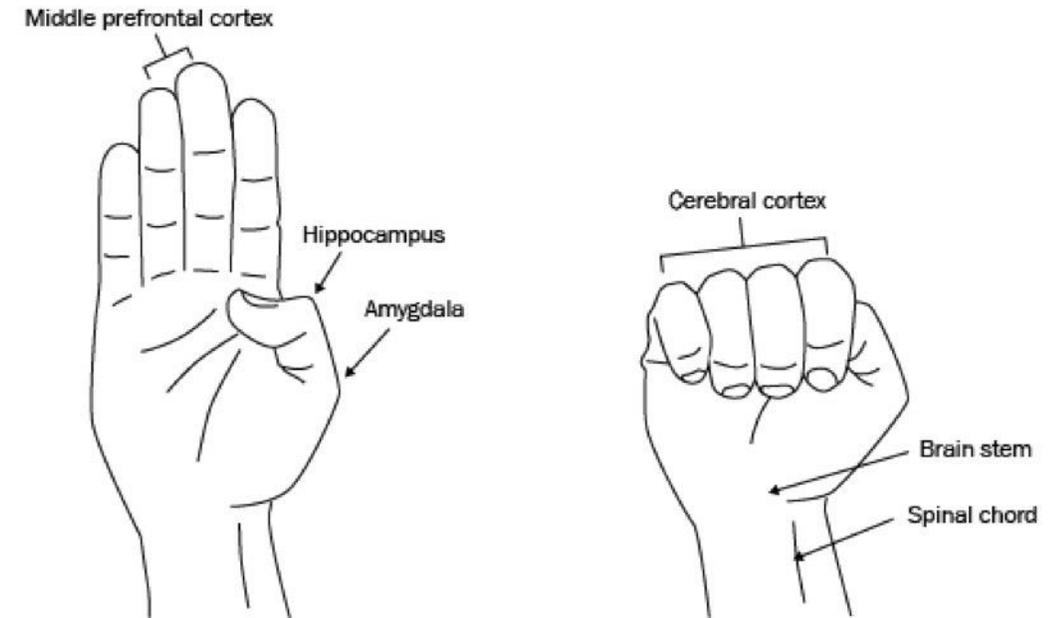
When we perceive something as a threat, the amygdala activates and generates a fear response—commonly referred to as the “**fight, flight or freeze**” or stress response.



Survival Response and Dysregulation

When we perceive something as a threat, the amygdala activates and generates a survival response—commonly referred to as the “**fight, flight or freeze**” or stress response.

Prolonged experiences of extreme stress, adversity or trauma can make it **challenging for individuals to regulate their emotions**.



Hand model courtesy of Dan Siegel

Chat Box Reflection

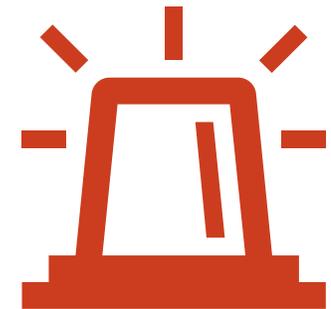
What do you notice are common stress responses for individuals you work with?

What have you found already works when responding to others who are demonstrating fight, flight or freeze behaviors?



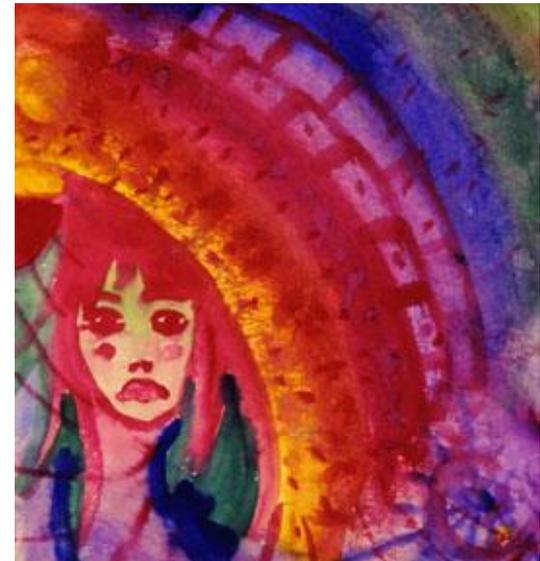
“Flipped Lid” & Stress Responses

Survival Response	What You Might See	What You Might Do/Experience
Fight	Swearing, disrespectful language, aggression, clenched fists, verbal attacks	Irritation, frustration, increased heartrate, raising voice
Flight	Avoidance, refusal to speak, jittery behavior, missing work	Anxiety, shallow breathing, trouble concentrating
Freeze	Non-responsive, shutting down, disconnected	Holding breath, sense of dread, feeling numb



What is “Re-Traumatization” ?

- A situation, attitude, interaction, or environment that **replicates the events or dynamics of the original trauma** and triggers the overwhelming feelings and reactions associated with them
 - Can be **obvious** - or **not so obvious**
 - Is **usually unintentional**
 - Is **always hurtful** - exacerbating the very symptoms that brought the person into services





Retraumatization WHAT HURTS?



SYSTEM <i>(Policies, Procedures, Structural and Institutional Racism and Oppression)</i>	RELATIONSHIP <i>(Power, Control, Subversiveness, Interpersonal Racism and Oppression)</i>
 HAVING TO CONTINUALLY RETELL THEIR STORY	 NOT BEING SEEN/HEARD
 BEING TREATED AS A NUMBER	 NON-TRANSPARENCY AND VEILED TRUTHS
 BEING SEEN AS A LABEL (I.E. ADDICT, SCHIZOPHRENIC)	 DOES THINGS FOR RATHER THAN WITH
 NO CHOICE IN SERVICE OR TREATMENT	 USE OF PUNITIVE TREATMENT, COERCIVE PRACTICES AND OPPRESSIVE LANGUAGE
 NON-ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WORK RELATED STRESS	 RACIAL PROFILING
 NO ACCESS TO SERVICES	 BEING NON-COLLABORATIVE
 PRACTICES WITHOUT ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS	 VICTIM BLAMING
 ISOLATION OR EXCLUSION PRACTICES	 NON-ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVES
 MARGINALIZING PRACTICES	 MICROAGGRESSIONS
 PRACTICES WITHOUT CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS	 NON-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AND MESSAGING
 "ISMS" AND PHOBIAS	 NON-ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POWER DYNAMICS



It really DOES matter how we respond...

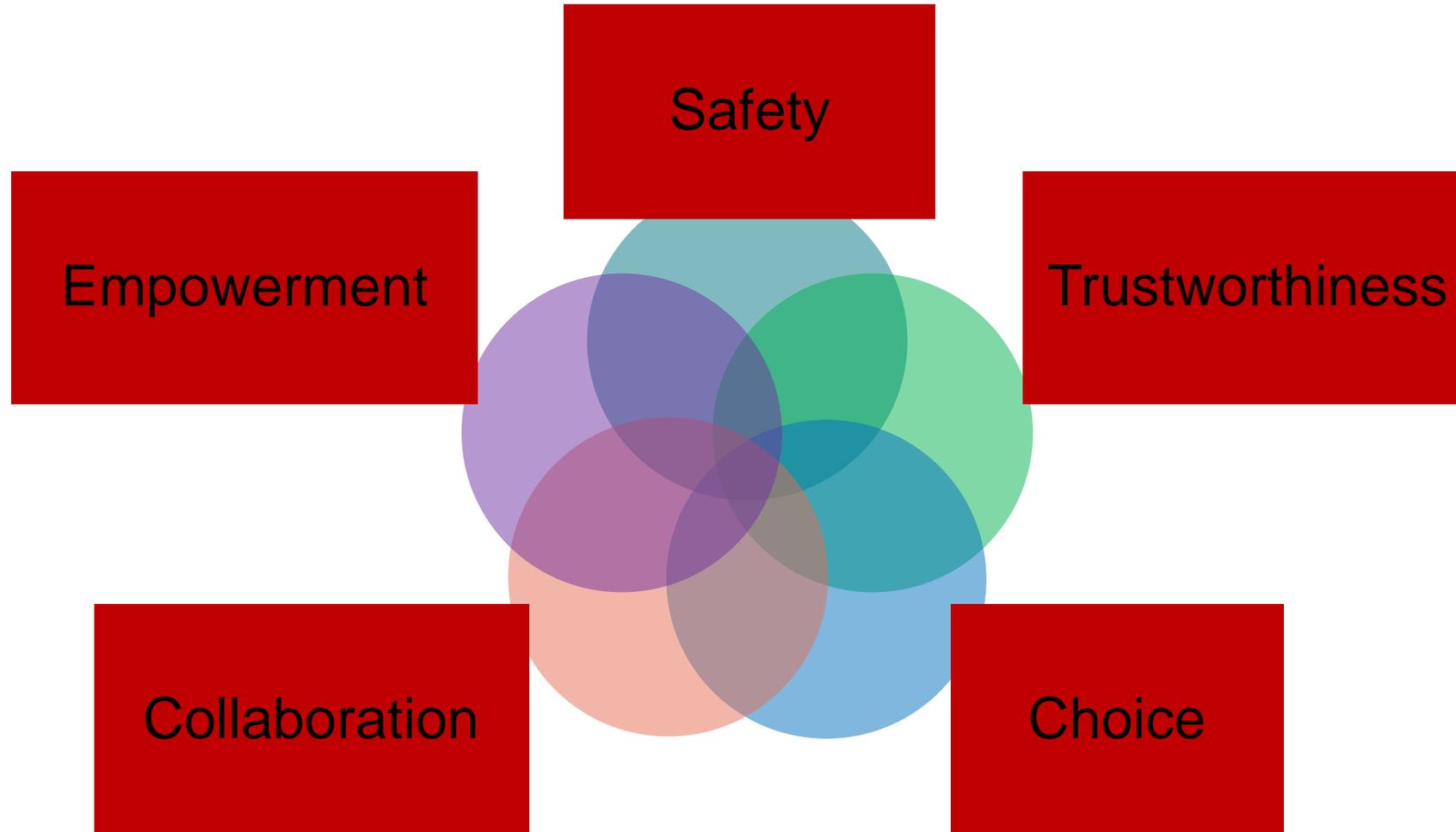


Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

Your role/department may not be specifically designed to treat the actual trauma, but **you can still have a positive impact by:**

- *Being informed* about trauma and strive to avoid re-traumatization
- *Being sensitive* to trauma-related issues present in survivors and communities
- *Referring to* trauma specific-services/treatments
- *Responding to everyone using the lens of the 5 values and principles*

Five Guiding Values and Principles of TIC



Five Guiding Values/Principles

Safety

Ensuring physical *and* emotional safety for all individuals. Generally, involves protection of self or others.

Trustworthiness

Maximizing trust, ensuring clear expectations, and having consistent boundaries. Refers to transparency.

Choice

Making individual choice and control a priority. Refers to the right to self-determination and autonomy.

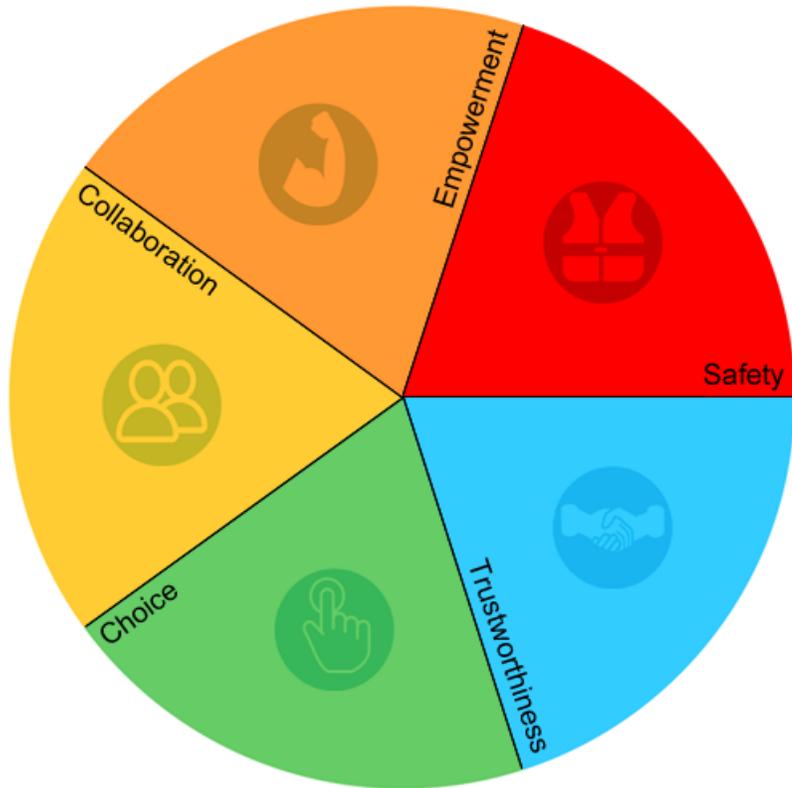
Collaboration

Sharing power and working together with individuals. The idea of working *with*, not doing *to* or *for*.

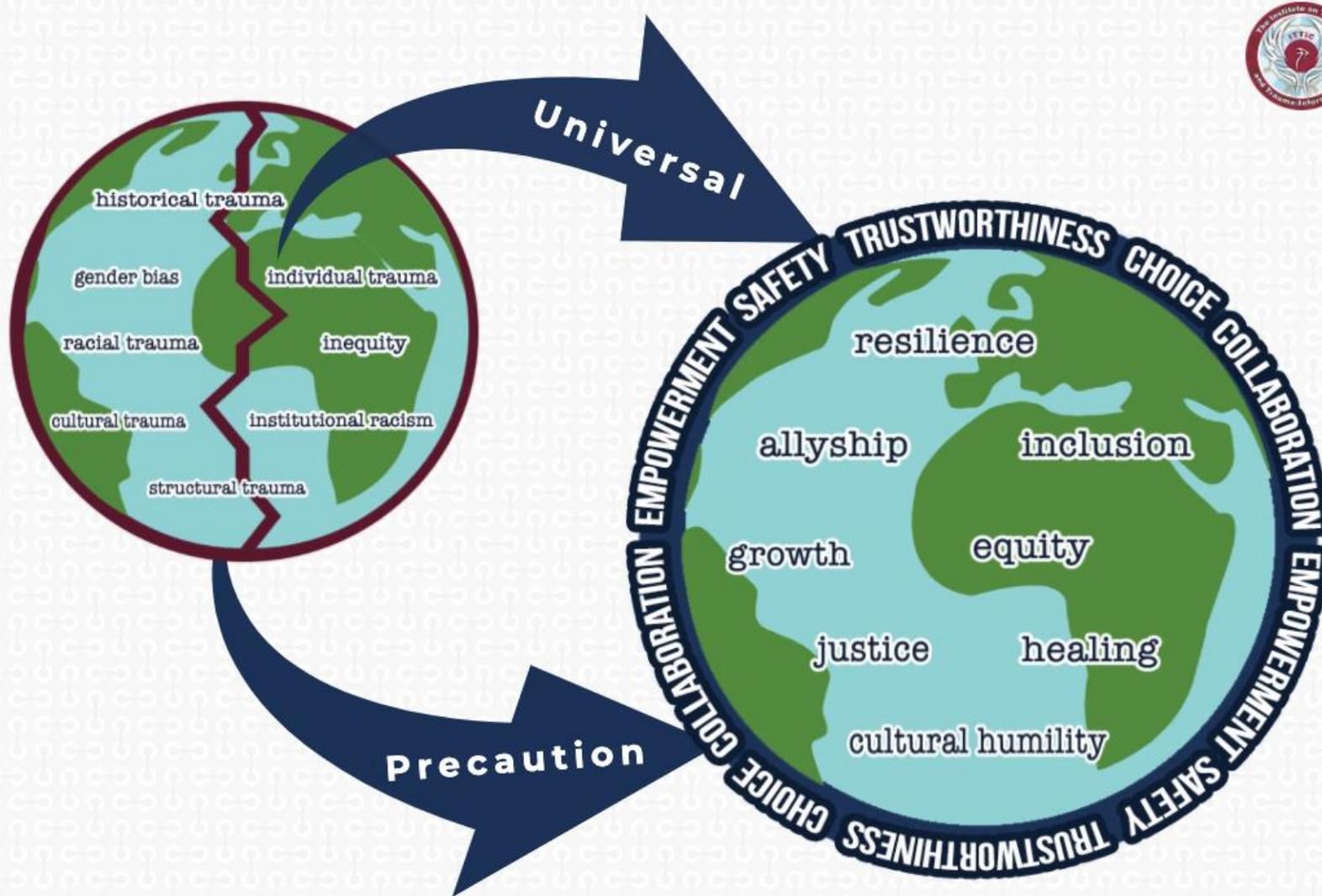
Empowerment

Making empowerment and skill-building a priority. Involves the recognition of strengths and skills to build a realistic sense of hope and possibility.

Chat Box Reflection



- Give an example of how you already use the values/principles in your work—be specific!
- What value/principle could you be more intentional about using in your role?



Trauma-Informed Care (TIC):

Provides the framework for all individuals, organizations and systems to engage in **Universal Precaution** for individual, historical and systemic trauma by using the values and principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment.