

More than touch: Integrating trauma-informed care into daily practice

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Integrating Trauma-informed care into daily practice using questions for reflection

- Integrating TIC into practice requires knowledge about:
 - trauma and its potential long term effects
 - ways to work sensitively with trauma survivors
- It also requires ongoing reflection on one's own practice to identify attitudes and areas that can be modified.
- We encourage you to use both the questions in this handout and to create questions that are specific to your practice.

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Questions for reflection: Respect

- What might get in the way of communicating my respect for my patients?

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Questions for reflection: Rapport

- What is my own personal style of interacting with clients?
- Does it seem to foster rapport?
- Do I put effort into maintaining rapport with each patient over time?

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Questions for reflection: Taking time

- How do I balance the demands of my whole practice with the need to take adequate time with each patient?
- What can I do if my patient's expectations of the time I should spend with that person are much greater than the time I can spend with them?

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Questions for reflection: Information sharing

- How do I ensure that patients have received what they feel is adequate information about examinations, treatment options, and treatment processes?
- In my practice, what do I do to help my patients retain information I share with them?

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Questions for reflection: Sharing Control

- How willing am I to share control with my patients?

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Questions for reflection: Respecting boundaries

- What are my own personal boundaries? How do I know if they are being violated?
- Could any of my actions be seen as boundary violations by patients?

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Questions for reflection: Mutual learning

- How do I get feedback from my patients about how I am doing in their eyes?
 - How often do I ask?

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Questions for reflection: Non-linear healing

- If a patient says they can't tolerate a certain treatment today -
 - What are the potential consequences of proceeding with this treatment?
 - What do I do?

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Questions for reflection: Triggers

- What are some parts of an assessment that might be triggering to individuals who have experienced childhood trauma?
- What parts of a typical interaction with a patient might be triggering?

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Questions for reflection: Inquiring about past trauma

- Does my environment foster a sense of safety for potential disclosure? Are there any steps I could take to increase patients' feelings of trust and safety?
- How do I want to integrate routine inquiry about trauma?
- How would I feel if a client disclosed a history of trauma?

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Questions about self care

- Realistically and practically, what can I do for myself after a day in which I have gone through a “difficult situation” with a patient’?

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General questions for reflection

- Might any of my current practices be interpreted as insensitive by individuals who have experienced trauma? What needs to change?
- In what ways might I adapt my own practice to incorporate specific guidelines?
- Do any of these guidelines seem unrealistic or unworkable in my practice? What are some alternative ways of following such guidelines?

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Questions for reflection (cont'd)

- How committed am I to incorporating these guidelines into my routine practice and into the routine practice of those who assist me in my work? What does this level of commitment mean to my patients?
- How aware am I of nonverbal communication of discomfort? Do I follow up on these indicators with my patients?

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Questions for self reflection and for your organization

- Am I aware of resources in my community to which I can refer patients who have experienced trauma for care outside my scope of practice?
- Is this information readily available?

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Not just your own practice -----

Organizational practices can also retraumatize patients with a history of trauma

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The Road to Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

Trauma-Informed Care calls for a change in organizational culture, where an emphasis is placed on understanding, respecting and appropriately responding to the effects of trauma at all levels. (Bloom, 2010)

<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>

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Recommendations for creating a trauma-informed organization

- Many sources of information for how to proceed in developing a trauma-informed organization.
- We recommend a manual developed by the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, University of Buffalo, School of Social Work. **Trauma-informed Organizational Change**

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Recommendations for Creating a Trauma- Informed Organization

- Involve all levels of staff.
- Create a core set of values and goals related to trauma-informed care.
- Continually train staff on how to recognize the characteristics of trauma and related trauma-informed practices.
- Approach trauma in a culturally sensitive manner.
- Develop a stakeholder committee, and involve members in evaluation.
- Continually assess the organization's work around trauma-informed care to ensure that positive changes are being made.
- Offer multiple outlets for staff, as they may experience secondary traumatic stress.

https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/VOA_TraumaReport_1-17.pdf

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Key Components of TIC

<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>

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