



**COALITION FOR PEACE IN AFRICA
COPA**

A TRAUMA TRAINING MANUAL

(A manual for community facilitators)



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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COALITION FOR PEACE IN AFRICA (COPA)

COPA is an African network of peace builders whose purpose is to promote peace, justice, human rights and development through capacity building, advocacy, research and documentation. COPA is a membership organisation of individuals and organisations working in peace building and conflict transformation, striving towards building the capacity of its members. As a network, COPA facilitates linking and sharing between practitioners and stakeholders to ensure the building of sustainable peace in Africa.

Vision

A continent anchored on a culture of peace, justice and equality.

Examples of interventions by COPA and its members

Peace education

- ≈ Project started in Nairobi high schools, but has been rolled out to conflict prone regions in Kenya (Mount Elgon, Eldoret)
- ≈ Innovative initiatives: successful establishment of peace clubs in all schools involved; publishing of the School's Peace Journal (both a case study of the project and a guideline for future projects in other countries/regions)
- ≈ Peace education (adapted to the local situation) introduced to primary and secondary schools in Somalia, in partnership with COPA member Somali Youth Development Network (SOYDEN)

Capacity building

- ≈ Advanced Conflict Transformation (ACT), an annual four week capacity building programme on peace building and conflict transformation for peace practitioners and policy makers in Africa, with focus on culturally sensitive and sustainable responses to regional and community conflict. Conducted in English with Portuguese translation
- ≈ Advanced Conflict Transformation for the Great Lakes region, conducted in French, with special focus on conflict resolution methods typical for the Great Lakes regions
- ≈ Trauma awareness trainings for communities and organizations in conflict prone areas in Kenya
- ≈ Making Change Happen: Challenges for Peace building Practice, a new short course on social change in the peace building context, in partnership with Responding to Conflict (RTC), developed for professionals with a field experience of more than 5 years

Sharing of expertise

- ≈ Exchange visit between women from conflict torn areas: e.g. Northern Uganda and Kenya (Rift Valley / Mount Elgon area)

- ≈ Capacity building trainings prove to be a fertile ground, as they attract a great diversity of peace practitioners from all over the continent, with a variety in background and experience
- ≈ Website as a forum for COPA members to link, share and learn

Research and documentation

- ≈ School's Peace Journal (see above, under peace education)
- ≈ Understanding trauma from the African perspective - a documentation of experiences and approaches
- ≈ Website as a forum for COPA members to link, share and learn

Short term interventions

- ≈ Trauma awareness & processing workshops for affected communities in Burundi and Kenya, targeted at building the capacity of community leaders so they could disseminate their skills/knowledge to the wider community
- ≈ Peace journalism in Kenya, in partnership with COPA member Centre for Conflict Resolution Kenya
- ≈ Conflict Transformation Training for youth in Nairobi's slum areas, in partnership with Ngeil Youth Development Group
- ≈ Advocacy trainings/workshops for national Ngos in Mozambique and Burundi
- ≈ Conflict transformation training for NGOs in Somaliland
- ≈ Capacity building of small scale rural farmers organizations in Juba, Somalia in peace building and improved natural resource management through a partnership with the Rural Community Development Organization

Contacts

Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA)

P.O. Box 61753-00200 City Square

Nairobi

Tel: +254 020 3870845

Telefax: + 254 020 3866686

Zain: +254 733 772 752

Safcom: +254 723 688 851

Email: copa@copafrica.org

Website: www.copafrica.org

Preface

Background

Wars and extreme violence overwhelm both social and state organized mechanisms for dealing and coping with the aftermath of atrocities of such conflicts. Social systems that have been set up to deal with conflicts at various levels of community are often stretched in situations of massive violence or protracted conflicts. For the state it is not a wonder that the more serious crimes against humanity are unlikely to be prosecuted under conventional criminal justice system.

In these instances ideas such truth and reconciliation programmes are suggested, negotiated and discussed at community and interpersonal levels discussion on how to support victims and perpetrators of violence with the goal of ending the cycles of violence. It is at this instance that subjects like trauma and its impact begin to be formulated.

After the post election violence in Kenya in January 2009, both civil society organizations have embarked on aggressive campaigns and programmes to address governance and social plight of the nation that led to unprecedented ethnic violence. The subject of trauma among peace and development organization has become critical with the reality that many victims of violence continue to harbor resentment and sentiments of revenge while at the same time perpetrators of violence are suspended in states of guilt. These experiences form the basis of continued and bear the seeds and potential for future violence if unchecked. The premise of conflict transformation work is that conflict also creates opportunity for changing those involved for positive outcomes. Based on this understanding COPA intends to contribute to peace building work in Kenya through addressing trauma of individuals and communities.

The Manual

This training module on trauma awareness has been designed with community caregivers in mind. It is expected to assist those working at the grassroots level to reach out to vulnerable and affected members of the society and to empower them with skills that will help them to positively deal with their trauma experiences.

The manual focuses on trauma from a social perspective and in a way that persons working with traumatized African societies can relate with. It is useful for those seeking to understand trauma from the basic to the complex level.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COPA's TRAUMA AWARENESS PROJECT

The trauma awareness project is a one year intervention by COPA supported by USAID through Pack Kenya's Kenya Civil Society Strengthening Programme (KCSSP). The project started off in October 2008 and is expected to reach out to traumatized communities in Eldoret and Mt. Elgon areas.

The main objective of this project is to sensitize organizations working in the fore-mentioned areas in trauma management so that with time they can incorporate the same in their peace building programmes and their other interventions in the communities.

The project is working in partnership with local organizations that have been in existence in the selected areas and that already have a feel of the needs of the local people and their trust. In turn, these organizations have nominated community facilitators who are people that they work with or are from partner organizations for an intensive training on trauma awareness and modalities of interventions at the community level.

Some of the major outputs for the project include the production of a trauma training module, training of community facilitators on trauma management, debriefing sessions of community facilitators who have been to the field and the facilitation of forums at the community level targeting groups that are going through traumatic experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Definitions of concepts related to trauma
- Linkages between trauma, violence and the brain
- Factors influencing trauma
- Characteristics/traits of traumatic experiences
- Different types of trauma
- Common responses to traumatic situations

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Differentiate between stress and trauma
- Make linkages between trauma, violence and the brain
- Understand what traumatic events are
- Understand the effects of trauma on the body, the mind and spirituality
- Have an understanding of the post stress traumatic disorder (PTSD)

Handouts

- 1.1: Trauma overview
- 1.2: Individual trauma
- 1.3: Collective trauma
- 1.4: Trauma Responses
- 1.5: The brain and trauma
- 1.6: Brain reactions to trauma
- 1.7: Impact of Events Scale

Suggested readings

- The STAR training manual
- Peacebuilding: A Caritas training Manual: 2002
- www.healingresources.org
- www.bbc.co.uk/health/conditions.ptsd1
- COPA trauma awareness workshops reports
- Conflict Transformation program, EMU, 2002, Carolyne Yoder
- Study guide: The little book of trauma healing by carolyne Yoder
- ‘Trauma and Critical incident care for Humanitarian workers’
Headington Institute

(Materials for the chapter are derived from the above sources)

1.1: Definition of Concepts

Understanding Common Terms Related To Trauma

1.1.1: Stress

This is the tension or the strain or the pressure we experience when we are faced with demands or expectations that threaten our ability to cope with life demands.

1.1.2: Ordinary Stress

It is normal and common. It is motivating in nature, enabling us to do something and to do it well. In addition, it helps us to mobilize energy to evaluate a situation and make the best decision.

1.1.3: Distress

It is characterized by the inability of the victims to cope with important demands or expectations placed on them by themselves or by others.

1.1.4: Cumulative Stress

A condition experienced after prolonged exposures to daily aggravations, including minor ones. These lead to physical, emotional, psychological and mental exhaustion.

“The difference between stress and trauma is that stress destabilizes the nervous system temporarily. As soon as the stressing condition is dealt with, the body reverts back to its normal equilibrium. With trauma, destabilization of the nervous system takes a longer time, sometimes even a life term to re-stabilizes. Victims of stress are able to bounce back to normal on their own, but with trauma, victims need external assistance to feel normal again.”

1.2: What kinds of violence cause trauma?

Violence can be caused by **nature** (natural disaster) or **humans** (person to person or group to group). Violence can be aimed at one person, a group, or a whole society. Some examples of violence include;

Natural violence: earthquakes, mudslides, floods, lightning strikes, tsunamis

Verbal violence: name-calling, intimidating, shaming, insulting or threatening

Physical violence: kicking, hitting, destroying objects or physically hurting others

Structural violence: poverty, racism or other injustices where one group is harmed due to social injustice

War: a kind of violence that affects all social relationships, corrupts institutions, destroys natural resources and influences people to accept violence as a normal part of life.

1.3: Trauma

Trauma comes from the Greek word “*traumat*’ which means wound. Trauma is what we experience when our ability to respond to threat is overwhelmed. It is the experiencing or witnessing of an event or events involving actual or threatened death, serious injury or threat to the physical integrity of oneself or another person.

“If you have experienced trauma it can be like having stared directly at the sun. Even after you look away the glare seems everywhere and prevents you from seeing things clearly. It can keep you from even opening your eyes at all for a while.....”-Rosenbloom & William, 1999, p.6

1.3.1: Examples of Traumatic events

- Sudden death of a loved one
- Difficult birth
- Emergency surgeries
- The breakup of a significant relationship
- A humiliating or deeply disappointing experience
- The discovery of a life threatening illness or disability
- Natural disasters e.g. landslides, earthquakes, floods etc
- Physical assault including rape, mugging, incest, molestation, domestic abuse
- Experiencing or witnessing horrific injury, carnage or fatalities
- Hearing about violence to or sudden death of someone close
- Long-term exposure to situations such as extreme poverty or milder forms of abuse, such as verbal abuse. (Verbal abuse can also potentially be traumatic as a single event).

Do you know of other traumatic events?

Different people will react differently to similar traumatic events. One person may suffer trauma by experiencing an event that is traumatic while another person may not suffer trauma as a result of the same event. In other words, not all people who experience a potentially traumatic event will actually become psychologically traumatized

1.2.3: Characteristics of traumatic events

1. They involve overwhelming forces that leave victim's feeling helpless and unable to cope e.g. natural disasters and atrocities
2. Involve events outside the range of normal human experience (i.e. they are more than commonplace misfortunes)
3. They challenge a person's or group's sense that life is meaningful and orderly
4. They involve threats to life or body integrity
5. The event is in most cases unexpected

1.2.3.1 Points to remember

Trauma can be caused not only by life-threatening events but also by events/ incidences which we perceive as putting ourselves or our loved ones at risk

- Individuals can be traumatized in various ways and for various reasons.
- People are traumatized not only by what they see, but also by what they hear.
- A traumatic event does not necessarily cause physical harm
- Whether the threat is physical or psychological, trauma results when an experience is so overwhelming that you freeze, go numb, or disconnect from what's happening.

1.3: Types of Traumatic Experiences

* **Ongoing & structurally induced trauma**

- Not all induced by a single event
- Examples of constant possibility of death or injury in conflict zones
- Ongoing violence or poverty-structural violence

→ This leads to: continuous, cumulative, chronic, sequential multiple-traumas

* **Societal or collective trauma (social trauma)**

- When an event or series of events affects large numbers of people
- Results in widespread fear, horror, helplessness

* **Historical trauma transferred through generations**

- Cumulative, emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations emanating from massive group trauma
- Examples include slavery, colonialism, persecution, genocide, etc
- The next generation may not even know the traumatic stories in details (trans-generational transmission)

* **Secondary trauma (also called: vicarious trauma)**

- Experienced by rescue workers, care givers, peace builders and peace keepers who respond to catastrophes or victims first hand
- Often close to what the victims experience

* **Participation induced trauma**

- Being an active part in causing harm to others legally (in the course of your job) or illegally
- It can even be more than what victims experience because of accompanying guilt

1.4: Factors Influencing Trauma

- The severity of the event
- The individual's personal history
- The larger meaning the event represents for the individual
- Coping skills, values and beliefs held by the individual
- The reactions and support from family, friends, and or professionals
- Level of preparedness

Psychological and emotional trauma can also be caused by experiences of ongoing and relentless stress, such as fighting in a war, living in a crime-ridden neighborhood, enduring chronic abuse, or struggling with a life-threatening disease.

Though, people respond differently to stressful experiences, a traumatic event is most likely to cause negative effects if it is:

- Inflicted by humans
- Repeated and ongoing
- Unexpected or unpredictable
- Sadistic or intentionally cruel
- Experienced in childhood

1.5: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Events that are threatening to life or body integrity will produce traumatic stress in their victim. This is a normal, adaptive response of the mind and body to protect the individual by preparing him to respond to the threat by fighting or fleeing. If the fight or flight is successful, the traumatic stress will usually be released or dissipated allowing the victim to return to a normal level of functioning. PTSD develops: when fight or flight is not possible; the threat persists over a long period of time; and/or the threat is so extreme that the instinctive response of the victim is to freeze.

It was first diagnosed among World War I soldiers and was known at the time as “shell shock.” In the aftermath of the Vietnam War it was renamed PTSD.

1.5.1: Symptoms of PTSD

The physical manifestations of PTSD may vary culturally. The symptoms of PTSD usually develop within three months of a traumatic event, although they can take up to a year to appear and must persist for at least a month for it to be diagnosed. There are three main types of symptoms:

- **Intrusion**, the event is constantly revisited in the person's mind:
 - Flashbacks (sudden unwanted vivid memories, such as reliving the event)
 - Painful emotions in the presence of reminders of the event
- **Avoidance**:
 - Numbness and loss of deep feelings
 - Depression, guilt and anxiety

- Retreat from relationships or feeling 'removed' from other people
- Avoiding activities, thoughts, conversations and or people that may trigger memories of the event
- Avoiding dealing with the grief and anger
- Avoiding symptoms by 'self-medicating' with alcohol or drugs
- Problems recalling some aspects of the event

▪ **Increased arousal, the feeling of constant threat can lead to:**

- Very short temper
- Irritable emotions
- Anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Disrupted sleep and nightmares
- Poor mental and work performance
- Being jumpy and easily startled

In children, this may be expressed as disorganized or agitated behavior.

1.5.2: What's the treatment?

- (1) Creating a safe, trusting environment where persons feel free to explore their feelings and experience support from others in overcoming the traumatic experience;
- (2) Learning to remember the past in a non-harmful way;
- (3) Discovering a new way to relate to self and others.

Examples of PTSD cases

- A police officer who had been called in to quell ethnic clashes in the Rift Valley in 2008 has now quit his job two years short of retirement because of persistent fiery nightmares and chest pains.
- A previously bright teenage boy is no longer able to concentrate on his school work and is failing his classes since the death of his mother last year. He no longer enjoys going to school, and is increasingly skipping school.
- A middle aged man is arrested after a fight in a bar. He says all he remembers is a smell that reminded him of the prison where he was tortured, when he woke up in a police cell.
- A Mau Mau veteran somewhere in Murang'a still awakes screaming from nightmares of ambush, forty five years after independence.

- A woman who was molested when she was six years old by a neighbor begins to be disturbingly over-protective of her own six year old daughter.
- An IDP in Nakuru seeks psychotherapy because she is suffering from persistent heart pulsations and panic attacks.
- In a school, a teacher observes a boy who witnessed the ethnic clashes aggressively trying to kill his play mate with a stick saying it was a poisoned arrow.

1.6: Common Responses to Traumatic Events

Reactions to trauma can be wide and varied, and differ in severity from person to person.

Common responses to traumatic events

Trauma can have a range of cognitive (i.e. rationally, using one's reason), emotional, physical and behavioural effects on the individual (spiritual and societal effects)

1.6.1: Cognitive (thinking) responses include:

- Memory difficulties
- Lack of concentration/decreased ability to concentrate i.e. shortened attention span sometimes accompanied with spaciness
- Poor judgement
- Inability to discriminate
- Inability to make choice

1.6.2: Emotional responses include:

- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Flashbacks
- Intense fear accompanied by feelings of numbness
- Feeling of helplessness or hopelessness
- Loss of control
- Shame
- Guilt
- Generalized anxiety
- Anger/rage accompanied by feelings of vengeance and resentment

1.6.3: Physical responses include:

- Stomach pains
- Tightness of the chest
- Headaches
- Visual difficulties

- Dizziness or faintness
- Changes in appetite

1.6.4: Behavioural (doing) responses include:

- Irritability
- Hyper-alertness
- Communication difficulties (*talking or writing*)
- Lost or increased appetite
- Domestic violence
- Suspiciousness
- Increased drug use

1.6.5: Spiritual Responses

- Emptiness
- Loss of meaning
- Doubt
- Anger at God
- Feeling un-forgiven
- Feeling punished
- Loss of faith in humanity
- Sudden turning to God/deeper faith
- Belief that God is powerless
- Belief that we have failed God
- Crisis in faith

1.7: Common effects of emotional trauma on interpersonal relationships: (*adapted from healingresources.org*)

- Inability to maintain close relationships or choose appropriate friends and mates
- Sexual problems
- Hostility
- Arguments with family members, employers or co-workers
- Social withdrawal
- Feeling constantly threatened

1.8: How do we Respond to Threat

- When you face a threat you will often be afraid. Being afraid can be a positive thing because it helps you protect yourself when in danger.
- When you face danger, your whole body quickly gets ready for action. Often you don't have control over how you respond and may do so in one of the following ways: **Fight, Flight or Freeze**
- No matter how you respond to threat, an enormous amount of energy is produced that gets used in different ways:

Fight-energy is used to “get back” at the source of threat, fight back

Flight-energy is used to escape the danger

Freeze-energy is not completely used up, but it is trapped in your body

- The freeze response does not allow the trauma energy to be completely discharged or used up. The body looks motionless on the outside, but inside there is a forceful tornado-like turbulence. The body is experiencing a situation similar to the flooring of a gas pedal and the slamming of brakes at the same time. Energy is produced, but cannot be used up. When this happens, trauma is like a tornado-fierce and destructive. It wreaks havoc on the bodies and spirits of people who experience it, as well as on communities and societies.
- Shaking, trembling, crying or sweating are normal responses and are helpful to the body and mind in the long run. If you allow yourself to shake and tremble, you are helping your body release or use up the energy that has been accumulated during freeze response
- Wild animals do not seem to exhibit long-term trauma responses like humans because their instinctual responses after freezing include: trembling, shaking, deep breathing, panting, all ways of releasing trauma energy

Exercise

- What does your culture teach you to do with your emotions when you are hurting inside?
- What might be some additional things you might try that would be healthy ways of releasing sadness and painful emotions

1.9: The Human Brain and Trauma

The human brain is designed to orchestrate the “fight, flight and freeze” responses in order to protect us and keep us safe. A part of your brain known as the amygdale, located in the **emotional brain**, sends a message to another part of the brain-the **instinctual brain**- that responds with “fight, flight or freeze”. Since this happens automatically and very quickly, the **thinking brain** is basically bypassed in times of trauma.

Even though the thinking brain is bypassed, some memories of the event (sights, smells, sounds) are still stored in your emotional brain. So, when

sights, smells or sounds remind you of the original event (even though the real threat has passed), you react instinctively and do things you normally wouldn't do.

Thinking/Rational brain (cerebral cortex) - deals with the past, present and future

- Enables us to come to a decision and make plans
- Enables us to evaluate and analyze
- Has a sense of time -knows what happened in the past, present and future.

Instinctual brain/Brain stem - Now, Now!!!

- Controls automatic reactions like digestion, heart beat, sweating, including fight, flight, freeze responses
- Does not have a sense of time, everything is happening NOW
- Allows us to act before we know why
- Centre of basic instincts

Emotional brain/Limbic system - First alert!!!

- Helps us have memories of different events in our lives
- Creates our emotions-sadness/fear/anger
- Contains amygdale-the" first alert system" that is activated by fear

Exercise

Most people seem to know intuitively how to calm the instinctual and emotional brain and do this naturally through drumming, dancing, singing, praying etc

- Make a list of things individuals and groups in your culture do to calm the body, mind and spirit and release blocked trauma energy

CHAPTER TWO

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF TRAUMA

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Sharing of traumatic experiences
- Creating a safe space: how to help a traumatized person

At the end of the chapter participants should be able to:

- Feel empowered enough to share their traumatic experiences with others
- Recognise their various trauma events

Handouts

2.1: How to help a traumatized person

Suggested readings

- The STAR training manual
- www.healingresources.org
- COPA trauma awareness workshops reports
- www.virginiatech.healthandperformancesolutions.net

(Materials for this session have been derived from the above sources)

1.1: Sharing Traumatic Experiences

Traumatic events are quite common. Death of a loved one, ethnic clashes, involvement in serious road accidents and natural disasters are some of these. Most of us experience several traumatic experiences and traumatic losses across our lifetime. These events not only affect us, but also our families, friends, co-workers and neighbors. It is important for those of us who have experienced such events to have the support of our friends, family, neighbors and others. One way of healing from a traumatic event is to keep remembering and talking about it. This involves sharing of the traumatic experiences with others.

Exercise

Ask each participant to draw a symbol that represents their traumatic event. When this is done, give each person an opportunity to talk to the larger group the story behind their symbol. This is called a sacred moment and should not be interrupted nor should comments be made. The group should sit in silence as they listen. It is important that no one is pressured to participate in this activity.

When the last person has shared, ask the participants to light a candle to signify the beginning of a new life and the start of the healing process.

Exercise 2: Debriefing from the exercise:

- What were your reactions--physical, emotional, cognitive (thinking)--as the symbols were shared?
- Review the various types of trauma presented in section 1:
 - Societal or collective trauma
 - Ongoing and structurally induced trauma
 - Historical trauma
 - Secondary/vicarious trauma
 - Participation-induced trauma (PIT)
- What types of trauma were represented by the symbols presented in the group?
- Were any of the above types of trauma surprising?
- Are there other types or causes of trauma that you would add?

CHAPTER THREE

TRAUMA AND PEACEBUILDING

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Relationship between trauma and aggression
- Cycles of victim hood and aggression
- How victims of violence break out of cycles of victim hood and aggression
- What is forgiveness?
- Three models to social approaches to trauma

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Understand how unhealed trauma develops into behaviors of “acting in” and “acting out”
- Understand why victims desire revenge in unhealed trauma
- Appreciate the concept “addiction to wounds”
- Map out how victims move out of a cycle of violence/ revenge to recovery
- Understand the concept of “re-storying” and memorializing
- Know what forgiveness is and what it is not
- Understand new models of social approaches to trauma (for further exploration)

Suggested readings

- Clancy, Mary Alice and Hamber, Brandon. Trauma, Peace Building and Development: An Overview of Key positions and Critical Questions. Incore, University of Ulster.

3.0 Introduction

Violence in complex political emergencies not only results in successive and cumulative injustices to individuals, but it is generally aimed at destruction of social structures, relationships and institutions and often contains structural elements (e.g. poverty, human rights abuses, racism, gender discrimination etc)...what needs to be 'healed' is therefore the multitude of individual, political, social and cultural responses to a traumatic situation and its aftermath.¹

3.1 Relationship between unhealed trauma and aggression

Although it cannot be assumed that those who are victims of violence and trauma will necessarily be aggressors in the end but there is a relationship between unhealed trauma and the potential to aggress or offend others.

“Pain that is not transformed is usually transferred”

When trauma is not dealt with or recognized it can lead to what is referred to as “Re-enactment” This is behavior in which the individual “acts in” or “acts out”

Acting-in (turning unhealed trauma energy in on oneself)

- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Overworking
- Eating disorders - e.g. not eating at all
- Risky sexual behaviors & sexual addictions
- Compulsive shopping or gambling
- Depression (sadness, withdrawal or hopelessness)
- Feelings of numbness, anxiety, self blame, shame
- Physical responses (pain, headaches, change in appetite, weakness, etc.)

Acting-out (turning unhealed trauma energy out onto others)

- Criminal behaviors and violent acts
- Aggression, blaming, irritability
- Inability to be flexible or tolerant or show empathy
- Domestic violence & sexual abuse
- Repetitive conflicts

¹ Clancy, Mary Alice and Hamber, Brandon. Trauma, Peace building and Development: An overview of Key positions and critical questions. Incore, University of Ulster.

Acting-in and acting-out behaviors lead to cycles of violence --violence or harm against self or others.

Many destructive acting in behaviors are attempts to calm turbulent trauma energy and self-sooth. Trauma healing involves helping people find healthy ways to comfort and calm themselves.²

Group exercise:

In your groups discuss the following statement and prepare to share in a plenary

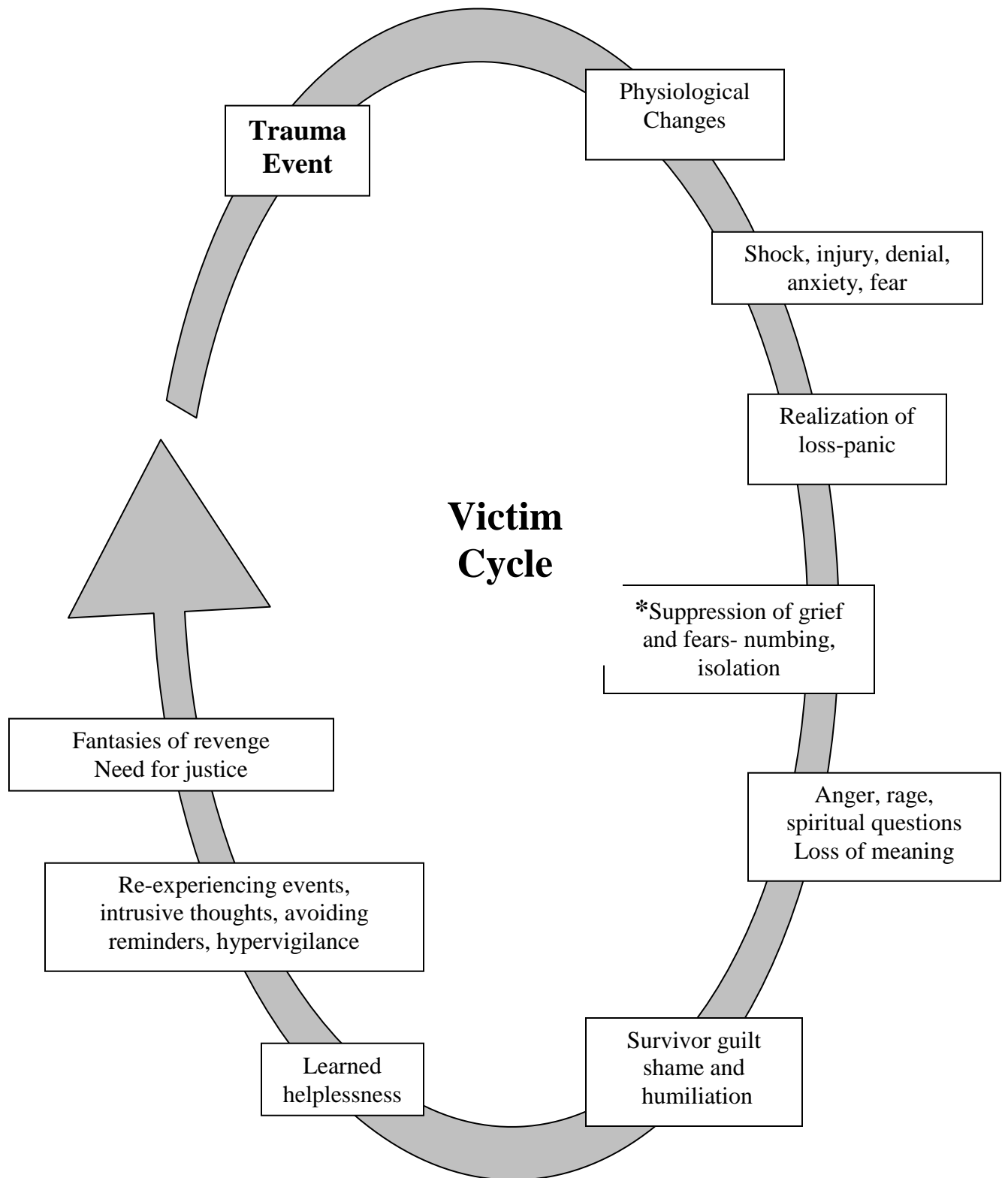
“Much of the violence that plagues humanity is a direct or indirect result of unresolved trauma that is acted out in repeated unsuccessful attempts to re-establish a sense of empowerment”¹

- When we begin to associate revenge with justice we call this **retributive justice**.
- The belief that Revenge will vindicate and relieve the anger, rage, fear, hurt and shame and humiliation we feel.

3.2 The Victim Cycle

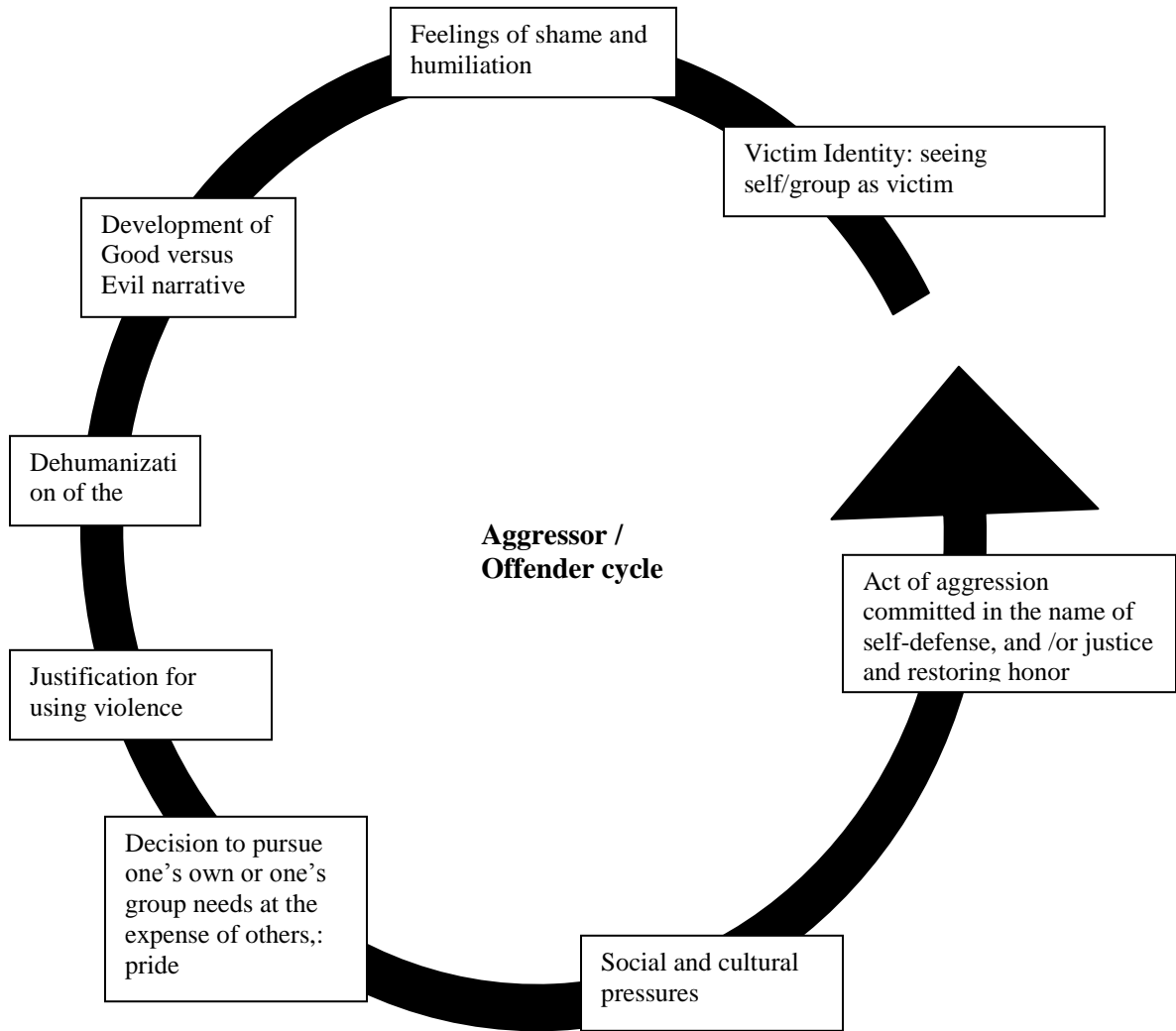
² Village STAR Manual, Eastern Mennonite University.

The Victim Cycle



- *A common reaction, but not inevitable

The aggressor Cycle



3.4 Revenge and Wounds

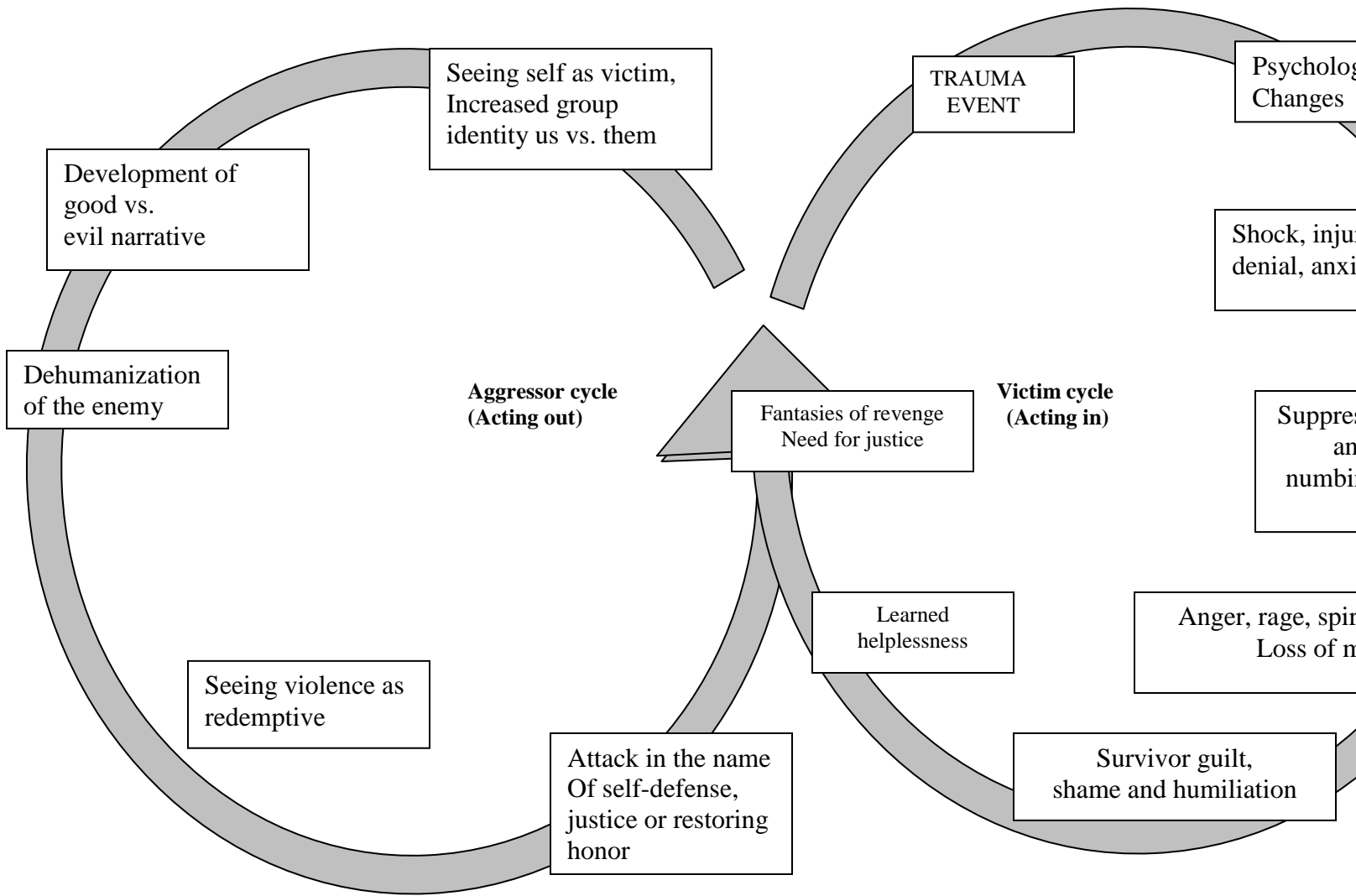
- We usually violate our values in our revenge actions which often leads to more feelings of shame
- We ignore any internal or external directions towards rightness.
- “there are only two or three human stories and they go on repeating themselves as fiercely as if they had never happened”
Willa Cather
- People and societies get addicted to their wounds. “An addiction to wounds surpasses an addiction to heroin.” Carolyn Myss

Can you identify examples where people are addicted to their wounds?

- Leaders play a key role in how they lead society towards healing or revenge. They can inflame their groups so that they are stuck in an aggression cycle or they can lead communities to make choices towards spiritual, emotional and societal transformation.
- Although the sources of violence are often external factors such as discrimination and conflict over resources the battle is always at the core of what makes us human beings. It therefore means the restoration must begin at the core of what makes us human
- This journey leads us to depths of ourselves as individuals and groups and we come face to face with our own darkness. This is where trauma healing begins.

3.5 Cycles of Violence

Cycles Of Violence



3.5 Breaking out of the cycle of trauma

When the story of trauma is told and retold in unchanging ways the desire for revenge remains. It therefore means that to move towards healing there must be a change in our narratives about who we are in light of what has happened to us.

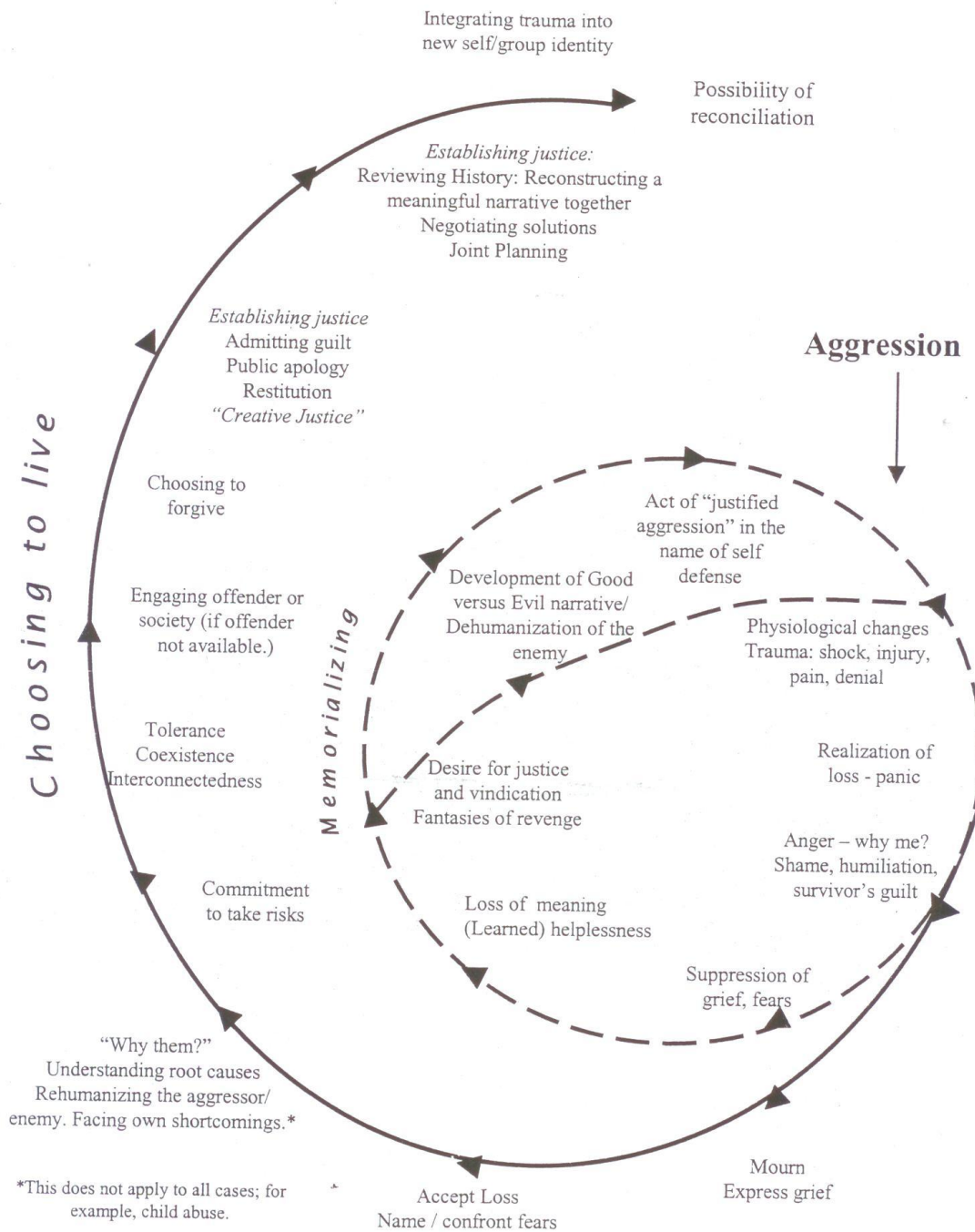
How do we break out of the cycle?

- Note that this is not a linear process and does not always work in all contexts especially when the sources of trauma still remain

The ability to break out of the cycle of aggression depends on

- Safety; physical, spiritual and emotional
- Choice or decision of victim /survivor: a willingness to go beyond blame
- An awareness of healing options
- An understanding of trauma and what it does to us/our identities
- Leadership (whether it keeps communities in inner cycle or helps them break out. Leadership also offers transformative narratives, ceremonies and rituals that can promote long term healing.
- Available support at all levels
- Memorializing - retelling the story in ways that promote long lasting healing.

3.6 Breaking the cycles



Trauma Healing Journey: Breaking the Cycles

©EMU, Conflict Transformation Program, 2002, Adapted from model by Olga Butcharova

Additional notes

- When the story of trauma is told and retold in unchanging ways the desire for revenge remains. It therefore means that to move towards healing there must be a change in our narratives about who we are in light of what has happened to us.
- The goal is to integrate the trauma experience in one's own life experience or group's life experience and regain a sense of safety and predictability.
- Survivors often say "healing is choosing to Live"
- Memorializing can be done in a healthy way and an unhealthy way. Are there examples of both you can share with the group? A paradox about trauma healing is that in order to forget we need to remember.

Grief

- Expressing grief is essential for getting on to the healing path

Healthy story telling

- This includes both facts and emotions
- It allows for shame and doubts and fears to be expressed
- Recognizes the strengths and resilience that helped a person survive.
- Moving from "why me/us" to "why them- why did they do it" and "why not me" This is the recognition that the victim is just as human as the perpetrator it helps to let go of the shame and guilt arising from the trauma.
- We then can move on and take risks such as beginning to trust and willingness to co-exist. There is also recognition of our co-existence and interconnectedness.

3.7 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is

- A process
- Learning to let go and move on
- Release from the dark ruminations that erode health and enjoyment of life
- Freedom from the power/control the offender has over the victim(s)\Accepting the humanity of ourselves and others
- An act of courage

Forgiveness is not

- Condoning the offence
- Letting go of the quest for justice
- A mandate for maintaining a harmful or abusive relationship
- Easy
- The same as reconciliation
- The same from culture to culture

Justice that brings healing and restoration of relationships is RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

3. 8 Three models of social approaches to trauma

- Many trauma models overemphasize individual experience but most traumas in the conflict situation are a social experience which means the healing process must be inclusive.
- The following are quotes from psychosocial approaches

“...rather than viewing war affected individuals as inherently vulnerable, advocates of psychosocial methods adopt a salutogenic or “health relate” approach wherein individuals are assumed to be resilient , and their ability to manage hardship depends upon their ability to recreate or maintain a “sense of coherence.”³

Psychosocial approaches fall under three categories

1. Rights based approaches
2. Culture based approaches
3. Gender based approaches

In rights based approaches try to diminish stigmatization of people emphasizing a sense of empowerment of those affected by violence. So they remove terminologies such as “victims” and “vulnerable.” Those affected are led to reconstructing their stories to a wider societal process so they come to term with the overall evil in society. In itself it brings more empowerment to people since their shame is not unique to them as individuals but to a wider context.

In the culture based approaches the separation of mind body and soul is not assumed. In this model there is an emphasis on understanding the specific context of each situation of violence since we cannot assume that each community defines their experience the way another does. The main challenge with this approach is that culture is a very fluid subject changing from one generation to the next or one locality to the next. Furthermore, there is no singular culture based approach to trauma.

In the gender based approach there is the recognition that violence affects men and women and children differently. Women are a prime target in violence in cases of mass rapes. Furthermore, men who are victims of sexual violence are forced to remain silent due to stigmatization. There is the emergence of female headed households

³ Clancy, Mary Alice and Hamber, Brandon. Trauma, Peace building and Development: An overview of Key positions and critical questions. Incore, University of Ulster

when men go to war or are killed. Finally the humiliations of war demasculates men and sometimes they feel the need to reassert their authority hence increased cases of domestic and sexual violence all over again.

The debate on psychosocial approaches to trauma is still an ongoing one but it aims to de-emphasize an individual based psychological model that is seen to be too restrictive in understanding trauma.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Definitions and concept
- Rationale and theory of concept
- Examples of restorative justice programmes
- Distinction between restorative justice and retributive justice

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Identify what restorative justice is and relate it with the current retributive justice principles.
- Understand the characteristic of restorative justice
- Identify the needs of victims, offenders and community in situations of crime.
- Understand the relationship between restorative justice and peace building field.

Suggested readings

- Stovel, Laura. When the Enemy Comes Home: Restoring Justice After Mass Atrocity. 2003. (A presentation in Vancouver 1-4 June 2003. Restorative Justice in post- war contexts.)
- www.restorativejustice.org This is a website that delivers detailed information on research, tools, bibliographies, training and tutorials on restorative justice

4.0 Definitions and Concept

“All violence is an effort to do Justice, or to undo Injustice.”

James Gilligan

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders.

Practices and programs reflecting restorative purposes will respond to crime by:

1. identifying and taking steps to repair harm,
2. involving all stakeholders, and
3. Transforming the traditional relationship between communities and their governments in responding to crime.

Some of the programmes and outcomes typically identified with restorative justice include:

- Victim offender mediation
- Conferencing
- Circles
- Victim assistance
- Ex-offender assistance
- Restitution
- Community service

4.1 Three principles form the foundation for restorative justice:

1. Justice requires that we work to restore those who have been injured.
2. Those most directly involved and affected by crime should have the opportunity to participate fully in the response if they wish.
3. Government's role is to preserve a just public order, and the community's is to build and maintain a just peace.

Restorative programmes are characterized by four key values:

1. Encounter: Create opportunities for victims, offenders and community members who want to do so to meet to discuss the crime and its aftermath
2. Amends: Expect offenders to take steps to repair the harm they have caused

3. Reintegration: Seek to restore victims and offenders to whole, contributing members of society
4. Inclusion: Provide opportunities for parties with a stake in a specific crime to participate in its resolution

4.2 Overview of Restorative Justice

What does justice require for victims?

- Traumatic crises affect (identity, relationship and meaning issues for the victims)
- Hence meaning, honor and vindication are important for the victims
- Victims need: safety, answers, truth telling, empowerment and vindication

What does justice require of offenders?

- Accountability that addresses harms and encourages empathy, responsibility

Restorative Justice is an effort to take seriously the

- Needs and
- Roles
- Of victims, offenders and community

Restorative Justice recognizes that:

- Crime is a violation of people and relationships
- Violations create obligations
- The central obligation is to put right the wrongs (this recognizes that we are all interconnected)

Criminal Justice

- Crime violates law and state
- Creates guilt
- Justice: state determines blame
- Central focus is on offenders getting what they deserve

Restorative Justice Exercise

The story of the lion

Once upon a time there was a lion who ruled over his animal kingdom. One day he realized his power and started to demand the offspring of the other animals as his food. All animals were suffering from losing their babies to the lion's appetite. Then the hare pulled a trick, as he lured the lion to the river. The lion was surprised to see another lion at the other riverbank. He jumped to greet this lion, only to end up in the middle of the river realizing it was his own image he was jumping after. And there he found himself, in the water, almost drowning. He begged the other animals to rescue him. Then the elephant called a meeting of all animals, to discuss what to do about the lion.

Group work:

Divide the participants (animals) in groups, ask them to come up with a solution to this dilemma: do we rescue the lion or not, and if we do, under what conditions?

CHAPTER FIVE

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVERS

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Secondary trauma
- Taking care of yourself

After this session the participant will be able to:

- understand and recognize vicarious trauma and explain it to others
- Skills to process his/her own secondary trauma

Handouts

5.1: A Self-Directed Program for Compassion Fatigue Resiliency & Prevention

5.2: Compassion Fatigue

Suggested readings

- A Self-Directed Program for Compassion Fatigue Resiliency & Prevention
A workbook that guides you through the origins and symptoms of Compassion Fatigue and helps you find ways to recover. The workbook focuses on capacity building in the following areas: Resiliency, Self-Management, Self Care, Connection with others, Skills Acquisition, Conflict Resolution and Resolving Primary Traumatic Memories.
- Compassion Fatigue
A handout with definitions on vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue, with tips on how to prevent compassion fatigue.

5.1: Secondary trauma⁴

5.1.1: Secondary (or: vicarious) trauma

Secondary trauma is trauma experienced by rescue workers, caregivers, peace builders and peace keepers who respond to catastrophes or victims first hand.

This traumatic experience is often close to what the victim's experience. As a consequence, practitioners/caregivers have unique trauma healing needs.

Helpers may feel a *positive* effect associated with their ability to help. They may also feel *negative*, secondary effects. Vicarious trauma can be caused by repeatedly hearing horrible stories about extremely stressful events.

5.1.2: Trauma build-up

- Those helping victims to recover listen to terrible (horrific) stories that affect them psychologically (e.g. in the aftermath of Kenya's Post-Election Violence) - especially as story after story piles up in the listeners memory
- They develop feelings of trauma not only through exposure to stories, but also by being present in the environment that gave rise to the original victim's trauma

Vicarious trauma may be exacerbated by feelings of professional isolation, large caseloads, and frequent contact with traumatised people and visits to trauma environments or locations.

It may further be aggravated by the severity of the traumatic material to which the helper is exposed, such as direct contact with victims, or exposure to graphic accounts, stories, photos and things associated with extremely stressful events.

5.1.3: Compassion fatigue

Compassion fatigue is the result of the effects of cumulative traumatic stress (primary and secondary) and burnout in the professional and personal life of the service professional.

At this point one works poorly, gets ill and begins to hate the people one previously wanted to help.

⁴ Sources:

B. Hudnall Stamm, E. M. Varra, L. A. Pearlman & E. Giller: "The Helper's Power to Heal and To Be Hurt - Or Helped - By Trying" / Lisa McKay: "Trauma and Critical Incident Care for Humanitarian Workers" (Headington Institute) / David Becker: "Dealing with the Consequences of Organised Violence in Trauma Work" (Berghof Research Centre)

5.2: Taking care of yourself

When you experience a traumatic event, your body goes into a state of high-alert. It is normal to experience some symptoms of stress and trauma as a result. These symptoms usually disappear over time. However, there are certain actions that will help or prevent your healing.

5.2.1: Do's

* *Bear in mind: you are still normal*

You are experiencing a normal reaction to an abnormal event.

* *Get some (physical) exercise*

This will help your body to process the chemicals produced during the trauma experience. But do not overreact: if you are not used to physical exercise, do not start with it now.

* *Be aware of your temporary shortcomings*

Avoid tasks that are too demanding or require intense concentration. Many trauma sufferers are not able to focus and concentrate normally.

* *Maintain routines and a daily structure*

Doing ordinary and practical things can support your sense of return to normalcy.

* *Give yourself a break*

Try to maintain a normal routine, but focus on tasks that do not require a lot of thinking and can be completed in a short time. Allow yourself extra time to accomplish ordinary tasks.

* *Regain control*

Taking decisions on small, daily things (like what you are going to eat for lunch) will help you feel that it is you who is in control over your life again.

* *Be alone and with others*

Spending time with family and friends can be very important and may help you feel less isolated. On the other hand, you should avoid constantly surrounding yourself with people. This can be a way of being in denial - to avoid thinking about what happened.

* *Talk, talk, talk*

Share your experience with people who are close to you.

* *Find other ways of expression*

Writing, praying, artistic expression (dancing, painting, singing) - these can all be ways of helping you putting things into perspective and start coping with your experience.

* *Keep eating*

Even if you are not hungry: eat regularly.

* *Get plenty of rest*

Even if you can not sleep: lie down and try to relax. Remember that sleep disturbances and changes in sleeping patterns are common with trauma.

* *Indulge yourself*

Engage yourself in activities that you really enjoy and that will help you to relax. E.g. reading, watching movies, etcetera.

5.2.2: Don'ts

* *Don't label yourself crazy or weak*

Always bear in mind that you are experiencing a normal reaction to an abnormal situation.

* *Don't make any life-changing decisions*

This is not the best time to decide to divorce, quit your job, or enforce other drastic changes.

* *Don't increase your addictions*

Don't increase your use of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, and etcetera. Don't engage more frequently in potentially addictive behaviour, like gambling. Even though all these substances and activities may help you feel better in the short term, they will only exacerbate problems (or create new ones) in the long term.

* *Don't exaggerate your use of caffeine and other stimulants*

Your body is already hyped up and these substances will only increase your level of arousal.

* *Don't try to escape your feelings*

Don't try to avoid your thoughts and emotions about the traumatic event all the time by keeping yourself distracted.

* *Don't shun away from people*

Even if you do not want to talk with people about what happened, it is good to spend time with persons you like and who will give you a sense of safety and anchored in the present.

* *Don't trigger your brain*

Avoid any movies, TV shows or books that are violent.

CHAPTER SIX

HOW TO COMMUNICATE

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- The communication process - a basic model
- Nonverbal communication
- The art of listening
- How to get people to share and talk
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Dealing with sensitive context and information

After this session the participant will be able to:

- understand the basic principles of communication and explain them to others

The participant will have gained:

- Communication skills, specifically when dealing with sensitive context and information

Handouts

6.1: The Communication Process

6.1: The communication process – a basic model

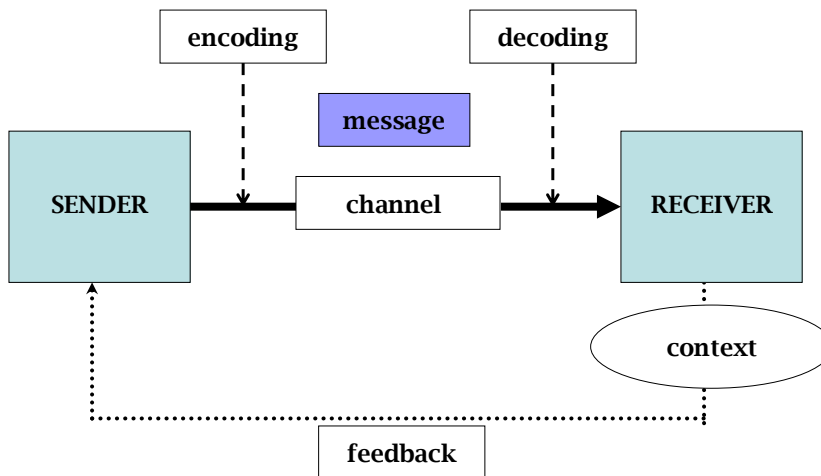
Communication. We do it constantly, without giving it much thought. But as communication is an essential part of facilitating workshops, meetings, consultations and the like, it is important to have a closer look at the communication process.

How do we communicate? And where can we go wrong?

6.1.1: Communication is: a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange information but also create and share meaning.⁵

The challenge is to share information (a message) in such a way that it is fully and equally understood by both parties.

A basic model of the communication process looks like this:



Sender (or source): the person who conveys the information.

Useful questions: *why* do you want to communicate and *what* do you want to communicate?

Encoding: transforming the message by the sender, in such a way that it will be understood by the receiver. E.g. from thought to speech.

Useful question: *who* are you communicating with?

Channel: the 'vehicle' for delivering the message. E.g. a face-to-face meeting, a phone conversation or an e-mail.

Useful question: *which form* is the best for your message?

Decoding: transforming the message upon arrival by the receiver.

⁵ www.businessdictionary.com

Receiver: the person who gets the message.

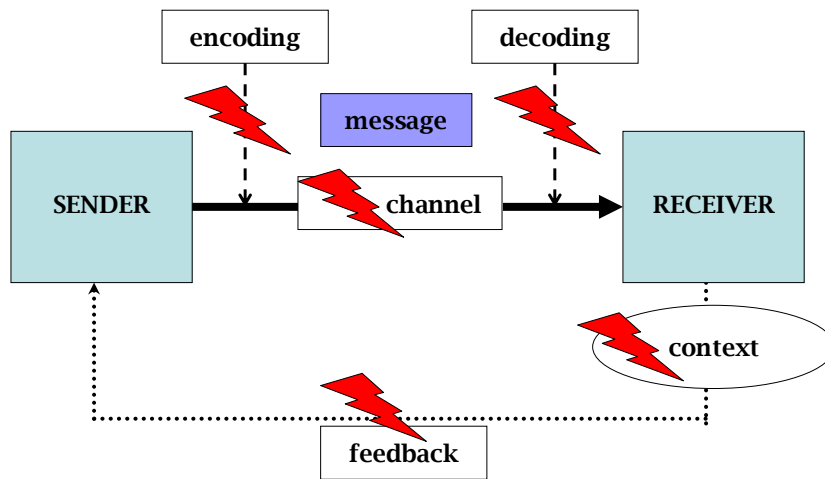
Context: the situation in which the message is delivered. E.g. the surrounding environment or the culture.

Feedback: reaction to the communicated message.

Communication is only successful when both sender and receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication.

Distortion (a barrier in the communication) can occur on many levels in the communication process.

6.1.2: Distortion



<i>Possible distortion occurs when...</i>	<i>Key to success: how to avoid potential misunderstanding and confusion</i>
Encoding	Anticipate and eliminate possible sources of confusion (e.g. cultural issues, mistaken assumptions, missing information) by knowing your audience (understand who you are communicating with).
Choosing the channel	Know the strengths and weaknesses of the different forms of communication (e.g. giving a long list of directions verbally is not the best way forward).

<i>Possible distortion occurs when...</i>	<i>Key to success: how to avoid potential misunderstanding and confusion</i>
Decoding	Know your audience; understand who you are communicating with and what level of knowledge the audience has.
Context differs	Know your audience and the context you are both communicating in - in case this context differs between the two parties, acknowledge the differences and cater for them (e.g. differences in community background).
Receiving feedback	Insist on feedback, as it is the best way to check if the message is understood in the way it was meant; read the signs given by the receiver, ask specifically, etcetera.

6.2: Nonverbal communication

6.2.1: Nonverbal communication means: sending and receiving wordless messages.⁶

Such messages can be communicated through gesture; body language or posture; facial expression and eye contact; object communication such as clothing, hairstyles or even architecture; and symbols.

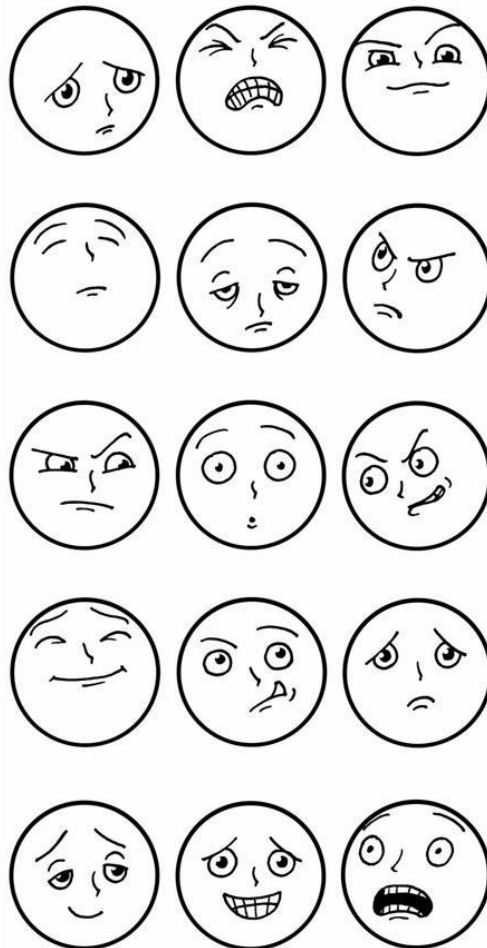
Speech may also contain nonverbal elements known as paralanguage, including voice quality, emotion and speaking style, as well as features such as rhythm, intonation and stress. Likewise, written texts have nonverbal elements such as handwriting style and spatial arrangement of words.

However, most people focus in nonverbal communication on face-to-face interaction.

Nonverbal communication is a powerful tool to emphasize your message. Nonverbal signs can even obstruct the language you are using. E.g.: your head is shaking NO while your mouth is saying YES.

⁶ Source: www.wikipedia.org

Note to the trainer: When lecturing about nonverbal communication, you can interact with the audience by asking them to give an example of each form of nonverbal communication (gesture, body language, posture, and etcetera).



Examples of facial expressions (source: www.edupics.com)

Group work: Do's and don'ts of listening

This exercise will illustrate the power of nonverbal communication (note that the person who is discouraged from telling his/her story will have much trouble to continue the full two minutes), while at the same time introduces the art of listening.

- Group participants two by two.
- One participant starts telling a story, the other one pretends not to listen, without using words (nonverbal communication).
- After two minutes, roles change. The listening partner now has to make the other understand that he/she is intensively listening and has to encourage the other to continue talking, again without using words.
- After two more minutes, participants share their experience and together compile a list with the *Do's and don'ts of listening*.
- The whole group will then in plenary make a complete list (each pair can give one suggestion from their list, this continues until all suggestions are added to the plenary list).

6.2.2: Do's and don'ts of listening	
DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face the speaker - Body language: focus towards the speaker - Posture: open posture (straight shoulders, arms open, e.g. resting in your lap), relaxed yet attentive - Give signs of encouragement: nod, make affirmative sounds, make occasional eye contact (if appropriate) - If you are moved by what you are hearing, it is ok to show that you are touched (facial expression) - but show <u>empathy</u> - Etcetera (group to supplement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look away - Body language: turn your back towards the speaker or make any other movement away from the speaker - Posture: closed / withholding posture (shoulders forward, arms folded) - Give signs of disapproval, judgment, discouragement or even boredom (yawning, sighing etcetera) - Cry uncontrollably or show other signs of <u>sympathy</u> - Etcetera (group to supplement)

6.2.3: Empathy means: the power to submerge oneself into the feeling of others; putting oneself in someone's shoes, in a way as to really feel what he/she experienced.

6.2.4: Sympathy means: an emotional affinity in which whatever affects one correspondingly affects the other, and its synonym is pity.⁷

6.3: The art of listening

6.3.1: Hear what people are really saying⁸

Tips for active or empathetic listening, helping you to ensure that you hear the other person, and that the other person knows you are hearing what he or she is saying.

⁷ www.wikipedia.org

⁸ Sources: www.mindtools.com / www.sfhelp.org

1. Pay attention.
Give the speaker your undivided attention and acknowledge the message. Recognize that what is not said also speaks loudly.
 - Look at the speaker directly.
 - Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
 - Avoid being distracted by environmental factors.
 - "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
 - Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.
2. Show that you are listening.
Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.
 - Nod occasionally.
 - Smile and use other facial expressions.
 - Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
 - Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like *yes*, and *uh huh*.
3. Provide feedback.
Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said (hearing check). This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions. From time to time when the speaker pauses...
 - briefly (use a few words or a phrase, at most);
 - in your own words (avoid parroting theirs);
 - Summarize the essence of what you believe they're thinking, feeling emotionally and/or physically, and needing,...
 - Without questions, comments, or solutions (this is the hard part!).
4. Be non-judgemental.
Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.
 - Allow the speaker to finish.
 - Don't interrupt with counterarguments.
5. Respond appropriately.
Active or empathetic listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.
 - Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
 - Assert your opinions respectfully.
 - Treat the other person as he or she would want to be treated.

Unlike saying "I hear you" and "I understand," empathic listening *demonstrates* whether you comprehend what the speaker thinks, feels, and needs. This...

minimizes misunderstandings. At the same time, listening empathically...

may help the *speaker* clarify their ideas, emotions, and needs, as they hear your periodic non-judgemental summaries.

6.3.2: Guidelines for responding⁹

- Give subtle signals (verbal and nonverbal) that you are listening and following the flow of what is said
- Ask questions sparingly and use mostly the open-ended type
- Never appear to interview the person
- Address the content (especially feelings) of what you hear without applying judgements
- Focus on responding to what the person is really saying or asking. Do not hijack the conversation by going off into your own interests and agenda.

6.3.3: Closed question: is a question to which the answer is limited to yes/no or very few options (fixed category answers).

Examples:

Do you like ugali?

What do you prefer, ugali or rice?

6.3.4: Open-ended question: is a question that invites to give an elaborate answer, beyond a fixed category. Note that the length of the answer and the level of detail may vary – asking the right question is an art in itself.

Examples:

What is your favourite food? (*leading possibly to a very short answer*)

Why do you like ugali? (*leading possibly to a lengthier answer*)

Note to the trainer: When explaining about closed and open-ended questions, you can interact with the audience by asking them to give an example of each question instead of using the examples as given above.

⁹ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:
"Supportive communication" (module 3 of Community-based psychological support)

Group work: Co-counselling

This exercise will help practise listening techniques and will provide a good illustration of the value of active (focussed) listening.

- Group participants two by two.
- One participant gets two minutes to share a personal story, while the other listens.
- After two minutes, roles change.
- Each of the listening partners should practise active listening, though feedback should be restricted until the end of the two minutes when the listener gives a brief summary.
- After the sharing, both partners give each other encouragement.
- The group comes back to plenary and participants randomly reflect on their feelings and experience: what was it like while he/she was sharing?

6.4: How to get people to share and talk

6.4.1: A three-step model

Step 1: provide SAFE SPACE

→ Feeling of safety will encourage the victims to open up and reveal details of their ordeal: provide unrestricted space for participants to share their stories.

Step 2: involve trauma sufferers in CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

→ Listen attentively, respectfully and compassionately; this will help them share their stories.

Step 3: LISTEN ACTIVELY

→ Active listening allows one to understand and empathize, facilitates reconnection with one's social environment and helps the victim to restore his/her place in society.

6.4.2: Tips for providing safe space

- Include basic values in the ground rules that are formulated at the beginning of a meeting / workshop / training session:
 - o Respect
 - o Confidentiality
 - o Commitment
 - o The meeting venue being a *sacred space* (“*all that is told here stays between the walls of this room; feel free to share from the bottom of your heart*”)
- Be accurate in keeping the rules: do not hesitate to correct participants whose behaviour does not reflect the ground rules (especially during the session when trauma stories are shared).

- Availability: give the participants the feeling that you are available for them even after training hours. This will give them a sense of reassurance.
- Open up yourself: do not be afraid to show your vulnerability and share your own traumatic experiences. Be a real *wounded healer*.
- Honesty: be genuine and keep your promises. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

6.5: Giving and receiving feedback

6.5.1: Room for improvement

Giving and receiving feedback is an essential part of the communication process. It is used to check whether you have been understood like you intended; or to test if you understood correctly what has been communicated to you.

In that way, feedback is a continuous process in which most people participate unaware - and often it is given nonverbal, e.g. nodding with your head, looking puzzled, etcetera.

In a broader sense, feedback is a way to let people know how successful they are in what they are trying to accomplish. It will give them guidelines on how to continue and what needs to be improved.

Feedback should never be meant as a personal attack, criticism or disapproval. When it is provided in a constructive and consistent way, it can be very useful to its receiver.

6.5.2: Delivery of feedback ¹⁰	
Negative ways	Positive ways
<i>Attacking</i> hard-hitting and aggressive, focusing on the weaknesses of the other person	<i>Supportive</i> delivered in a non-threatening and encouraging manner
<i>Indirect</i> feedback is vague and issues hinted at rather than addressed directly	<i>Direct</i> the focus of the feedback is clearly stated
<i>Insensitive</i> little concern for the needs of the other person	<i>Sensitive</i> delivered with sensitivity to the needs of the other person
<i>Disrespectful</i> feedback is demeaning, bordering on insulting	<i>Considerate</i> feedback is intended not to insult or demean
<i>Judgemental</i> feedback is evaluative, judging personality rather than behaviour	<i>Descriptive</i> focuses on behaviour that can be changed, rather than personality
<i>General</i> aimed at broad issues which cannot be easily defined	<i>Specific</i> feedback is focused on specific behaviours or events

¹⁰ www.bristol.ac.uk

Negative ways	Positive ways
<i>Poor timing</i> given long after the prompting event, or at the worst possible time	<i>Good timing</i> given as close to the prompting event as possible and at an opportune time
<i>Impulsive</i> given thoughtlessly, with little regard for the consequences	<i>Thoughtful</i> well considered rather than impulsive
<i>Selfish</i> feedback meets the giver's needs, rather than the needs of the other person	<i>Helpful</i> feedback is intended to be of value to the other person

6.5.3: Tips for giving feedback

- Use personal statements (use "I" statements) that reflect your views and rely on description of:
 - o The problem or situation
 - o Your feelings about the issue
 - o The reason for the concern.
- Be very careful with advice; often, the best help is assisting the person to come to a better understanding of their issue, how it developed, and how they can identify actions to address the issue more effectively.
- Always be aware of your own biases and prejudices.

6.5.4: Receiving feedback ¹¹	
Negative ways	Positive ways
<i>Defensive</i> defends personal actions, frequently objects to feedback given	<i>Open</i> listens without frequent interruption or objections
<i>Attacking</i> verbally attacks the feedback giver, and turns the table	<i>Responsive</i> willing to hear what is being said without turning the table
<i>Denies</i> refutes the accuracy or fairness of the feedback	<i>Accepting</i> accepts the feedback without denial
<i>Disrespectful</i> devalues the speaker, what the speaker is saying, or the speaker's right to give feedback	<i>Respectful</i> recognises the value of what is being said and the speaker's right to say it
<i>Closed</i> ignores the feedback, listening blankly without interest	<i>Engaged</i> interacts appropriately with the speaker, asking for clarification where needed
<i>Inactive listening</i> makes no attempt to 'hear' or understand the meaning of the feedback	<i>Active listening</i> listens carefully and tries to understand the meaning of the feedback
<i>Rationalizing</i> finds explanations for the feedback that dissolve any personal responsibility	<i>Thoughtful</i> tries to understand the personal behaviour that has led to the feedback
<i>Patronizing</i> listens, but shows little interest	<i>Interested</i> is genuinely interested in getting feedback

¹¹ www.bristol.ac.uk

Negative ways	Positive ways
<p><i>Superficial</i> listens and agrees, but gives the impression that the feedback will have little effect</p>	<p><i>Sincere</i> genuinely wants to make personal changes if appropriate</p>

6.6: Dealing with sensitive context and information

6.6.1: Not the facts, but the emotions

When it comes to experiencing trauma, it is often not the facts that account for the intense feeling of loss, panic and pain, but the underlying emotions.

In contrast, when sharing trauma, many people stick to the bare facts, giving an aloof story, as if it did not happen to *them* but to someone else. Reading the underlying emotions is crucial in helping to heal trauma successfully.

At the same time, the caregiver (or you as a facilitator) is exposed to the most horrendous stories. Much of the narrative shared is very sensitive. These guidelines will help you with your own behaviour and attitude when dealing with sensitive information, in a sensitive context.

6.6.2: Basic principles of ethical conduct¹²

- Do not harm.
- Be trustworthy and follow through on your words with appropriate deeds.
- Never exploit your relationship.
- Respect a person's right to make his/her own decisions.
- Never exaggerate your skills or competence.

6.6.3: Dealing with sensitive issues

- Try to hear what the speaker is *really* saying and what feelings are being expressed
- Do not deny or belittle the other's feelings ("*Oh, that is nothing to worry about*" and likewise sentences) - each traumatic reaction needs to be treated as valid, irrespective of how the event that induced it is viewed
- Stay cool: do not overreact or jump to conclusions. Be calm and keep your emotions in check. Although it is ok to show empathy, the other is mainly looking for comfort and understanding, and not waiting for a reaction that will only aggravate his/her own feelings

¹² International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: "Supportive communication" (module 3 of Community-based psychological support)

- Maintain confidentiality - only share the stories you have heard with others in public (this means: outside the room where the training/meeting took place) with explicit consent of the speaker(s)

Self-reflection & group discussion: Tribalism

This exercise is to illustrate just how sensitive some issues are.

First, answer this question for yourself while preparing your training/meeting:
How would you deal with tribalist remarks that would be expressed while sharing trauma stories?

Then, during the training/meeting, ask the group/audience:
How would they deal with tribalist remarks?

Appoint one reporter, who will note the steps to be taken (as agreed unanimously by the audience) on a flipchart.

6.6.4: Finally: do not forget about yourself!

Hearing trauma stories is as heavy and as emotionally draining as being a trauma witness. Suffering from vicarious or secondary trauma (trauma experienced by the caretaker) is a serious reality that can happen to you too. You should therefore take very good care of yourself. Chapter five *Care for the caregiver* will further elaborate on this.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING GOOD MEETINGS

BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONTENT

- Ideas of how to organize good meetings
- Factors to consider in organizing trauma management sessions
- Facilitation - guiding an event through to a successful conclusion
- Breaking the ice
- Energizers - recharging the battery

At the end of this session participants should be able to:

- brainstorm on their experiences of good and bad meetings
- have identified factors that contribute to good meetings in their own contexts
- consider how trauma sessions differ from other regular meetings

Moreover participants should be:

- empowered as facilitators with tools that will make their trainings/workshops/meetings more interactive and professional, with a high level of contribution by the participants

Group discussion: Reflection of good meetings

In discussions of three reflect on meetings you consider to have been successful in the community. What are the elements that made the meeting successful?

Appoint one reporter, who will note the steps to be taken (as agreed unanimously by the audience) on a flipchart.

7.1: The following are ideas on how to organize successful community meetings and forums.

1. Plan meetings early before meeting date.
2. Consult with others e.g. in a small committee on how to handle the meeting
3. Give adequate time for people to participate.
4. Consider the time when people would be most available to participate
5. Consider the location. Choose location that are within reach of attendants and do not create a conflict of interest.
6. Publicize to ensure good attendance of the specific target group.
7. Identify ways of increasing attendants of the target group. E.g. ask someone to come with a neighbor.
8. In a public forum (where the target is not exclusive e.g. a youth or elders group), ensure the meeting is as inclusive as possible.
9. Follow up on meetings to receive feedback on the results of the meeting.

What other ideas do you have to share on how to make meetings successful?

7.2: Factors to consider when holding community meetings on trauma.

1. Trauma of any kind whether personal or relating the stories of others is often stressful to the narrator as well as the listener. Victimization in the hands of another human being often carries with it a sense of shame and humiliation which is difficult to relay as well as listen to.
2. Sometimes it may be culturally inappropriate for people to express pain in public or in the presence of youth or women. It is therefore necessary to consider the audience and the cultural context of the forums. For instance, it may be better to hold separate meetings for men and women or for different ethnic groups first before bringing them together.

3. The organizers of trauma forums must be prepared for the possibility of the meeting agenda shifting because of the experiences of participants. They should also be prepared for emotional outbursts which they must handle in a way that provides support to all involved. It is on such a basis that trauma forums should be organized with the support of a good number of individuals to support the facilitation of the events in the course meetings.

Tips & tricks for the Facilitator

7.3: Guiding an event through to a successful conclusion¹³

7.3.1: The difference between success and failure

So you have been asked to facilitate a training, workshop or meeting. What does that mean exactly? Do you just ensure everyone's introduced, and maybe kick off with a quick ice breaker exercise? Is your main role simply to stand by the flip chart and note down all the ideas? What preparation do you need to do? How do you manage the event, and how exactly do you pull the whole thing together?

Good facilitation can make the difference between success and failure.

As a facilitator, you may need to call on a wide range of skills and tools, from problem solving and decision making, to team management and communications.

7.3.2: What is a facilitator?

The definition of facilitate is "to make easy" or "ease a process".

What a facilitator does is *plan, guide and manage* a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking, good participation and full buy-in from everyone who is involved.

To facilitate effectively, you must be objective. You focus purely on the group process. Your key responsibility as a facilitator is to create this group process and an environment in which it can flourish, and so help the group reach a successful decision, solution or conclusion.

7.3.3: Group process: is the approach used to manage discussions, get the best from all members, and bring the event through to a successful conclusion. How you design this depends on many factors (a little more detail will follow later). The secret of great facilitation is a group process that flows - and with it will flow the group's ideas, solutions, and decisions too.

¹³ www.mindtools.com

7.3.4: What does a facilitator do?

To facilitate an event well, you must first understand the desired outcome, and the background and context of the meeting or event. The bulk of your responsibility is then to:

- * Design and plan the group process, and select the tools that best help the group progress towards that outcome.
- * Guide and control the group process to ensure that:
 - There is effective participation;
 - Participants achieve a mutual understanding;
 - Their contributions are considered and included in the ideas, solutions or decisions that emerge;
 - Participants take shared responsibility for the outcome.
- * Ensure that outcomes, actions and questions are properly recorded and actioned, and appropriately dealt with afterwards.

7.3.4.1: Design and Plan

With the objective firmly in mind, preparation for the meeting or event is all-important. Your job is to choose and design the right group process (es), and develop an effective agenda for the occasion.

Two key aspects of the design and planning are 1. choosing the right group process, and 2. Designing a realistic agenda.

1. Choose and design the group process

There are as many ways to design a group process as there are events to facilitate. It is quite an art! Here are some of the just some of the factors and options to consider:

- * Do you want an open discussion, or a structured process? An open discussion, well facilitated, may be the simplest option for your group process. But ask yourself whether you will be able to achieve the participation you need, and manage the discussion with the number of participants involved with this format. Can you cover the variety of topics needed? Can you generate enough ideas and solutions? And can you involve everyone, and get their buy-in?
- * What structured process should you choose? If you need to accommodate participation from a large group, consider smaller "break-out" groups. Are you concerned about getting enough participation? Then give people time in the agenda to think about and write down the things they want to contribute. If you want to get ideas flowing, then consider including a brainstorming session.

- * Other factors to consider
You will not be able to change some constraints. However, you may be able to change others to optimize your process and agenda. As part of this, consider:
 - The number of participants;
 - The nature of the topics under discussion;
 - The type of involvement people need to have;
 - The background and positions of the participants;
 - How well they know the subject. and each other; and
 - The time you have available.

Remember, whatever group process you define, it is a question of keeping your focus on outcomes. Find the best way to achieve the objectives of the overall event.

2. Designing a realistic agenda

Designing the agenda goes hand in hand with designing the group process. As you iterate between designing the process and designing the agenda, the event starts to take shape. Among the factors to consider when planning the agenda are:

- * In what order should the topics be presented?
- * How will participants get to know each other?
- * How will they gain a common understanding of the objectives?
- * If an event is to be broken into separate sessions, how much time should be allocated to each item?
- * Will all participants be involved each session?
- * Or will some be in smaller, break-out groups?
- * How and when will break-out groups' feed back to the wider group?
- * When will you recap and summarize?
- * How will the outcomes of one session flow into the next?
- * How will you achieve closure of the overall event?

By the end of the design and planning stage, you should have a solid agenda, which focuses on outcomes, and provides a good flow and structure for the event.

Other design and planning considerations

In addition to process and agenda, you should also consider the following:

- * Information and materials - What do participants need to know before or at the event? How will this be provided and when?
- * Room arrangements - What room set-up will best encourage participation? Are separate rooms needed for break out groups?
- * Supplies - What supplies and props do you need? Pens, flip charts, notebooks are just the starters - make sure you have everything you need for the agenda and process you have

planned. Pay extra attention to special props needed for group exercises (like candles for the closure of the trauma sharing).

With the agenda and group process in place, it is time to think about how you will guide and control the proceedings. There is still some preparation to do for this, and then there is the whole business of guiding and controlling the event itself.

7.3.4.2: Guide and Control

The final stage of preparation is to think about how you will guide and control the meeting. This is where you prepare the ground rules for the event, polish your facilitation skills, and also consider some what-if scenarios: What if people do not open up? What if a solution does not emerge? and so on.

At the meeting itself, as facilitator, you will set the scene and ensure that participants are clear about the desired outcome, the agenda, the ground rules and expectations for the event. At the start of the meeting, and throughout, your role is to ensure the meeting keeps progressing towards a successful outcome.

To guide and control the meeting, you will need to:

- * Set the ground rules - What rules should participants follow in the meeting? How will people interact? How will you ensure that people respect each others ideas? How will questions be handled? How will sessions be opened and closed (Word of Prayer?)? You will have prepared some ground rules in advance, but ask the participants for their contributions at the start of the event. If rules that are essential in your view do not result from the group, you should suggest them.
- * Set the scene - Here, you will run through the objectives and agenda. Make sure everyone understands their role, and what the event is seeking to achieve.
- * Get things flowing - You will make sure everyone introduces themselves, or perhaps use appropriate icebreakers to get the meeting off to a positive start.
- * Keep up the momentum and energy - You might need to intervene as the proceedings and energy levels proceed. Make sure people remain focused and interested. (If energy levels are beginning to flag, perhaps it is time to take a break? Or introduce an energizer?)
- * Listen, engage and include - Even though, as facilitator, you are taking a neutral stance, you need to stay alert, listen actively, and remain interested and engaged. This sets a good example for other participants, and also means you are always ready to intervene in

- facilitative ways. Is everyone engaged? If not, how can you bring them in? How can you get better participation?
- * Monitor checkpoints, and summarize - Keep in control of the agenda, tell people what they have achieved and what is next; Summarize often. At the same time, allow for some flexibility in the agenda. Sharing trauma stories does not keep time; this especially is a session that should be going with the flow, in utmost concentration of everyone, without breaks or energizers.

To keep the event flowing and positive:

- * Watch for and close any side conversations. These limit the ability of others to focus, and often people are exchanging ideas that should be brought to the group.
- * Keep a close eye on the timing. Be flexible, and balance the need for participation with the need to keep things running efficiently.
- * Learn what to do when a discussion is not reaching a natural conclusion. Is more information needed? When and how will the discussion proceed? Park topics that cannot be concluded, and ensure that action time is scheduled to address these issues.
- * Be on the lookout for people who are not participating fully. Are they experiencing discomfort? What is the source of the discomfort? What can you do to bring them into the conversation?
- * Pay attention to group behavior, both verbal and non-verbal. Some of the most damaging behavior is silent, so know how to spot it and stop it effectively.
- * Step in and mediate immediately if there are obvious personal attacks. Effective facilitators look for the least intrusive intervention first, so reminding everyone of the ground rules is often a good place to start. Whatever the issue, you can not allow bad behaviour to continue so be prepared to take the steps necessary to stop attacks.

7.3.4.3: Record and Action

Last but not least among the responsibilities of a facilitator is the recording of outputs, and of bringing these together, sharing them, and making sure they are actioned.

The key to successful recording of outputs from an event is to be clear about what will be recorded, how and by whom. Make sure people's responsibilities are 100% clear, whether they are yours or others' involved.

When you are recording and actioning, here are some things to remember:

- * You are responsible for making sure the participants hear, see, and understand the information that is presented and offered. Make

- sure you keep an accurate record of what is going on. If in doubt, record now and summarize later.
- * Try to use words that the group chooses, and when in doubt, ask them to provide the words for you to record.
 - * Ensure all decisions and actions are recorded. You may want to use a scribe to do this, so that you can stay focused on the group and the process.
 - * As you record decisions and actions, check with the group that the information you are recording is a fair and accurate reflection of what has been discussed.
 - * Remind the group what has been discussed, and keep them focused and moving forward.
 - * If in doubt, ask for clarification before the discussion moves on.
 - * Make sure that responsibility for, and commitment to, action, is obtained and recorded when necessary.
 - * After the event, follow up to ensure that outstanding actions and issues are progressed, and that the proceedings are brought to a successful conclusion.

7.3.4.4: Key points

To be an effective facilitator you must know when to take a leadership role, and when to be neutral and take a back seat. This is a difficult balance to maintain! The key to being proficient in the role is to plan and guide the proceedings effectively, and remain focused on the group process and outcomes, rather than specific content and opinions involved.

7.4: Breaking the ice¹⁴

7.4.1: Getting everyone to contribute at the start of a successful event

Ice breakers can be an effective way of starting a training session or team-building event. As interactive and often fun sessions run before the main proceedings, they help people get to know each other and buy into the purpose of the event.

If an ice breaker session is well-designed and well-facilitated, it can really help get things off to a great start. By getting to know each other, getting to know the facilitators and learning about the objectives of the event, people can become more engaged in the proceedings and so contribute more effectively towards a successful outcome.

As a facilitator, the secret of a successful icebreaking session is to keep it simple: design the session with specific objectives in mind and make sure the session is appropriate and comfortable for everyone involved.

¹⁴ Sources: www.mindtools.com / www.meetingenergizers.com

7.4.2: When to use ice breakers

As the name suggests, an ice breaker session is designed to “break the ice” at an event or meeting. The technique is often used when people who do not usually work together, or may not know each other at all, meet for a specific, common purpose.

Consider using an ice breaker when:

- * Participants come from different backgrounds;
- * People need to bond quickly so as to work towards a common goal;
- * The topics you are discussing are new or unfamiliar to many people involved;
- * As facilitator you need to get to know participants and have them know you better.

7.4.3: So what’s the “Ice”?

When designing your ice breaker, think about the “ice” that needs to be broken.

If you are bringing together like-minded people, the “ice” may simply reflect the fact that people have not yet met.

If you are bringing together people of different standing from your community for an open discussion, the “ice” may come from the difference in status between participants.

If you are bringing together people of different backgrounds, cultures and communities, then the “ice” may come from people’s perceptions of each other.

You will need to handle these differences sensitively. It is always best to focus on similarities (rather than differences), such as a shared interest in the event’s outcome.

7.4.4: Designing your ice breaker

The key to a successful ice breaker is to make sure the ice breaker is specifically focused on meeting your objectives and appropriate to the group of people involved.

Once you have established what the “ice” is, the next step is to clarify the specific objectives for your ice breaker session.

For example, when organizing a trauma awareness workshop, the ice breaker objectives may be:

“To establish a safe space, an atmosphere of confidentiality and a productive working environment for the event with full participation from everyone involved, where people feel respected and safe enough to share their (traumatic) experiences.”

With clear objectives, you can start to design the session. Ask yourself questions about how you will meet your objectives. For example:

“How will people become comfortable with contributing?” “How will you create an atmosphere of confidentiality?” ...and so on. These questions can be used as a check list once you have designed the ice breaker session.

7.4.5: Examples of ice breakers

There are many types of ice breakers, each suited to different types of objectives.

Introductory ice breakers

Introductory ice breakers are used to introduce participants to each other and to facilitate conversation amongst the participants.

* The Little Known Fact

Ask participants to share their name, background (i.e. the area they hail from or the organisation they represent), their expectations of the event and one little known fact about themselves.

This "little known fact" becomes a humanizing element that can help break down differences such as status in future interaction.

* Hot Seat

A variation on the previous ice breaker.

Each participant will introduce him/herself to the group, telling their name, background, their expectations of the event and the answer to one common question, like what their hobby is.

In addition, the audience can be allowed to ask ONE 'free' question on any topic.

This free question will promote interaction in the audience, while at the same time it will require them to agree on who gets to ask this free question.

* True or False

Ask your participants to introduce themselves and make three or four statements about themselves, one of which is false. Now get the rest of the group to vote on which fact is false.

As well as getting to know each other as individuals, this ice breaker helps to start interaction within the group.

* Interviews

Ask participants to get into pairs. Each person then interviews his or her partner for a set time while paired up. After this, roles change and the interviewer becomes interviewee. When both partners have been interviewed, the group reconvenes and each person introduces their interviewee to the rest of the group.

* Who's Who?

Before the meeting, write all of the participants' names on nametags, and then put them into a box at the front of the room. Have everyone pick one tag. When everyone has a tag, have them find the person whose nametag they drew, and briefly introduce themselves. After everyone is sorted out, have each participant introduce the person whose nametag they had drawn.

* List of Qualities

This is an ice breaker that can be used in a group of people who already know each other. Each participant sticks a piece of paper to his/her back. All the other participants write a (true!) statement about this person's qualities on the paper. For instance: A good listener. When everybody has contributed to all the papers on the back of all the participants, it is time to share the List of Qualities in the group. Each List will be read out loud. This ice breaker will help to build the participants' confidence, as well as stimulate their own (positive) contribution to the event.

* Longest Lists

Divide the participants into small groups. Have each group pick one person to do the writing, and then have the groups make lists.

Pick one topic - (African) countries, movies shot in Kenya (or Africa), songs with the word blue in the title, anything that you think will have several responses, but make sure they only make lists and do not take up time discussing the topic. The team with the longest list wins.

This activity can get the group ready for an effective brainstorming session, but it is also good just as an icebreaker to get everyone thinking and participating.

* Notable Quotes

Find a variety of quotations or proverbs and write them on index cards. As the group enters the room, ask your participants to pick one at random. When you are ready to start your ice breaker, sort them into small groups or pairs and have them discuss what their quote means to them. Ask your groups or pairs to vote on which was their favorite quote, then have them share that quote with the group at large. You might want to provide a random mix of quotes that will generate conversation, or you could try to pick quotes that are relevant to the topic of the meeting or helpful for facilitating people getting to know one another.

Teambuilding ice breakers

Teambuilding ice breakers are used to bring together individuals who are in the early stages of team building. This can help the people start working together more cohesively towards shared goals or plans.

* The Human Web

This ice breaker focuses on how people in the group inter-relate and depend on each other.

The facilitator begins with a ball of yarn. Keeping one end, pass the ball to one of the participants, and the person to introduce him/herself. Once this person has made their introduction, ask him or her to pass the ball of yarn on to another person in the group. The person handing over the ball must describe how he/she relates (or expects to relate) to the other person. The process continues until everyone is introduced.

To emphasize the interdependencies amongst the team, the facilitator then pulls on the starting thread and everyone's hand should move.

Topic exploration ice breakers

Topic exploration ice breakers can be used to explore the topic at the outset, or perhaps to change pace and re-energize people during the event.

* Word association

This ice breaker helps people explore the breadth of the area under discussion. Generate a list of words related to the topic of your event or training. For example, in a trauma awareness workshop, ask participants what words or phrases come to mind relating to "trauma". Write all suggestions on the board, perhaps clustering by theme. You can use this opportunity to introduce essential terms and discuss the scope (what's in and what's out) of your training or event.

* Burning questions

This ice breaker gives each person the opportunity to ask key questions they hope to cover in the event or training. Again you can use this opportunity to discuss key terminology and scope. Be sure to keep the questions and refer back to them as the event progresses and concludes.

Final Tip!

Use your own and the group's creativity, as many of these ice breakers can also be used as Energizers - sometimes with a little adjustment.

7.5: Energizers – recharging the battery¹⁵

Keep going

Have you ever been in a meeting and your mind was slipping away? Or, worse still, you had trouble to stay awake and not doze off?

Those moments are the perfect time for energizers!

7.5.1: When to use energizers

- * When the attention and focus of the group is slipping away (how to notice? either you receive nonverbal signs from your participants while lecturing, or the level of responses and contributions drops dramatically during an interactive session)
- * To break (give some breathing space) in the middle of a long and complicated session, especially when there is little interactivity in that session (note: breaking is absolutely not done during the trauma sharing session, no matter how long that session takes)
- * To help everyone drop one topic and move on to the next
- * To introduce a new topic
- * To help everyone re-focus after a coffee break or lunch

7.5.2: Designing energizers

The secret to the success of many energizers is that they give the audience an opportunity to do something totally different for a change.

In case participants have to sit calmly and listen as you are lecturing, by contrast the ideal energizer should be very loud and physical, giving them a chance to unwind and recharge their batteries at the same time.

Designing energizers is not that difficult – just bear in mind that you need a contrasting activity and that it must be something that all your participants can engage in. The activity should be quick, easy explainable and understandable.

Tip: Many of the games you played as a youngster might be perfect as energizers!

7.5.3: Checklist for energizers

- * Contrast activity
- * Opportunity to unwind
- * Fun! Lots of laughter recharges everyone's battery
- * Suitable for all participants
- * Easy to explain and understand
- * Timeframe: no longer than 5-10 minutes in total

¹⁵ Sources: www.meetingenergizers.com / humanresources.about.com / www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com / www.wilderdom.com

7.5.4: Examples of energizers

* In Line

Give each person a small piece of paper with a different number written on it. Have the participants arrange themselves in order without writing, talking or showing their numbers. To make it more challenging, you can pick numbers that are not consecutive.

Alternatively, let the participants arrange themselves according to the following criteria:

- Alphabetical by best friend's first name
- Alphabetical according to favourite food
- Length of hair
- Shoe size
- Length of thumb

* Five of Anything

Divide the meeting participants into groups of four or five people by having them number off. (You do this because people generally begin a meeting by sitting with the people they already know best.)

Tell the newly formed groups that their assignment is to share their five favourite movies of all time, or their five favourite dishes, or their five least liked foods, and so forth. The topic can be five of anything - most liked or disliked. This activity helps the group explore shared interests more broadly and sparks lots of discussion about why each person likes or dislikes their selected five.

You can also use this activity for topical discussion. As an example, in a session on trauma symptoms, you might ask, "What are five physical symptoms of trauma?" Tell the groups that one person must take notes and be ready to share the highlights of their group discussion with the whole group upon completion of the assignment.

Debrief the activity by asking for a volunteer to read their list of five of anything. Or ask the volunteer to list any movies, for example, that more than one person had in common and shared as their favourite. Then, ask each group to share their whole list with the whole group.

Because people are almost always your best source for laughter and fun, the reading of the lists generates a lot of laughter and discussion. You can also catch the drift of the conversation in the small groups based on the transitions made from item to item.

When the volunteer from each group is finished, ask the rest of the participants if they have anything they would like to add to the discussion before moving on with the rest of the session.

* Knots of People

Divide the group into teams of 8 to 12 members. Have each person join right hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right. Then have each person join left hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right and someone other than before.

Now the groups have to untangle themselves without letting go of hands. They may have to loosen their grips a little to allow for twisting and turning. They may have to step over or under other people. The first group to untangle their knot is the winner.

Please note: There are four possible solutions to the knot

- One large circle with people facing either direction.
- Two interlocking circles.
- A figure eight.
- A circle within a circle.

* Animal Scramble

There is some preparation for this activity. On a slip of paper, write the name of an animal that makes an obvious noise. Create five to ten slips for each animal.

Give each participant a slip of paper, but tell them to keep their animal a secret. The participants are to find the rest of their kind, but there is no talking. So how do they find the others? They have to make the noise of the animal. Once two of the same kind have found each other, they stay together to find more. Continue until all of the like animals have created one big group.

Alternatively, add a hint of danger by planting a couple of danger animals who if incorrectly approached can take you out of the game (snake, lion, etc). The last survivor of non-dangerous animals is winner. (Non-dangerous animals need to gather say 4 of a kind to be safe in a pack; they can even fake being a dangerous animal but cannot take out anyone - someone catches onto this and the fun begins!).

* Gotcha!

Participants stand in a circle, arms out to the side. Left hand palm up, right index finger pointing down and touching on their neighbour's outstretched palm.

"When I say the word go, do two things.... grab the finger in your left hand, and prevent your right finger from being grabbed... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... [add suspense] ... Go!".

Repeat several times.

The trick is dramatizing the "Go!", the build up of suspense, and most will jump the gun, adding to the fun.

Try a different trigger word, e.g., "Peace", and mention lots of other "eace" words for humour - cheese, sneeze, please and freeze.