



TRAUMA

**INFORMED
MINISTRY
SERIES**

GUIDEBOOK



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church



TRAUMA

**INFORMED
MINISTRY
SERIES**

SESSION #1
**UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS
OF TRAUMA**



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

Trauma and its effects on our minds, bodies, spirit, communities, nation, generations, and systems is still a blooming area of research and focus.

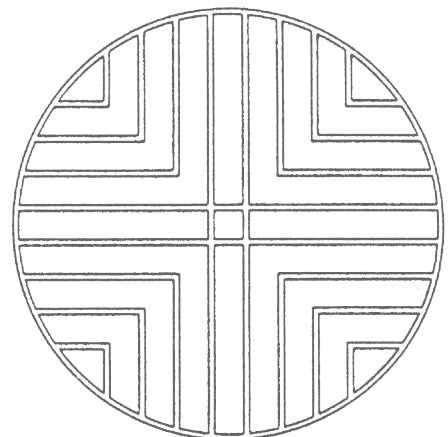
RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

- R** = take **RESPONSIBILITY** for what you say and feel without blaming others
- E** = use **EMPATHETIC** listening
- S** = be **SENSITIVE** to differences in communication styles
- P** = **PONDER** what you hear and feel before you speak
- E** = **EXAMINE** your own assumptions and perceptions
- C** = keep **CONFIDENTIALITY**
- T** = **TRUST** ambiguity, because we are not here to debate who is right or wrong

MUTUAL INVITATION

In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:

1. The leader or a designated person will share first.
2. He or she then invites another to share. Who you invite does not need to be the person next to you.
3. If you are not ready yet, say “pass for now” and then invite another to share.
You will be invited again later.
4. If you don’t want to say anything, simply say “pass” and proceed to invite another to share.
5. After each person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share.
6. We will do this until everyone has been invited



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SESSION #1: UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

(This session will take about 1 hour to complete. Please plan accordingly.)

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, soften our hearts, slow our breathing, and make your presence undeniable in this space. We invite you into this conversation around the harms done to your beloved children. God, we invoke your Spirit to be among us and within us as we learn how trauma affects us and the lives of our sisters and brothers near and far. God, break our hearts for what breaks yours. God, remind us of the healing power and presence you modeled for us in the life of Jesus and strengthen us to be healers in your name. God open our hearts to your healing care and our minds to hear how we can walk alongside your beloved ones even in a world filled with harm and hurt. Be for us hope in the darkness. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL WARM-UP

- Based on what you currently know about trauma, how would you define it? What are some examples of trauma?
- What do you think causes trauma?
- What do you know and believe about trauma? Consider what you know/believe about how trauma happens, the effects of trauma, who experiences trauma, and how recovery from trauma works.
- If you identify as someone who has experienced trauma, name for yourself the traumatic event or circumstances. (You will NOT be asked to share this information, but it is important for us to recognize our own trauma as we seek to serve others effected by trauma)

GROUP WARM-UP

Together review the RESPECTful Guidelines and Mutual Invitation process and recommit to your small group covenant.

- Directions for what to do with the information shared through discussions, impact on how the group leader will facilitate.

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What do you know and believe about trauma?
2. What do you believe about the role of Christians and the Church in responding to trauma in our communities and around the world?
3. What fears or concerns do you have about working with people who have experienced traumatic situations?

THIS SESSION'S VIDEO WILL:

- define trauma and provide examples
- highlight our United Methodist stance on how trauma happens in our world
- discuss types of trauma
- identify adaptive trauma effects

Key concepts from the video are written below in the order in which they are presented. Take time to pause and rewind as necessary while your group watches the video and take notes that will be helpful to you. All the Trauma Informed Ministry (TIM) Series Videos are also available online at <http://www.westohioumc.org/TIM>. Feel free to review them again on your own.

WATCH VIDEO



DEFINING TRAUMA

- Crisis- “an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person’s life” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)
 - Examples: the loss of a job, the death of a loved one, or a natural disaster
- Traumatic stress- Occurs when a person is attempting to deal with a crisis but has insufficient emotional or relational support and internal resources to respond in healthy ways.
- Trauma- a real or perceived threat to one’s life or livelihood or viewing a threat to another person’s life (The Diagnostic Statistical Manual, DSM, 5th Edition)
 - Only the person who has experienced traumatic stress can say if they feel they’ve experienced trauma or been traumatized
 - Trauma disorders, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), are diagnosed by a mental health or medical professional.

EXAMPLES OF TRAUMATIC STRESS

- Violence
 - Gun, intimate partner or domestic, community, hate-based, sex-based violence
 - Violence based on race, ethnicity, culture, orientation, or gender identity
- Abuse and neglect
- Natural disasters or pandemics
- Accidents

THE UNITED METHODIST PERSPECTIVE ON TRAUMA

- “God deplores violence in our homes and streets, rebukes the world’s warring madness, humbles the powerful and lifts up the lowly. And so shall we.” -*The 2016 Book of Discipline*
- The 2016 Book of Discipline & Book of Resolutions presents a call for us to serve families affected by trauma and speaks to eradicating domestic & gun violence, human trafficking, incarceration, separation of migrant families, harm of indigenous people groups, hunger and poverty, health care disparities, and stigmas around mental illness.

TYPES OF TRAUMA

- Acute- one type, one time
- Chronic- one type, multiple times
- Complex- multiple types, multiple times
- Developmental- can be chronic or complex trauma that begins early in life
- Generational- typically chronic or complex trauma that is passed down through generations through thoughts, words, and actions
- Systemic- complex trauma that disproportionately affects populations who are marginalized and oppressed

ADAPTIVE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

- Hypervigilance- the heightened awareness of one’s surroundings
- Intuition- a keen ability to identify the smallest changes in a person (e.g., facial expressions, tones of voice, or body movements)
- Creativity- the ability to conjure up different possible situations and multiple ways to respond to each situation
- Memories- whereas typical memories may change over time, trauma memories are fixed and static
- Isolation- forced or chosen removal of oneself from others

CENTERING EXERCISE

- Did you know, if we breathe deeply, we will only take 12-15 breaths a minute? Did you know that, at any time, the top and bottom rows of our teeth should not touch? Many people go through life in a state of hyperventilating and clenching their jaws. Let's practice deep breathing where we allow our jaw to relax and our breaths to flow in through our nose and out through our mouths. Each breath in and out should last about 4-5 seconds. If it helps, think, "breathe in, 2, 3, breathe out, 2, 3...". As a group practice deep breathing for 2-3 minutes to center before moving into the post-video discussion.

POST-VIDEO GROUP DISCUSSION

- What came up for you while watching the video? Consider your brain, your emotions, and your body responses. Reflect on your thoughts, your feelings, and your body's response while watching the video.
- What information stood out to you from the video? Consider what surprised you, was new information, or confirmed your beliefs around trauma?
- How does this information shift how you view the ministry of your local church, the people in your community, and the role of the Church in our world?
- What will you take with you and use in your ministry? Consider how knowing more about trauma positions you to serve people differently, to ask different questions, to give more grace, or to help you adapt certain ministries or spaces to feel safer for more people.

ACTION STEPS

As a group discuss what action steps you may be able to take after gaining more information on trauma-informed ministry. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **PRAY:** Pray for persons who have experienced trauma to experience the love and acceptance from healing communities on their recovery journey. Pray to be humble enough to listen non-judgmentally and learn from those who have experienced trauma.
- **LEARN:** Learn more about trauma through reading personal narratives or taking a course or workshop.
- **Suggested readings:**
 - *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* by Bessel Van der Kolk
 - *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence- From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* by Judith Herman
 - *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma* by Peter A. Levine
- **CONNECT:** Organize and participate in a healing worship service or support community for those who have experienced a traumatic event
- **PARTNER:** Partner with a local mental health agency to offer a community training on responding to trauma.
- **LEAD:** Lead your congregation toward best practices for serving persons who have experienced trauma by updating your Safe Sanctuaries training to include trauma information.
- **SERVE:** Serve an area in your community where people may have experienced trauma Consider serving in prison settings, shelters or food assistance locations, crisis centers, etc. If you are working with children, consider serving at an animal shelter. Often animals have been abused or neglected which can be a terrific way to teach children about identifying pain or harm in another living being and responding with compassion and care).

PRAY TOGETHER

“God, we acknowledge our complete dependence upon you in birth, in life, in death, and in life eternal. Secure in God’s love we affirm the goodness of life and confess our many sins against God’s will for us as we find it in Jesus Christ. We have not always been faithful stewards of all that has been committed to us by You, our Creator. We have been reluctant followers of Jesus Christ in his mission to bring all persons into a community of love. Though called by the Holy Spirit to become new creatures in Christ, we have resisted the further call to become the people of God in our dealings with each other and the earth on which we live. We affirm our unity in Jesus Christ while acknowledging differences in applying our faith in different cultural contexts as we live out the gospel. We stand united in declaring our faith that God’s grace is available to all, that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.”

— 2016 Book of Discipline, PP 160: Preamble, p. 106



TRAUMA

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SESSION #2

**RECOVERY FROM TRAUMA & CARE FOR
THE TRAUMA-INFORMED FAITH WORKER**



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

SESSION #2:

RECOVERY FROM TRAUMA & CARE FOR THE TRAUMA-INFORMED FAITH WORKER

(This session will take about 1 hour to complete. Please plan accordingly.)

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God, you knew us before we were even born. You knew the pain we would endure in our lives and the harm caused by others. You knew how we would falter in loving ourselves as you have loved us, and how we would struggle to trust others. Creator God, you knew we would hope to change the world for the better, to make meaning out of difficult times, and to connect deeply with others. God, for we who have experienced trauma and who work with persons affected by trauma, we ask for peace, clarity of purpose, and hope. God, we invite you into this space. Spirit, we invite you to move within us. Christ, we invite you to lead us now and in the coming weeks. Remind us of the grace you offer freely and the grace we can grant ourselves because you love us for who we are. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL WARM-UP

1. Based on you what you now know about trauma, has your understanding and belief about it changed?

2. Do you believe people who experience traumatic stress can ever recover? Consider different types and occurrences of trauma (e.g., natural disaster, human trafficking, loss of a loved one).

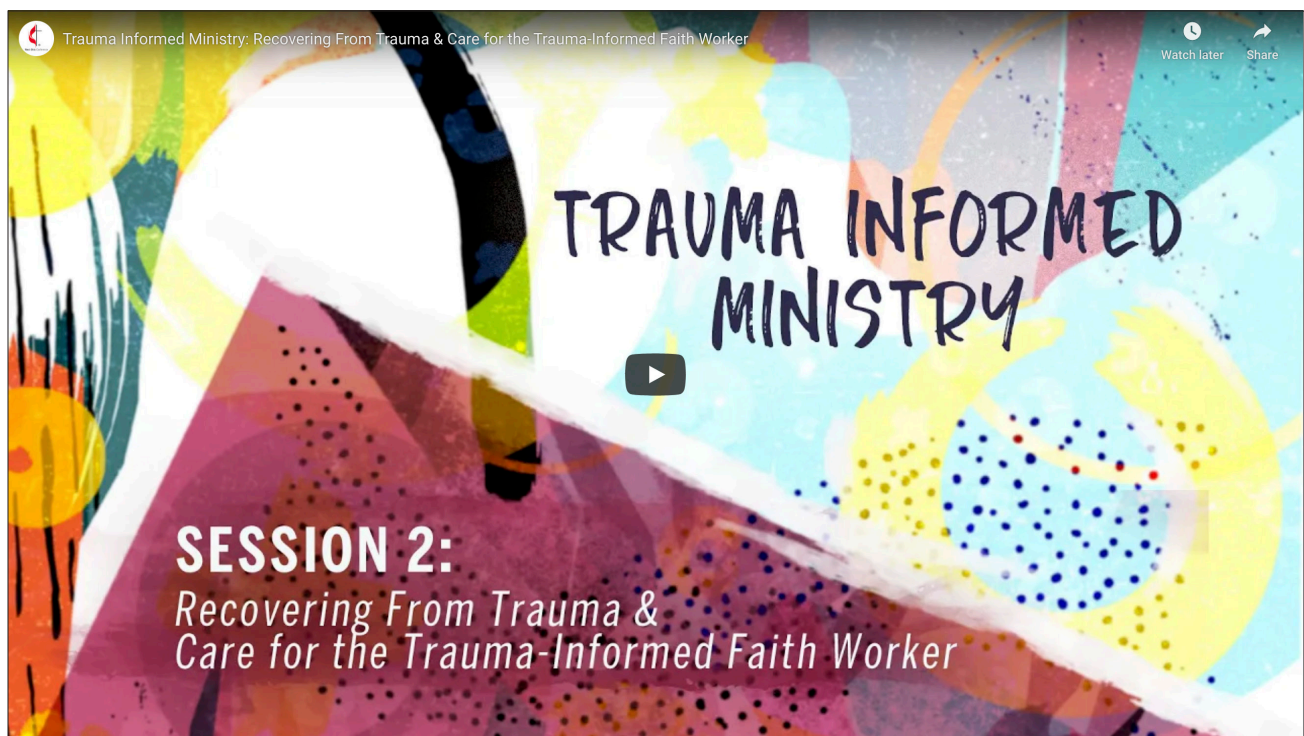
3. If recovery from trauma is possible, what do you think it would take to recover? Consider the type of supports, training, environments, etc. that would need to be present.

4. What might your role and the role of the church be in helping people heal from trauma?

SESSION VIDEO

This session's video will examine what it takes for individuals to seek healing after a traumatic experience(s), how scripture speaks to the healing of trauma, and how to strengthen resilience and post-traumatic growth. Key concepts from the video are written below in the order in which they are presented in the video. Take time to pause and rewind as necessary while your group watches the video and take notes that will be helpful to you. All the Trauma Informed Ministry (TIM) Series videos are also available online at <http://www.westohioumc.org/TIM> if you would like to review them again on your own.

WATCH VIDEO



THE TRAUMA RECOVERY PROCESS INVOLVES:

1. establishing perceived and real safety,
2. reconstructing the trauma narrative, and
3. restoring the connection between survivors and their community.

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLE:

Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Bethzatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

- John 5:2-9, NIV

SCRIPTURAL BREAKDOWN:

- Safety- helping persons recovering from trauma includes knowing they are seen and heard. This requires deep listening where affirmations of their experiences (rather than your personal stories) are shared. Safety also requires that the person recovering from trauma is ready and willing to engage the work of healing. If they're not ready yet, that should be respected by you and your ministries.
 - Trust is imperative.
- Reconstruct trauma story- where a person recovering from trauma accepts a desire to change, as well as, the personal work it will require. When reconstructing a trauma story, an individual will challenge their deeply held beliefs about themselves, their faith in God, and the world in order to develop new beliefs about themselves in the world.
 - Note: Often this work is completed with or in concert with a trained or licensed mental health worker
- Restore connection- where a person recovering from trauma will attempt to trust others again and reconnected with the community

BOUNCING BACK WITH POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

- Resilience- “the ability to bounce back from adverse experiences” or “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress” (<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)
- Post Traumatic Growth (PTG)- creating and experiencing positive outcomes following a traumatic event(s) that may include:
 - a sense of new possibilities
 - change in relationships
 - increased sense of personal strength
 - greater appreciation for life in general, and
 - spiritual/religious awakening/awareness (<https://ptgi.uncc.edu/what-is-ptg/>)

HOW TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE IF/WHEN A PERSON IS READY AND WILLING TO WORK ON THEIR TRAUMA

- Belief systems
 - Making meaning of crisis and challenge
 - Maintaining a positive outlook
 - Valuing transcendence and spirituality
- Organization and resources
 - Being flexible
 - Staying or getting connected
 - Being supported by social and economic resources
- Communication
 - Sharing clear, consistent messages with others
 - Openly expressing emotions
 - Using collaborative problem solving

HOW OTHERS' TRAUMA CAN AFFECT FAITH WORKERS

- Burnout- the physical and emotional exhaustion that workers can experience when they have low job satisfaction and feel powerless and overwhelmed at work
- Compassion fatigue- the profound emotional and physical erosion that takes place when helpers are unable to refuel and regenerate
- Vicarious trauma- the profound shift in worldview that occurs when working with people who have experienced trauma

If you recognize any of these symptoms in yourself or another faith worker while serving, please seek mental health services and additional supports immediately. Remember, even Jesus took time away from the "work" to revive his own spirit. So can you.

CENTERING EXERCISE

Bring to mind a safe space for you- perhaps, a beach, forest, in a house, talking with friends, playing a sport. Focus on the goodness of that space- the things that make you feel safe. Allow your whole body to be filled with the goodness of this safe space. Keep this image in mind while practicing deep breathing for 2-3 minutes. After the group has completed the centering exercise, begin the post-video group discussion.

POST-VIDEO GROUP DISCUSSION

- What came up for you while watching the video? Consider your brain, your emotions, and your body responses. Reflect on your thoughts, your feelings, and your body's response while watching the video.
- What stood out to you from the video in your role as a faith worker? Consider what surprised you, was new information, or confirmed your beliefs around trauma?
- How does this information shift how you view the ministry of your local church, the people in your community, and the role of the Church in our world?
- What will you take with you and use in your ministry? Consider how knowing more about trauma positions you to serve people differently, to ask different questions, to give more grace, or to adapt certain ministries or spaces to feel safer for more people.
- Who, including you, might be showing signs of burnout, compassion fatigue, or vicarious trauma in your church? How might you help them recognize this and begin self-care?

ACTION STEPS

As a group discuss what action steps you may be able to take after gaining more information on trauma-informed ministry. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **PRAY:** Pray for persons who have experienced trauma to experience the love and acceptance from healing communities on their recovery journey. Pray for faith workers who are walking alongside persons affected by trauma.
- **PARTNER:** Partner with a local mental health agency to offer a community training on responding to trauma.
- **LEAD:** Lead a time of self-care, rest, or healing for faith workers serving persons affected by trauma. Provide a space that is safe and restorative for their souls.
- **SERVE:** Serve an area in your community where people may have experienced trauma. Consider serving in prison settings, shelters or food assistance locations, crisis centers, etc. If you are working with children, consider serving at an animal shelter. Often animals have been abused or neglected which can be a terrific way to teach children about identifying pain or harm in another living being and responding with compassion and care.
- **LEARN:** Learn more about preparing to serve others who have experienced trauma through reading personal narratives or taking a course or workshop.
 - Suggested TED talks to prepare your soul:
 - [3 Secrets of Resilient People](#) by Lucy Hone (A TED Talk)
 - [The Power of Emotional Courage](#) by Susan David (A TED Talk)
 - Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky
- **CONNECT:** Organize and participate in a healing worship service or support community for those who have experienced a traumatic event

PRAY TOGETHER

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

- *The Serenity Prayer* by Reinhold Neibur



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SESSION #3
**UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA**



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

SESSION #3: UNDERSTANDING & WORKING WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA

(This session will take about 1 hour to complete. Please plan accordingly.)

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God, you knew us before we were knit together in our mother's wombs. There have been good experiences and bad experiences that have shaped us from conception to who we are now. Thank you for those experiences- for the strength and support needed to survive the difficult days, and the strength and support needed to celebrate the good days. As we learn about developmental trauma remind us of your care for each beloved child of God. Remind us that any person whom we encounter is your beloved and may be carrying invisible wounds from their life. Open our hearts, minds, and ministries to better serve all of God's beloved ones. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL WARM-UP

1. Based on you what you now know about trauma, has your understanding and belief about it changed?

2. How is trauma experienced in the body? Where is trauma "stored" in a person?

3. What might be some signs or symptoms of developmental trauma in a child, young adult, or older adult?

4. What might your role and the role of the church be in healing trauma?

GROUP WARM-UP

Together review the *RESPECTful Guidelines and Mutual Invitation* process and recommit to your small group covenant.

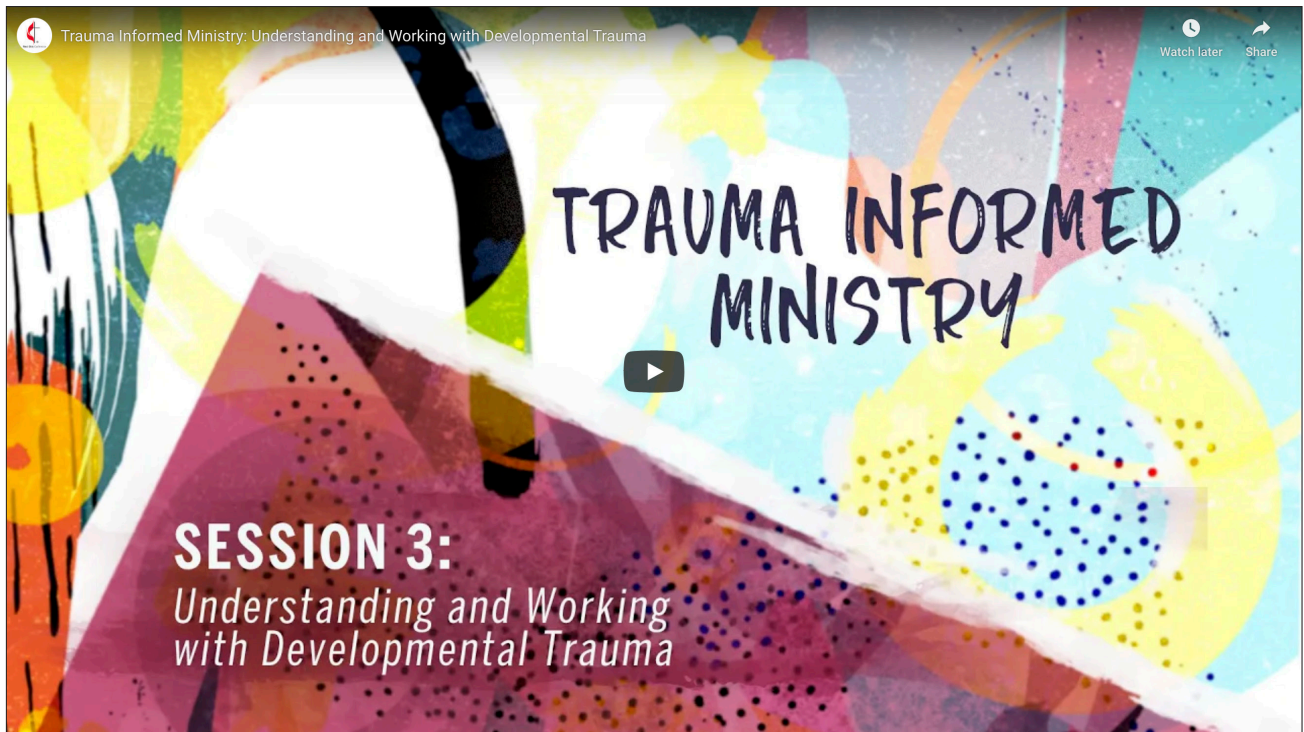
DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. As a group, what is your current understanding and belief about trauma?
2. How is developmental trauma experienced in your current mission field today?
3. Where is trauma stored in the body, and what are some possible signs and symptoms of developmental trauma?
4. What do you believe about the role of Christians and the Church responding to trauma in our communities and around the world?

SESSION VIDEO

This session's video will define developmental trauma, explain effects of trauma on the developing brain, and provide best practices and interventions for working with young persons affected by trauma. Key concepts from the video are written below in the order in which they are presented in the video. Take time to pause and rewind as necessary while your group watches the video and take notes that will be helpful to you. All the Trauma Informed Ministry (TIM) Series videos are also available online at westohioumc.org/TIM if you would like to review them again on your own.

WATCH VIDEO



THE BRAIN DEVELOPS FROM THE BOTTOM UP:

- Brainstem
- Midbrain
- Limbic
- Cortical

UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA:

- Primitive brain (brain stem)
- Limited awareness of senses
- Stuck in survival loop
- Stuck in fight, flight, or freeze
- Cannot identify threats versus safety
- Difficulties accepting nurture or care

WORKING WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA:

- What fires together wires together
- Work on developmental age rather than birth age
- Identify and support a safe and caring trusted adult for the child(ren)
- Provide consistent and predictable patterns of interventions
- Use the same interventions in all aspects of life
- Be curious rather than judgmental about skill deficits
- Help others to learn to bridge skill deficits through modeling

INTERVENTIONS FOR MINISTRY:

- Flip the lid
- Upside down traffic light
- Side-by-side or parallel play

CENTERING EXERCISE

- Before jumping into the post-video group discussion, let's take time to examine what's happening in our brains, bodies, and with our emotions. You are invited to conduct a body scan from your toes to your nose. While practicing deep breathing, starting at your toes and moving slowly up toward your nose, notice what is going on in your body. Notice without judgement:
 - Notice any body sensations- pain, numbness, weight, tightness
 - Notice any thoughts that come up- I feel cold, maybe my shoes are too tight, this exercise is interesting
 - Notice any emotions that come up for you- I realize how exhausted I am, I am feeling sad, I am feeling confused
 - Notice any judgments, emotional blocking, or attempts to get through the exercise quickly. These may signify discomfort with pausing to be aware of your own body, how it feels, and how it is functioning.
- Set a timer for 5 minutes so the group may conduct an individual body scan at their own pace. After the timer has gone off, feel free to reflect on the experience or move directly into the post-video group discussion.

POST-VIDEO GROUP DISCUSSION

- What thoughts, feelings, emotions, or physical responses came up for you while watching the video?

- What stood out to you from the video? Consider what surprised you, what was new information, or what confirmed your understanding around developmental trauma.

- How does this information shift how you view the ministry of your local church, the people in your community, and the role of the Church in our world?

- What will you take with you and use in your ministry? Reflect on how knowing more about trauma can position you to serve people differently, to ask different questions, to give more grace, or to adapt certain ministries or spaces to feel safer for more people.

ACTION STEPS

As a group discuss what action steps you may be able to take after gaining more information on trauma-informed ministry. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **PRAY:** Pray for persons who have experienced trauma to experience the love and acceptance from healing communities on their recovery journey. Pray for children who are currently experience traumatic stress and limited support or resources. Pray for children affected by developmental trauma who are not attempting to function as adults and work through their own traumatic histories. Pray for faith workers who are serving young persons and families in the messiness of trauma.
- **PARTNER:** Partner with a local mental health agency to offer a community training on responding to trauma.
- **LEAD:** Lead your congregation toward best practices for serving persons who have experienced trauma by updating your Safe Sanctuaries training to include trauma information.
- **SERVE:** Serve an area in your community where people may have experienced trauma Consider serving in prison settings, shelters or food assistance locations, crisis centers, etc. If you are working with children, consider serving at an animal shelter. Often animals have been abused or neglected which can be a terrific way to teach children about identifying pain or harm in another living being and responding with compassion and care.
- **LEARN:** Learn more about trauma through reading personal narratives or taking a course or workshop.
 - [How to Teach Brain in the Palm of Hand to Kids](#)
 - Resources from [The Child Trauma Academy](#)
 - Resources from [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
 - Healing Developmental Trauma: How Early Trauma Affects Self-Regulation, Self-Image, and the Capacity for Relationships by Dr. Laurence Heller and Dr. Aline Lapierre
- **CONNECT:** Organize and participate in a healing worship service or support community for those who have experienced a traumatic event

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus loves the little children. All the children of the world. Every color, every race, all are covered by God's grace. Jesus loves the little children of the world. God, help us to see pain and hurt in the lives of your beloved at any age. God, we invoke your Spirit to lead us and guide us on our journey to creating safe space for your beloved children affected by trauma. Amen.



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SESSION #4
**GROUNDING TECHNIQUES AND
COPING STRATEGIES**



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

SESSION #4: GROUNDING TECHNIQUES & COPING STRATEGIES

(This session will take about 1 hour to complete. Please plan accordingly.)

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God, you designed us for healing. You created our bodies and brains in a way that protects us from things beyond our control and heals us when we develop wounds- visible and invisible. In and through community, we are able to experience the healing power of your love, and the healing power of the bodies you have gifted us. As we learn about coping strategies we can use, we can teach, and we can encourage others to learn, remind us your love for us. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL WARM-UP

- Based on you what you now know about trauma, has your understanding and belief about it changed?

- How is trauma experienced in the body and where is trauma “stored” in a person?

- What are ways people might cope with stress, especially traumatic stress?

- What might the Christian’s role and the role of the church be in helping people heal from trauma?

GROUP WARM-UP

Together review the *RESPECTful Guidelines and Mutual Invitation* process and recommit to your small group covenant.

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- As a group, what is your current understanding and belief about trauma?

- What are ways people might cope with stress, especially traumatic stress?

- What do you believe about the role of Christians and the Church responding to trauma in your community and around the world today?

SESSION VIDEO

This session's video will provide information on and opportunities to practice four coping strategies and grounding techniques to use when experiencing stress. Key concepts from the video are written below in the order in which they are presented in the video. Take time to pause and rewind as necessary while your group watches the video and take notes that will be helpful to you. All the Trauma Informed Ministry (TIM) Series videos are also available online at <http://www.westohioumc.org/TIM> if you would like to review them again on your own.

WATCH VIDEO



COPING STRATEGIES

(Pause after each strategy to allow group members to practice.)

- Mindful breathing
 - Place one hand on your stomach- when you inhale, your hand should move out, and when you exhale this hand should move in.
 - Breathe in for four counts, hold for two counts, and exhale for four counts.

- Focus on the 5
 - Name 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you feel, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste.
 - Try to be as detailed as possible when naming each item.

- Hyperfocus
 - Think - Bring something positive to mind (e.g., an image or sound)
 - Strengthen - Engage all 5 senses to strengthen the image or sound
 - Maintain - focus only on that positive thing for 12 seconds.

- Bilateral stimulation
 - A way to engage both sides of your brain to help calm your mind and body.
 - Examples include walking or running and tapping or drumming.

POST-VIDEO GROUP DISCUSSION

- What thoughts, feelings, emotions, or physical responses came up for you while watching the video?

- What information stood out to you from the video? Consider what surprised you, was new information, or confirmed your understanding about coping strategies around trauma.

- How does this information shift your view of your church's ministry with people in your community, and the role of the Church in our world?

- What will you take with you and use in your ministry? Reflect on how knowing more about trauma coping strategies positions you to serve people differently, to respond to different behaviors, to give more grace, or to adapt certain ministries or spaces to feel safer to more people.

ACTION STEPS

As a group discuss what action steps you may be able to take after gaining more information on trauma-informed ministry. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **PRAY:** Pray for persons who have experienced trauma to experience the love and acceptance from healing communities on their recovery journey. Pray to be humble enough to listen non-judgmentally and learn from those who have experienced trauma.
- **PARTNER:** Partner with a local mental health agency to offer a community training on responding to trauma.
- **LEAD:** Lead your congregation in a workshop on coping strategies using this video or additional resources below.
- **SERVE:** Serve an area in your community where people may have experienced trauma. Consider serving in prison settings, shelters or food assistance locations, crisis centers, etc. If you are working with children, consider serving at an animal shelter. Often animals have been abused or neglected which can be a terrific way to teach children about identifying pain or harm in another living being and responding with compassion and care.
- **LEARN:** Learn more about trauma through reading personal narratives or taking a course or workshop.
 - [7 Tools for Managing Traumatic Stress](#) by NAMI
 - [Feelingswheel.com](#) to assist in identification of feelings
 - Apps like “Headspace” or “Calm”
- **CONNECT:** Organize and participate in a healing worship service or support community for those who have experienced a traumatic event

PRAY TOGETHER

God, thank you for creating us with bodies, minds, spirits, hearts, hands, and feet. God, remind us to use all that you have gifted us when we feel overwhelmed and stressed. Guide us through your Holy Spirit to be people of joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and to have self-control, so we may use effective coping strategies to meet people where they are. Remind us that you are the breath within our lungs, the wind on our skin, and the hope for today and tomorrow. Amen