

Module 2: Healing Centered Engagement in Supervised Visitation Services

Module 2, Segment 1: Supporting Ourselves to Be Resilient in the Work



Facilitator Preparation & Notes

Prepare to play this 20-minute video: **Beyond the Cliff*** - a talk given at TEDxWashington by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTWBXmBPmADBOJah1tI0IFA/playlists?view_as=subscriber. From this “Info @InspireAction” YouTube Channel you can then select “Playlist” on the menu bar and then open the “Enhanced Model of SV Immersion Extension Package” playlist. Then select “VIEW FULL PLAYLIST” and choose this video.

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Additional resources: Trauma Stewardship (book) and The Age of Overwhelm: Strategies for the Long Haul (book) by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky.



Supporting Materials

- Each staff person will need writing materials and their Supplemental Workbook
- Video and audio equipment to view and listen to the online video



Facilitator Guide & Talking Points

1. (5 minutes) Check-in: Share one example of resilience that inspires you (share this simple definition of resilience if needed: having the ability to bounce back or strive for healing after experiencing setbacks).
2. (3 minutes) Read this expanded definition of resilience from Dr. Michael Unger to the staff (it is also in their workbooks on page 19 if they would like to follow along). “In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.”
3. (5 minutes) Ask the staff to break into pairs and discuss their reactions to this definition of resilience. Is there anything new or surprising about this definition?
4. (5 minutes) Ask the staff to complete the Self-Reflection Writing Exercise on workbook pages 19-20. (1) What does vicarious trauma, sometimes called secondary trauma, mean to you? (2) Why do we need to be proactive about paying attention to it?
5. (5 minutes) Bring the staff back together for a group discussion about their writing exercise. Talking points to supplement the discussion if needed:
 - a. Being impacted by the stress and trauma of the people who use our services can be difficult, and sometimes feel like directly experiencing trauma ourselves.
 - b. We can experience traumatic reminders or triggers while working with survivors of trauma.
 - c. People who are drawn to helping professions tend to have higher rates of childhood trauma than in other professions, so working with people experiencing trauma similar to what we experienced can be overwhelming and stressful.
 - d. We can experience vicarious trauma in our bodies, similarly to how we directly experience a traumatic event.

- e. When we are impacted by vicarious trauma, our lids can flip more quickly and easily, because we are on edge more often.
 - f. Vicarious trauma often creates feelings of physical and emotional fatigue - which is often defined as “burnout.”
 - g. We need to pay attention to it for our well-being, and also because of the quality of our work with families is enhanced when we can be professionally resilient.
6. (20 minutes) Watch the video, “Beyond the Cliff.”
 7. (10 minutes) Lead the staff in a large group discussion about their responses to the video and how it relates to their work at the center.
 8. (5 minutes) Check-out: Share two-three words that sum up how you feel about building your resilience related to this work.

Module 2, Segment 2: Building Organizational Resilience



Facilitator Preparation & Notes

In this segment, staff will be brainstorming practices that can help build the resilience of your organization. We have provided some ideas to supplement the discussions, but encourage you to draw out the wisdom and expertise of the staff here - which will help them feel a sense of ownership and community. You will also want to be transparent about what ends up being possible and not possible. There is more guidance on this embedded in each step, but we recommend you read through all of the steps in advance of starting this segment to prepare.



Supporting Materials

- Each staff person will need writing materials and their Supplemental Workbook



Facilitator Guide & Talking Points

1. (5 minutes) Warm-up: Ask staff to turn to page 21 of their workbooks and complete the “Self-Reflection Writing Exercise” responding to the question: Thinking back to our last session, what would being resilient, at work, look like for you?
2. (5 minutes) Ask for a volunteer to share reflections from their writing.
3. (15 minutes) Have staff break into groups of 2-3 and discuss the questions in the workbook on pages 21-23, entitled “Group Discussion Questions”. Each group should assign a notetaker and a reporter.
4. (15 minutes) Bring the group back and share with them: This is a time to brainstorm and learn from each other about how we can build resilience as an organization. All of your ideas are welcome,

though, in full transparency, we may not be able to implement all of them. Later we will talk about a process for moving viable ideas forward. Ask each group reporter to share response highlights from their discussion. Below are the questions as well as talking points if the staff need additional suggestions, but we encourage you to draw out the knowledge and ideas directly from the staff. If you decide to share some of these suggestions, you should first think about which are possible in your center.

Question 1: Do we need to change any policies or elements of our workplace culture to support staff well-being and increase resiliency? What ideas do you have? Here are some ideas to supplement your discussion if needed, though we recommend you try to draw out the staff ideas first:

- Being able to use sick time as mental health days.
- Breaks built into workdays?
- Celebrate birthdays or any other holidays that are important to the staff (remembering that diversity and culture are important in considering what you celebrate as a staff).
- Setting up a quiet, calm place where the staff can take breaks when needed?

Question 2: How does access to your cultural traditions and your community help build resiliency? What are some ways that this is currently supported in our organization? What are some additional ways we could support cultural traditions and community in our work? Here are some ideas to supplement your discussion if needed, though we recommend you try to draw out the staff's ideas first:

- Being connected to culture and community can help us feel in touch with something larger.
- People from many cultures have survived hardship, and developed a myriad of ways to thrive - being connected to that cultural resilience can help both personally and professionally.

- The staff should feel comfortable bringing their whole selves to work, including aspects of culture and community.

Question 3: What are some ways that culture is currently supported in our organization?

Question 4: What are some additional ways we could support cultural traditions and community in our work?

Question 5: How do we celebrate success as staff? What are some ways we could strengthen this practice? When working with stressed families, it can be quite easy for trauma to be in the driver's seat. Celebrating success can shift the focus away from trauma. Here are some ideas to supplement your discussion if needed, though we recommend you try to draw out the staff ideas first:

- Every staff meeting can start with celebrating a success, for example: something that went well in a visit, milestones, accomplishments of both staff and clients, children and youth laughing and playing, etc.
- Your center can make a visual celebration board.
- The staff can engage in appreciation for each other in a variety of ways.

5. (10 minutes) Large group discussion. Share with the staff: Building our resilience as an organization is a work in progress. There are some things we can start right away, and others that will take time and planning. This work will be on-going. Some organizations have workplace wellness committees, and that could be a good fit for us (one idea). For now, we could gather in a smaller group to think through how to build a plan and next steps for promoting resilience in the culture of our organization. The smaller group would share the plan they develop with the larger group for feedback. *Ask the staff what they think of this idea of meeting in a smaller group to sketch out a plan.*

6. (3 minutes) If the staff are open to the idea of establishing a smaller group to work on next steps for building organizational resilience, ask for 3-5 volunteers, and schedule a time to meet.
7. (5 minutes) Check-out: What was your favorite subject in junior high or middle school?

Module 2, Segment 3: Supporting Infants, Children, and Youth in their Healing Process



Facilitator Preparation & Notes

If this segment is too long, feel free to break it up over multiple meetings as needed.

*Prepare video (5 minutes, 30 seconds): **Changing Minds: "Chad"** developed by Futures Without Violence. **

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTWBXmBPmADBOJah1tI0IFA/playlists?view_as=subscriber. From this "Info @InspireAction" YouTube Channel you can then select "Playlist" on the menu bar and then open the "Enhanced Model of SV Immersion Extension Package" playlist. Then select "VIEW FULL PLAYLIST" and choose this video.



Supporting Materials

- Each staff person will need writing materials and their Supplemental Workbook
- Video and audio equipment to view and listen to the online video



Facilitator Guide & Talking Points

1. (5 minutes) Check-in reflection: Share one word you associate with "healing."
2. (5 minutes) Ask for volunteers to read each point out loud from the list "Ways Infants, Children, and Youth Heal" on workbook page 24. Ask the staff to think about these points as they watch the video coming up next.
3. (6 minutes) Introduce the "Chad" video from Futures Without Violence. Let the staff know that there are parts of this video that may evoke emotion, which means that self-care is crucial. Remind them that kids like "Chad" heal and do quite well because of

supportive adults in their lives, just like them. Though no one from a supervised visitation center is identified as an adult that helped Chad, staff should think about how the video applies to their role as a visitation provider.

4. (5 minutes) After the video, allow a few minutes of quiet processing time. Once everyone has had a chance to collect their thoughts, ask the staff to break into pairs, and discuss their reactions.
5. (15 minutes) Ask the staff to individually complete the writing exercise on pages 24-27 of the workbook.
6. (10 minutes) After the writing exercise, ask the staff to come back together for a large group discussion, sharing any highlights from their writing reflection. The questions with talking points to supplement the discussion if needed are below (not every point needs to be covered; these are offered as an aid to the discussion if needed):

Question 1: *What can we do as a center to support infants, children, and youth in healing? What is within our scope of control, and what is not?*

- We can't control what happens at home.
- We can't control what either parent says or does, though we can clearly state our expectations and guidelines for their time in the center.
- We can't control what children say or do.
- We can do our very best to support safety for the survivor parent and the children, though we can't control it.
- We can create a center environment that is developmentally appropriate and welcoming to children and youth of all ages.
- We can model respect and care in our interactions with each other and the families who use our services.
- We can build as much routine and predictability into our processes with families as possible.

- We can use feeling word vocabulary as much as possible, which has been shown to support healing and resilience.
- We can make sure our lids are down before we help children and young people who may have their lids flipped.
- We can demonstrate unconditional positive regard for infants, children, and youth in our centers, and express an interest in their interests.
- We can offer child orientations that build trust and establish rapport.

Question 2: *What policies or elements of our workplace culture to support child and youth well-being, resiliency, and healing could be changed?*

- Can we include diverse messages of hope and healing in our environment via posters, books, toys, and media?
- We can recognize that our well-being makes it easier to promote the well-being of infants, children, and youth - they are connected.
- We can review our practices to make sure they are developmentally friendly and support building trust.
- We can review our child orientation practices to ensure they are child and youth-friendly.

Question 3: All cultures have positive traditions. These traditions can be grounding, affirming, and healing. Cultures that are not rooted in the white American experience can feel pressure to assimilate or ignore cultural traditions and environments that positively affirm their cultural identities. Supporting the positive cultural traditions of those who use our center services can be healing. It's important to note that sometimes power and control or other behaviors that cause harm can be framed by people who use violence, and even community members, as "culture." This can happen in white families, too, as white families also have cultural norms. For this reason, it's critical to remember that each family is

unique, and the survivor parent and children should be consulted about engaging in cultural practices. Some survivors experience power and control through cultural norms, so assessing what feels safe to survivors is critical. No cultural practice should cause harm.

Q: How does access to cultural traditions and community help build resilience for children and families we serve? Q: How do we currently support this practice? Q: What are some additional ways we can incorporate this into our practice?

- Humans are not designed to heal in isolation, which is why the community aspect of cultural traditions can be crucial in healing and recovering from trauma.
- Being in community shows children that they are not alone and that they are part of something larger - all core components of healing from trauma. Our center can be part of their community that helps children and youth feel connected.
- If children only have access to some parts of their culture in the context of a supervised visit, it becomes even more important that the family feel comfortable and welcome to engage in those practices, as long as they are safe to the survivor parent and children.

Question 4: *How can we support the celebrations, successes, and milestones for families? And part 2 of this question: How can we do this while also working with the survivor parent and children to make sure that what is celebrated and honored during their time at the center feels safe to them and is not an aspect of power and control?*

- Before steps are taken to celebrate a milestone or event, we can check in with the survivor parent and children about their related wishes and feelings.
- We can be aware of milestones, birthdays, and holidays that are important to the families we serve and offer words of support and affirmation.
- When a child excels at a task or activity, even if the accomplishment is persistence or attention, we can give

a clear compliment at the end of the visit, “Jayden you really focused on that puzzle with your dad!”

- In our staff family consultations, we can be sure to ask questions that encourage recognizing the positive.

Question 5: *Can we build more routine and ritual into the visitation processes? Why is this important? What can we do at the center to support more routine and ritual?*

- Trauma can lead to feelings of unpredictability, chaos, a loss of self-efficacy, or the ability to control one’s environment. Building routines and rituals into even the most mundane processes can build predictability and a sense of control and mastery for infants, children, and youth who may not experience routines and rituals that often.
- You can make anything into a routine or ritual:
 1. The way you greet each child arriving at your center.
 2. When and where children say good-bye to their custodial parent.
 3. The check-in process that you establish before and after each visit.
 4. How children enter the visitation room.
 5. When and where they pick out a snack or activity to take into the visitation space.
 6. How they greet their parent.
 7. How they say goodbye to their parent and how they leave the visit space.
 8. How you say goodbye at the end of each check-in (e.g., giving a high five).

7. (5 minutes) Check-out: Share one thing you can do tonight to honor yourself and your important role in this work.