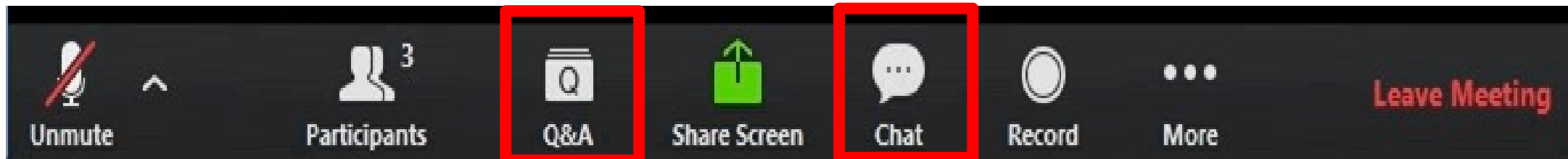


# Wellness Webinar Series Part 3: Supporting the Emotional and Mental Health Needs of Harm Reduction Staff

Monday, July 17 | 3:00 – 4:30 pm EST

# Housekeeping

- You will be muted automatically upon entry and for the duration of the webinar.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be archived for future viewing on the National Council's website.
- Please submit your questions using the Q&A box at the bottom of the screen.



*This webinar was made possible by grant number 6 NU38OT000318-02-02 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$750,000 with 100% funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government.*

# Agenda

- Speaker Introductions
- Presentations
  - Psychological safety, moral injury and creating a culture of compassion
  - Causes of burnout and how to support staff
  - Systems-level actions that prevent burnout
- Q&A



Amelia Roeschlein, DSW, MA, LMFT



Hector Mata, LMSW



Heather Lusk, MSW, LCSW



# What is toxic stress?

Amelia Roeschlein, DSW, MA, LMFT

# Toxic Stress – Why It Matters

## POSITIVE STRESS

Mild/moderate and short-lived stress response necessary for healthy development

## TOLERABLE STRESS

More severe stress response but limited in duration which allows for recovery

## TOXIC STRESS

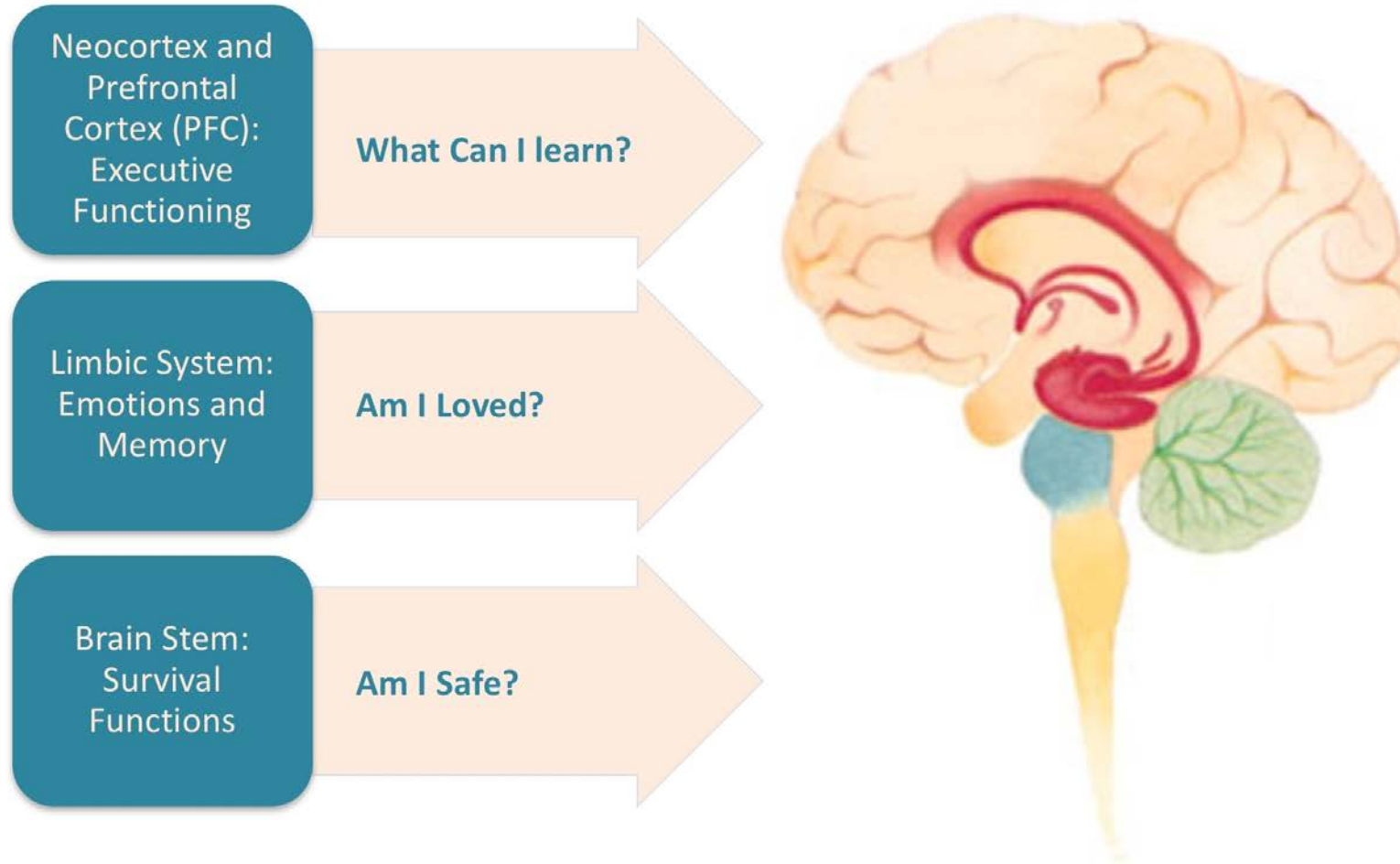
Extreme, frequent, or extended activation of the body's stress response without the buffering presence of a supportive adult

Intense, prolonged, repeated and unaddressed

Social-emotional buffering, parental resilience, early detection, and/or effective intervention

# Impact on Body & Mind

# Stress on the brain



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# Moral Safety



# Moral Injury

In traumatic or unusually stressful circumstances, people may perpetrate, fail to prevent, or witness events that contradict deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. A moral injury can occur in response to acting or witnessing behaviors that go against an individual's values and moral beliefs.

- Act of commission
- Act of omission
- May include feeling betrayal from leadership, others in positions of power or peers
- Includes distressing psychological, behavioral, social, and sometimes spiritual aftermath of exposure to such events

# What has happened to you?

Messages of worthlessness

Undermined for being scientifically correct/relevant

- Punished socially for speaking truth
- Ridiculed when message doesn't match what others want to hear

Experiences of being dismissed as unimportant, less than

When you were harmed for helping people

When doing no harm causes harm to you

Having to work when ill

Having to work when children are home, family members are ill

# Moral Safety

The never-ending quest for understanding how organizations function in the healing process

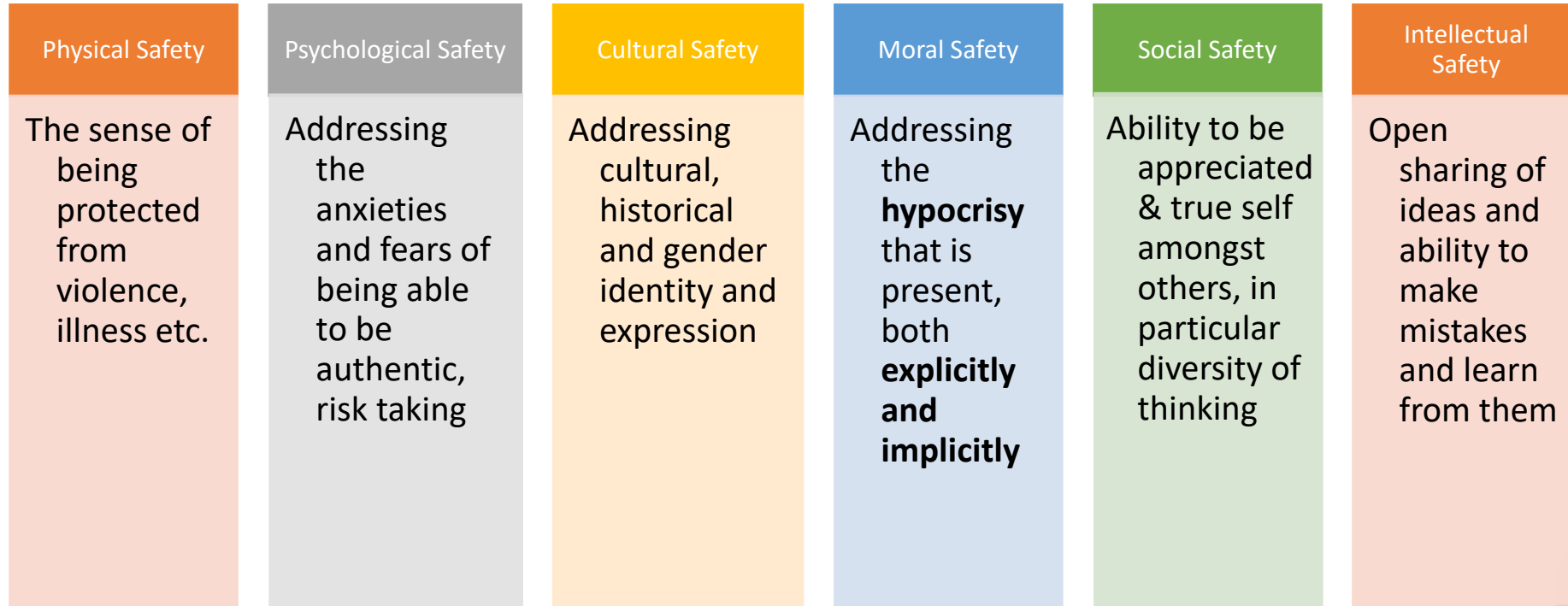
- An attempt to reduce the **hypocrisy** that is present, both **explicitly and implicitly**
- A morally safe environment struggles with the issues of **honesty and integrity**

-Bloom, 2013



# Preventing & Responding to Toxic Stress

# Safety Considerations



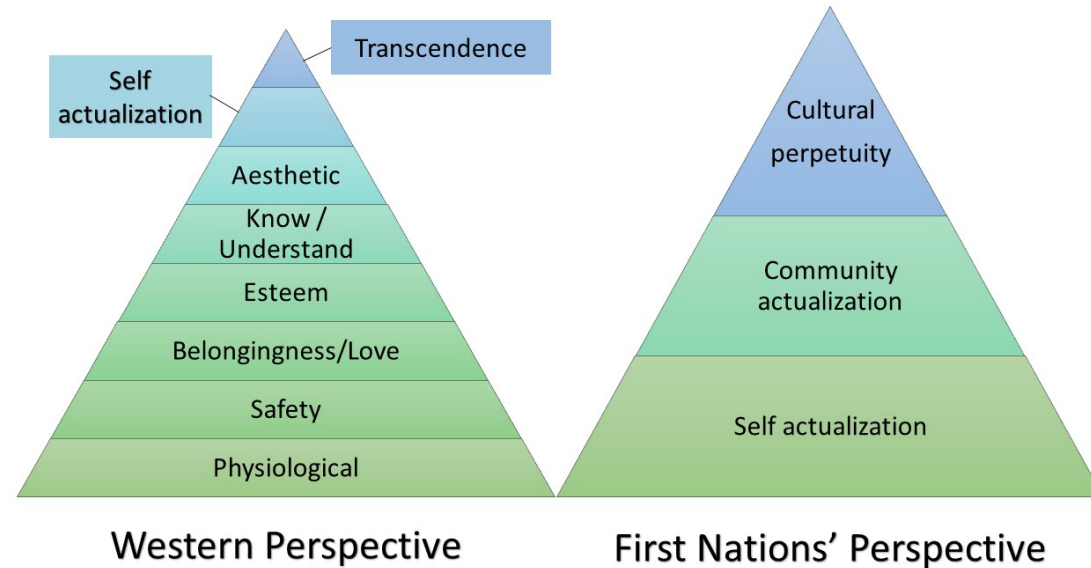
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# Universal Expectations

# Create Safe and Secure Environments for ALL

Throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve, whether children or adults, feel culturally, physically and psychologically safe; the physical setting is safe and interpersonal interactions promote a sense of safety.



# Creating a Holding Environment

A holding environment is a place where:

- Difficult adaptive challenges can be discussed
- Diversity of opinion is welcome
- Experiences, values and assumptions are shared and challenged
- Stress is expected and tolerated



Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development. (2012). *Georgetown University Leadership Academy Leading in Challenging Times Curriculum*.





# Preventing & Responding to Stress

## Organizational Level

- Reasonable workloads
- Efficiency for provider expertise
- Safe physical environments
- Empower and Encourage over Command and Control
- Fair benefits packages
- Training on symptom recognition
- Ensure provider anonymity
- Utilize measures

## Individual Level

- Work, play, health, relationships
- Ask for help. No, really.
- Recognize your own symptoms of stress, burnout, etc.
- Practice self-compassion. Give grace and space to yourself
- Remember your preventive healthcare
- Changing relationship with time



# Harm Reduction & Burnout

Hector Mata, LMSW

# What is Harm Reduction?

**Harm reduction is a public health model that has been utilized successfully throughout the world for more than 25 years to help individuals minimize the harms associated with the use or misuse of alcohol and other drugs (Marlatt & Tatarsky, 2010).**



# Effectiveness of proper communication with our staff

Methods of communication:



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# What can we do to prevent burnout within our teams?

Reward the quality of work, not the quantity of hours worked –

Role model healthy behaviour from the top –

Encourage your team to take time out –



# Avoiding burnout in the workplace

The World Health Organization

Recently recognized burnout as an occupational  
phenomenon



# Characteristics of Burnout

- 1: Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion!
- 2: Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativity or cynicism related to one's job
- 3: Reduced professional efficacy



# Feedback & Expectations

Importance of consistent supervision

Providing feedback (not only when things go wrong, but also when things are going great)

Discuss what is expected for the role starting at the interview process





# Practice solutions and examples

Hybrid Work – How do we maintain wellness and responsibility while working using a hybrid model? Provide some examples of issues that arise and how to manage these.

Tardiness – Absences – PTO –

How to discuss attendance with staff (Harm Reduction Approach vs Punitive Approach)



# Meeting staff where they are at

## Six Ways to Meet Your Employees Where They Are & Where They Need You:

- Safety. People need to feel emotionally, physically, and psychologically safe.
- Stability. Stability has always been important, but now it is dramatically magnified.
- Belongingness.
- Appreciation.
- Communication.
- Purpose.





# Wellness, Resiliency and Harm Reduction

## Creating a Sanctuary for Harm Reductionists

Heather Lusk, LCSW  
Hawai'i Health &  
Harm Reduction Center  
[www.hhhrc.org](http://www.hhhrc.org)

# Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center(HHHRC)

Reducing harm, promoting health, creating wellness and fighting stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific.

*Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center serves Hawai'i communities by reducing the harm and fighting the stigma of HIV, hepatitis, homelessness, substance use, mental illness, and poverty in our community. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, drug use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities. We foster health, wellness, and systemic change in Hawai'i and the Pacific through care services, advocacy, training, prevention, education, and capacity building.*



# Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC)

## *OUR VALUES*

- ***HARM REDUCTION:*** A non-judgmental approach to public health that meets people where they are and celebrates positive change, with the goal of minimizing the harms of actions that pose adverse social and health outcomes.
- ***RESPECT:*** To honor the dignity of others by recognizing difference and fostering peaceful coexistence.
- ***ADVOCACY:*** An uncompromising dedication to eliminating the stigmas and systemic injustices impacting the communities we serve and represent.



# Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC)

## *OUR VALUES*

- ***QUALITY CARE:*** Individualized health care and social services that demonstrate best practices and improve desired health outcomes. In order to achieve this, services must be evidence-based, safe, effective, timely, efficient, equitable, and people-centered.
- ***COMPASSION:*** The motivation to alleviate suffering from a place of empathy, kindness, and receptiveness to the lived experience of others.
- ***INTEGRITY:*** Commitment to building relationships founded in honesty, trust, accountability, and transparency.



# HHHRC Services

## Street-based Services

Outreach & Linkage to Services

Wound Care

Syringe Exchange

Naloxone Distribution

HIV/HCV/STD Testing

HIV/HCV Case Mgmt &

Care Coordination

Law Enforcement Assisted

Diversion

(LEAD)



## Warm Hand Off Referrals

Wound Care\*

Buprenorphine\*

HIV/HCV Testing, Case  
Management\* & Care  
Coordination\*\*

Transgender Services\*\*

Mental Health

Smoking Cessation

LEAD

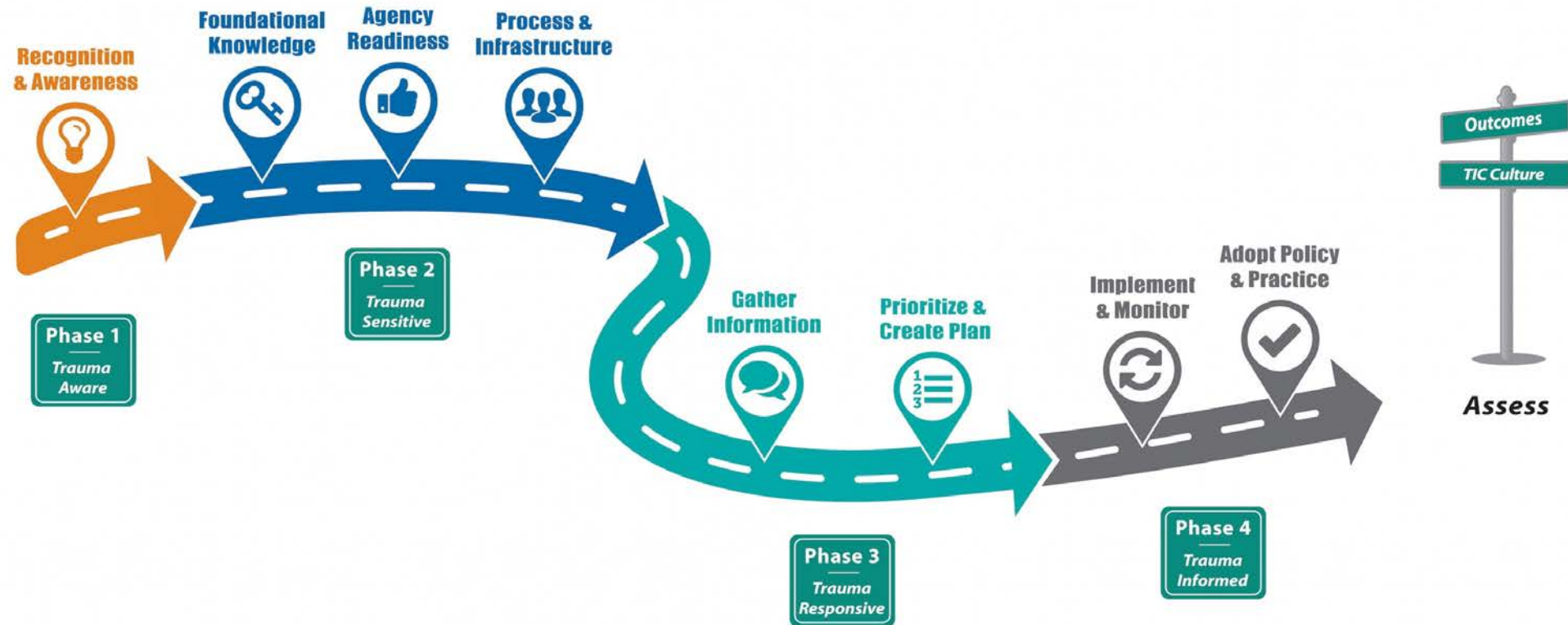
\*referral form at  
[www.hhhrc.org](http://www.hhhrc.org)

\*\*often can transport/meet



# HHHRC as Trauma-Informed Agency

## ROAD MAP TO TRAUMA INFORMED CARE





# Trauma-responsive Agency Creating Sanctuary for Staff

- Trainings and common language about TIC, burnout/compassion fatigue and importance of workplace wellness
- Paid wellness hours (1 per week)
- **Wellness Committee**
  - Create opportunities for connection
- **Self-care plans integrated into supervision with outside supervision also available**

## 6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The CDC's **Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR)**, in collaboration with SAMHSA's **National Center for Trauma-Informed Care (NCTIC)**, developed and led a new training for OPHPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work. Participants learned SAMHSA'S six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach, including:



Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. On-going internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. The training provided by **OPHPR** and **NCTIC** was the first step for CDC to view emergency preparedness and response through a trauma-informed lens.

# Wellness Options at HHHRC

- Self-care plan
- Regular supervision
- Clinical supervision
- Wellness Committee
  - Cultural events, potlucks, all-staff gatherings
- One hour a week of work time for wellness activities
- Healthcare flex savings plan
- Headspace app for meditation





# Art Therapy



**HAWAII HEALTH  
& HARM REDUCTION CENTER**  
*The New Chapter for Life Foundation and The CHOW Project*



# Zumba



# Yoga





# Walking in Sunshine



# Lei Making





# Staff Lunches



Group lunches once a month for holidays or events and more recently, food has been provided for breakfast and lunch and food pantry open to all staff

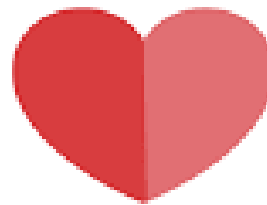
# Mindful Self Compassion

- **Research-based Mindful Self Compassion by Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer**
  - 8 week course [www.centerformsc.org](http://www.centerformsc.org)
  - Self-compassion scale <https://self-compassion.org/self-compassion-scales-for-researchers/>



## **Mindfulness**

Being aware of the physical, emotional, or mental pain of the moment.



## **Self-kindness**

Treating ourselves with kindness, considering our own needs.



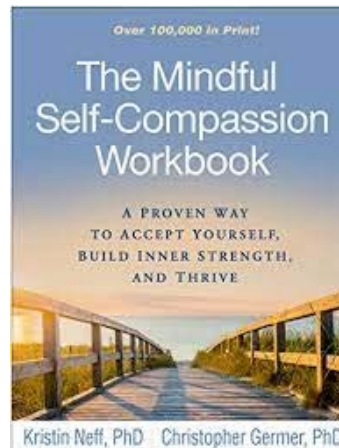
## **Common Humanity**

Recognizing that these experiences are a normal part of being human.

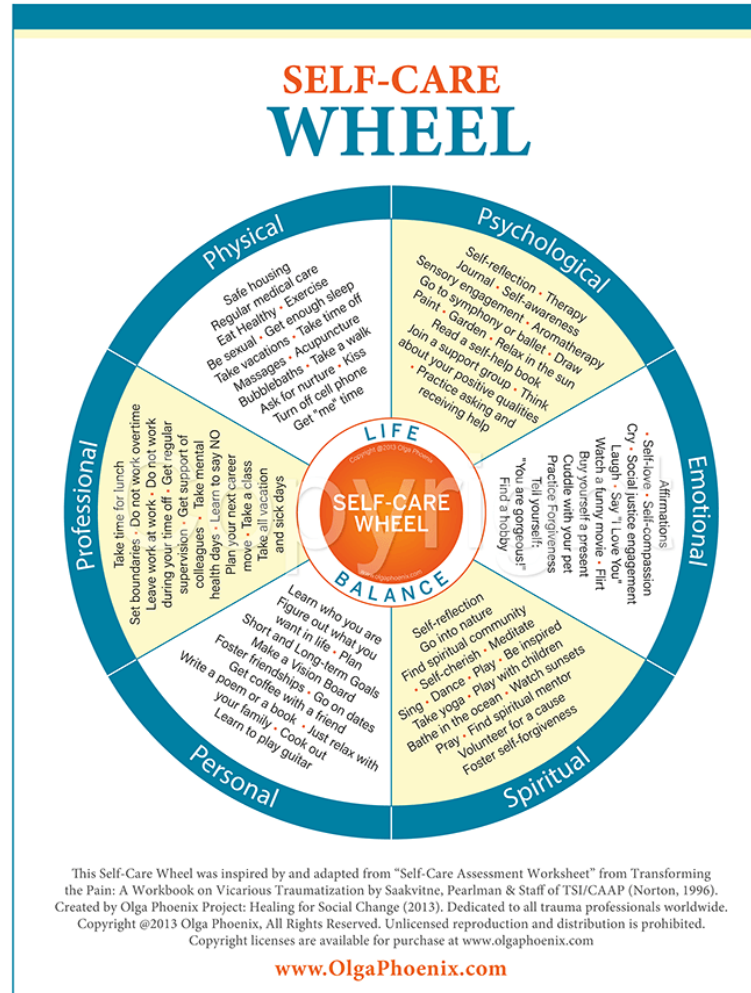


# Example - Three Components of Mindful Self Compassion

- Mindfulness – awareness vs. overidentification
- Common humanity – connectedness vs. isolation
- Kindness – compassion vs. criticism



# Practicing Self Care



Self-care and life/work balance is integrated into supervision and a self-care plan is created by everyone each year and staff get to determine how wellness funds are spent

# Resilience is Connection!

- **Fostering resilience means coming together – virtually and in person**
  - Events such as Overdose Awareness Day and World AIDS Day connect us with each other
- **During staff meetings, “GLOWs” are given from staff to each other as well as resilience tips**
- **Wellness tips and events listed on internal MS Teams chat**







HHHRC staff March 31 2023 Transgender Day of Visibility at Hawaii State Capitol



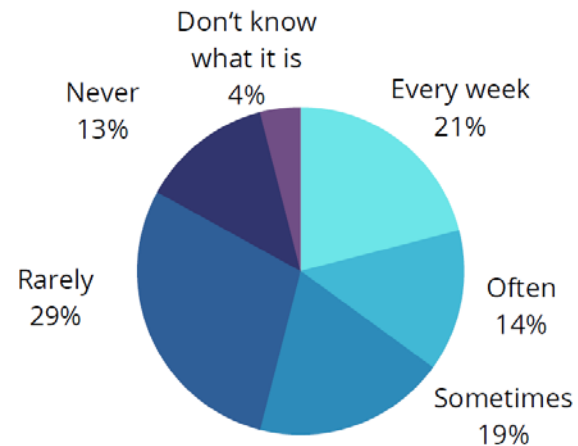
# 2022 H3RC WELLNESS SURVEY RESULTS

ECOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS LAB  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I MĀNOA

SARAH COMBS, MPH  
JACK BARILE, PHD

## WEEKLY WELLNESS TIME

Weekly Wellness Time Utilization



Over half of all respondents say that they use their weekly wellness hour every week (21%), often (14%), or sometimes (19%). About 29% state they rarely use it, 13% state they never use it, and only 4% state they do not know what weekly wellness time is.

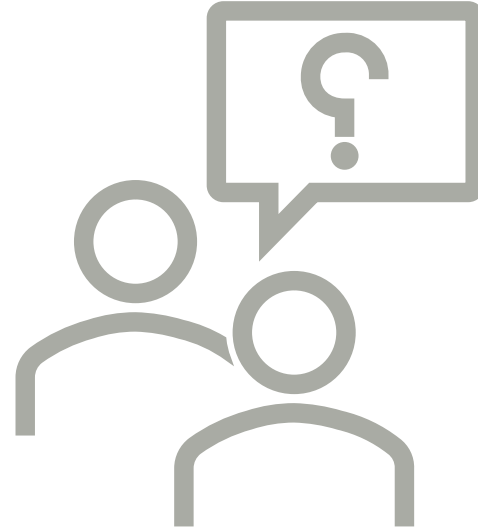
**Most people stated that H3RC creates a culture of wellness (75%).** Only 3% responded disagree or strongly disagree, with the rest responding neutral. The biggest barriers for prioritizing wellness were workload and people themselves (people just did not do it), both of which are potential topics that could be addressed during supervision. Some respondents stated that supervisors who help troubleshoot problems with workload and help them work through their own personal barriers were useful tools in helping prioritize wellness.

# Lessons Learned Wellness Program

- **Takes work, funding, buy-in (all levels), continous reinforcment and discussion**
  - Wellness inequity and privilege
- **Boundaries and wellness interconnected**
- **Funders need to be educated about link between trauma-responsive practices and providing staff wellness**
- **Leaders must walk our talk**



# Questions?



For more information, please check out our website  
<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/program/harm-reduction/>

# Resources from Presenters

<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/fostering-resilience-and-recovery-a-change-package/>

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/16-ways-relieve-stress-anxiety#section1>

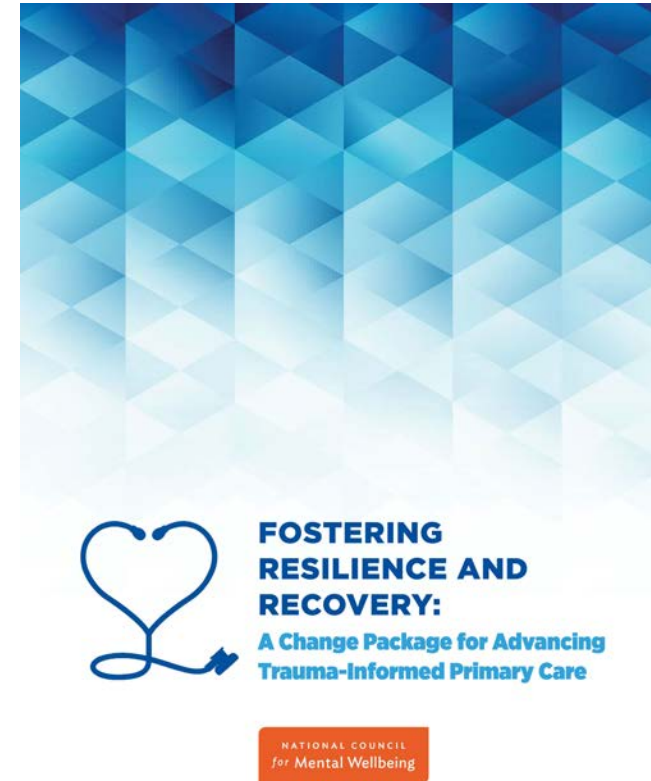
<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/coronavirus-anxiety.htm>

<https://adaa.org/tips-manage-anxiety-and-stress>

<http://mentalhealthchannel.tv/episode/youre-wired-for-anxiety-and-youre-wired-to-handle-it>

<https://compassionresiliencetoolkit.org/staying-resilient-during-covid-19/>

<https://www.neurosequential.com/covid-19-resources>

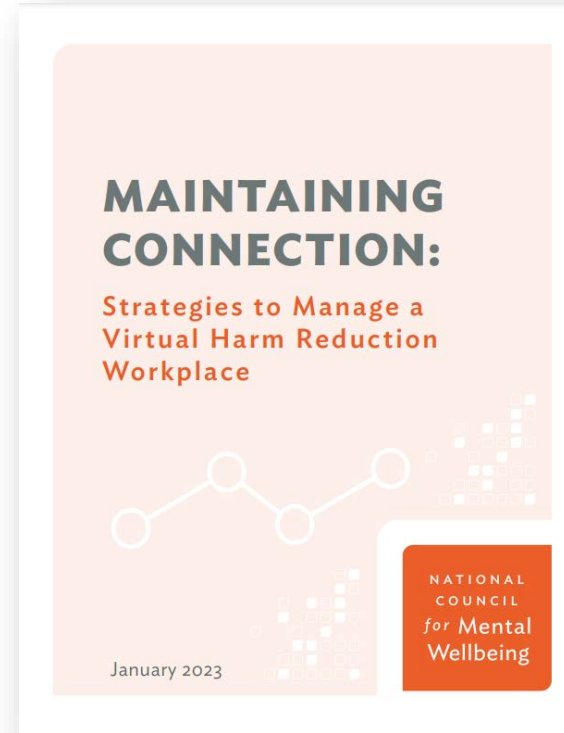


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# National Council Resources

- **Maintaining Connection:** Strategies to Manage a Virtual Harm Reduction Workplace
- **Wellness Webinar Series Part 1:** Establishing Professional Boundaries in the Virtual Harm Reduction Workplace
- **Wellness Webinar Series Part 2:** Coping with Grief and Loss in the Harm Reduction Workplace



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# Thank You!

## Speakers

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[hector@partnersintheworks.com](mailto:hector@partnersintheworks.com)

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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/wellnesswebinar3>

