



## Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

### 10 Principles of Trauma-Informed Approaches<sup>1</sup>

1. **Safety:** throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve feel physically and psychologically safe; the physical setting is safe and interpersonal interactions promote a sense of safety.
2. **Trustworthiness and transparency:** organizational operations and decisions are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, clients, and family members of people being served by the organization.
3. **Collaboration and mutuality:** there is true partnering and leveling of power differences between staff and clients and among organizational staff from direct care staff to administrators; there is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making.
4. **Empowerment:** throughout the organization and among the clients served, individuals' strengths are recognized, built on, and validated and new skills developed as necessary.
5. **Voice and choice:** the organization aims to strengthen the staff's, clients', and family members' experience of choice and recognize that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach.
6. **Peer support and mutual self-help:** are integral to the organizational and service delivery approach and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.
7. **Resilience and strengths based:** a belief in resilience and in the ability of individuals, organizations, and communities to heal and promote recovery from trauma; builds on what clients, staff and communities have to offer rather than responding to their perceived deficits.
8. **Inclusiveness and shared purpose:** the organization recognizes that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach; one does not have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.
9. **Cultural, historical, and gender issues:** the organization addresses cultural, historical, and gender issues; the organization actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases (e.g. based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, geography, etc.), offers gender responsive services, leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.
10. **Change process:** is conscious, intentional and ongoing; the organization strives to become a learning community, constantly responding to new knowledge and developments.

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<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), "Part-Two: A Trauma-Informed Approach," *Trauma Definition*, December 10, 2012: <http://www.samhsa.gov/traumajustice/traumadefinition/approach.aspx>.