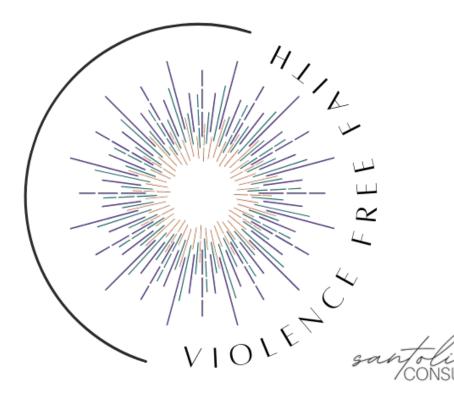


Leading from Alongside

How Faith Leaders
Can Support
Survivors of Abuse

Suzanne Holsomback March 19, 2024



Suzanne Holsomback

Founder | Consultant
Coach | Advocate
Researcher | Trainer



About Me

Bachelor of Arts in Religion & Classics

Master of Divinity

Master of Philosophy in Social Anthropology

Worked & volunteered in faith communities and religious organizations for 10+ years

Working & volunteering in the abuse/violence prevention movement since 2012

Live in Austin, Texas



Hopes & Expectations

We hope that you will:

- Build new friendships
- Participate fully
- Approach the topics with a growth mindset
- Acknowledge that in discomfort, we grow
- Approach the subject with curiosity

All questions are welcome!

Please keep phones, tablets, other devices off or silenced for the duration of the training.



Learning Objectives

- Identify and define the different types of harm individuals experience
- Unpack why harm happens and the tactics harm doers use
- Define & understand a "crisis" and types of "trauma"
- Understand the impact of trauma on survivors
- Utilize elements of trauma informed care in your ministry
- Develop a response that is survivor defined and empowering
- Apply knowledge and skill in case studies and activities

Abena



Abena is a singer during her faith community's musical worship time. She has been coming to rehearsals late and after the most recent rehearsal, shared with the musical director that Jason, her husband of 10 years and the father of their three children, lost his job due to COVID cut backs and hasn't found new work. He has always been demeaning, but has been yelling at her more and more and it got so bad the day before rehearsal, he threw a paper weight at her and punched the wall next to her head.

Jason was immediately sorry and promised to never do that again, begged for her forgiveness, and said that he would spend the whole night applying for every job possible and start attending their faith community more regularly.

The incident really scared Abena and their oldest child witnessed it. Jason has never hit Abena or their children, but Abena is really exhausted by it and after yesterday wants to separate from him and file for a divorce. She is nervous about what a divorce means for her role as a singer in her faith community and her reputation in the faith community and their wider social community.

Abena's faith community believes strongly in families and the commitment of marriage. Divorce happens, but is frowned upon. Anyone getting divorced or who is divorced is not allowed to be in a leadership role in the faith community.

The musical director told Abena a marriage on the rocks or a broken marriage will make the worship team look bad and create a lot of gossip when people should be worshiping. The musical director also told Abena giving up on a 10 year marriage after one angry outburst also feels like throwing away a sacred relationship and she needs to repair her marriage or leave the worship team.

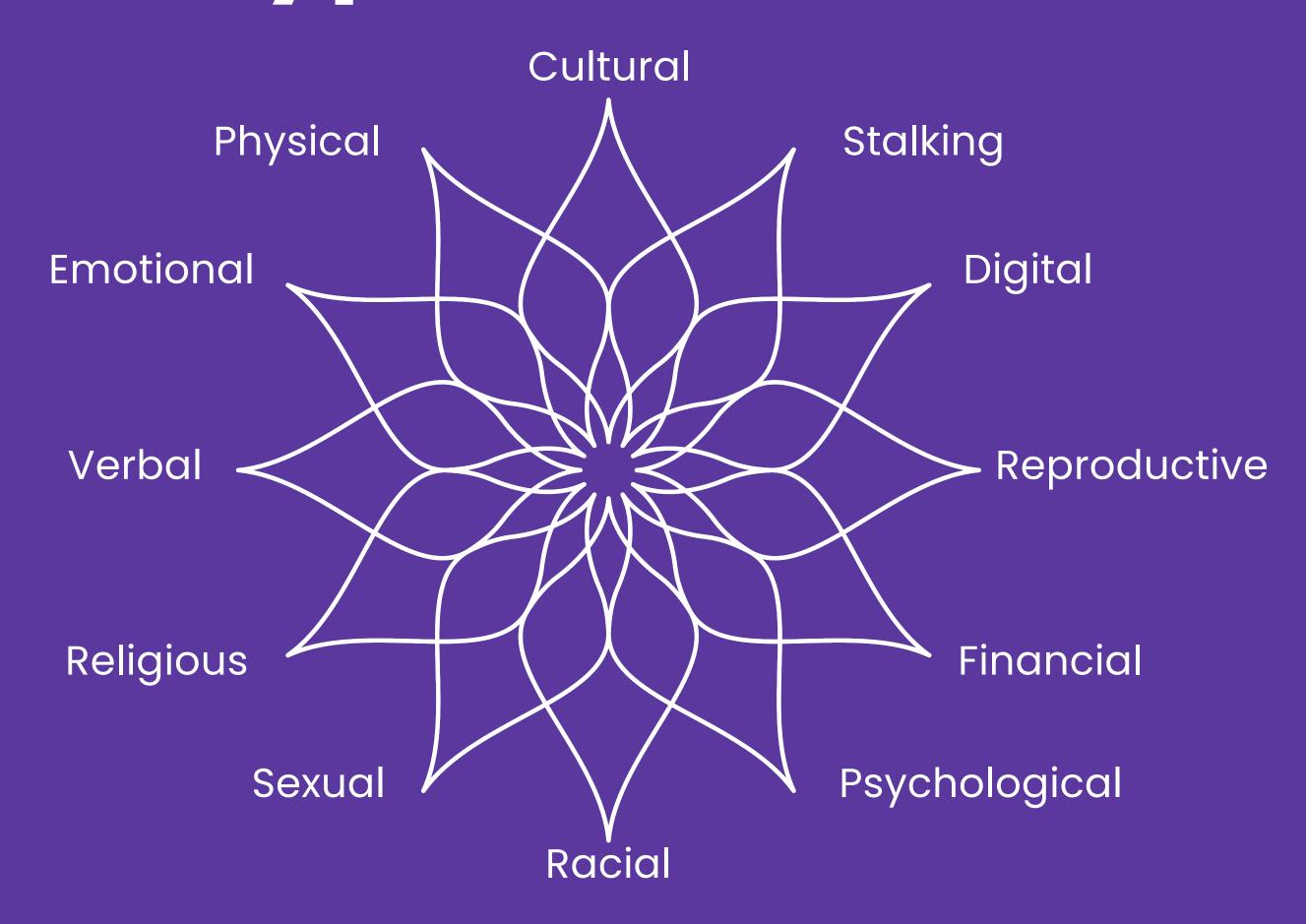
What Is Abuse & Violence





Abuse or Violence or Harm?

Types of Harm



Definition of Harm

Harm includes:

- Domestic violence
- Family violence
- Intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Domestic abuse
- Relationship abuse
- Teen dating violence



Definition of Harm

It is a pattern of behaviors within an intimate or family relationship that is used to gain and maintain power and control over the other partner.



Definition of Harm

While in most states law enforcement only recognizes physical forms of violence and threats to be offenses, it is vital to recognize that tactics of abuse also includes all other types of harm.



Gendered Nature of Harm

Harm is by no means just male violence towards women.

Women and same sex partners can harm their partners or former partners.

However, statistically, more harm is caused by men toward women.



How Harm Happens



Power & Control

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL **USING COERCION** USING AND THREATS INTIMIDATION Making and/or carrying out threats Making her afraid by using to do something to hurt her looks, actions, gestures . threatening to leave her, to · smashing things · destroying commit suicide, to report her property • abusing her to welfare . making USING pets . displaying her drop charges • making USING weapons. **ECONOMIC** her do illegal things. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** ABUSE Preventing her from getting or keeping a job . making her Putting her down . making her feel bad about herself . calling her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not names • making her think she's crazy · playing mind games · humiliating her letting her know about or have access to family income. · making her feel guilty. **POWER AND** CONTROL **USING ISOLATION USING MALE PRIVILEGE** Treating her like a servant • making all the Controlling what she does, who she sees big decisions • acting like the "master of and talks to, what she reads, where the castle" • being the one to she goes • limiting her outside define men's and women's roles involvement • using jealousy to justify actions. USING MINIMIZING. CHILDREN DENYING Making her feel guilty **AND BLAMING** about the children • using Making light of the abuse the children to relay messages and not taking her concerns · using visitation to harass her about it seriously . saying the . threatening to take the abuse didn't happen • shifting responchildren away. sibility for abusive behavior . saying she caused it. VIOLENCE SEXUAL PHYSICAL

DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

202 East Superior Street Duluth, Minnesota 55802 218-722-2781 www.theduluthmodel.org

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL **USING COERCION** USING AND THREATS INTIMIDATION Making and/or carrying out threats Making her afraid by using to do something to hurt her looks, actions, gestures . threatening to leave her, to · smashing things · destroying commit suicide, to report her property . abusing her to welfare . making USING pets . displaying her drop charges • making USING weapons. **ECONOMIC** her do illegal things. **EMOTIONAL**

ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job . making her ask for money . giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

POWER AND CONTROL

USING MALE PRIVILEGE

Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING CHILDREN

Making her feel guilty about the children . using the children to relay messages · using visitation to harass her . threatening to take the children away.

USING ISOLATION

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes . limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

Putting her down • making her

feel bad about herself . calling her

names • making her think she's crazy · playing mind games · humiliating her

ABUSE

· making her feel guilty.

MINIMIZING, DENYING **AND BLAMING**

Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously . saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

VIOLENCE SEXUAL PHYSICAL

Case Study Activity

- What tactics of abuse did Jason use toward Abena?
- Where did power and control come in?
- Who was causing harm in this scenario?
- What barriers to support did Abena face?



NONVIOLENCE

NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS

Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict • accepting change • being willing to

being willing to compromise.

Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.

ECONOMIC

PARTNERSHIP

NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR

Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.

RESPECT

Listening to her nonjudgmentally • being emotionally affirming and understanding • valuing opinions.

EQUALITY

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work • making family decisions together.

TRUST AND SUPPORT

Supporting her goals in life • respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.

RESPONSIBLE PARENTING

Sharing parental responsibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the children.

HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use of violence • admitting being wrong • communicating openly and truthfully.

NONVIOLENCE

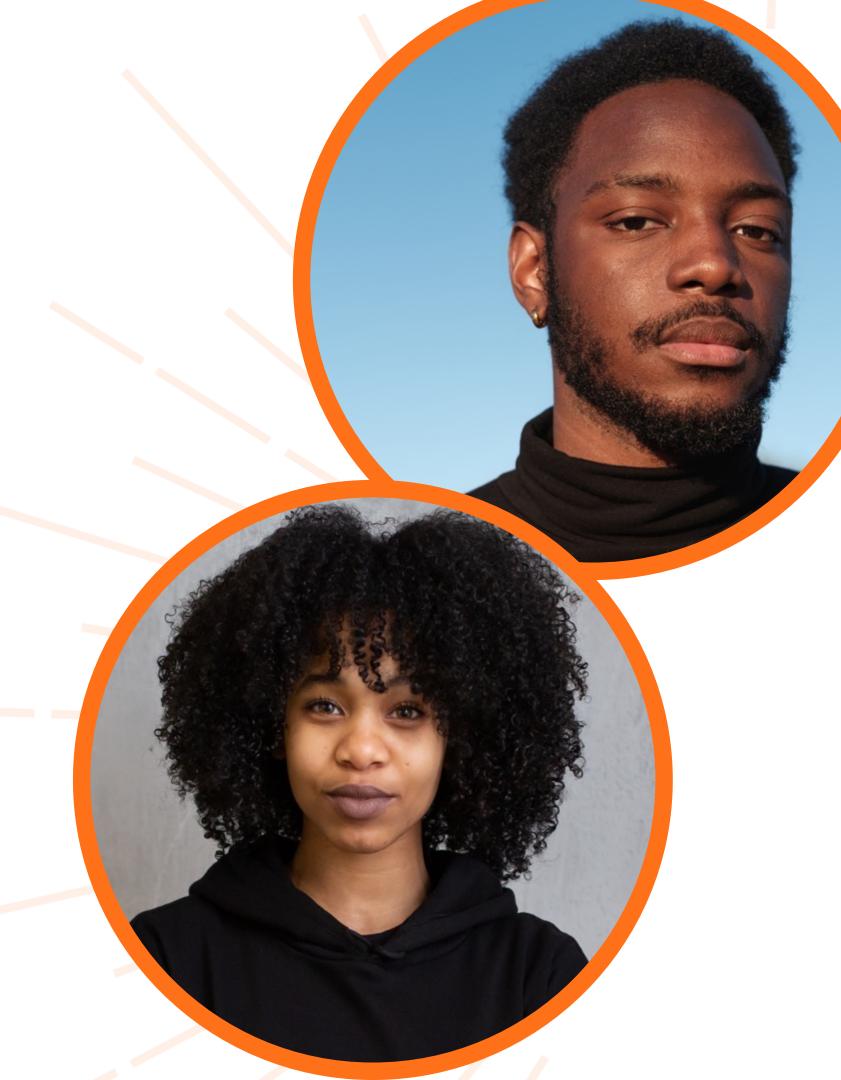
DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

202 East Superior Street Duluth, Minnesota 55802 218-722-2781 www.theduluthmodel.org

NONVIOLENCE **NON-THREATENING NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS BEHAVIOR** Seeking mutually satisfying Talking and acting so that she resolutions to conflict feels safe and comfortable · accepting change expressing herself and doing · being willing to things. compromise. **ECONOMIC** RESPECT **PARTNERSHIP** Listening to her nonjudgmentally . being emotion-Making money decisions ally affirming and understanding together • making sure both partners benefit from financial · valuing opinions. arrangements. **EQUALITY** TRUST AND SUPPORT SHARED RESPONSIBILITY Supporting her goals in life • respecting Mutually agreeing on a fair her right to her own feelings, friends, distribution of work . making activities and opinions. family decisions together. RESPONSIBLE **HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PARENTING** Sharing parental respon-Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use sibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the of violence . admitting being wrong . communicating openly and children. truthfully. NONVIOLENCE

Case Study Activity

- Where could Jason have chosen differently to support health relationship characteristics?
- Where could the musical director have chosen differently?
- What are ways Jason can rebuild trust with Abena?

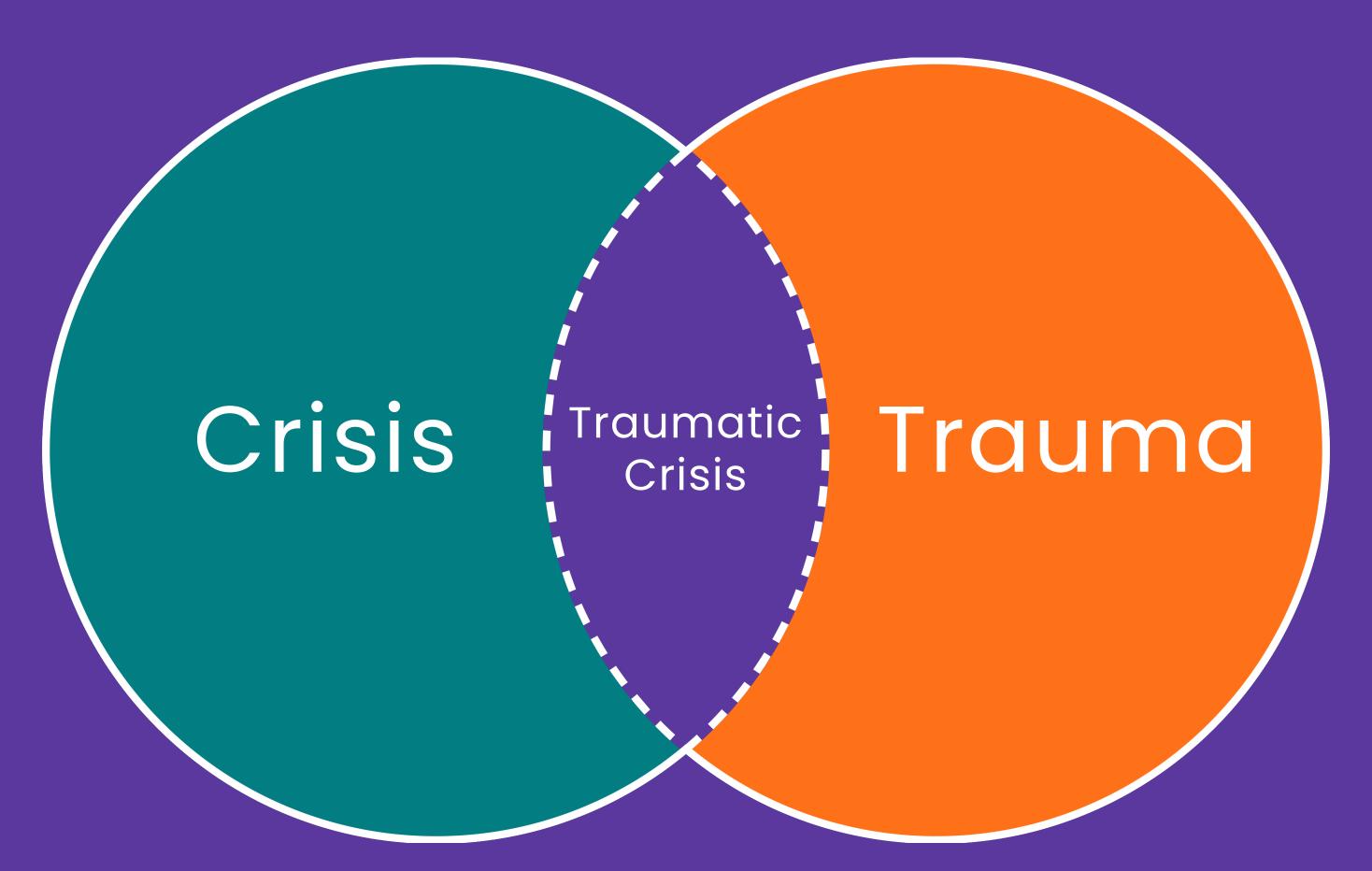


Breck

be back in 15min

roum nformed Ministry

Crises & Traumas



What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic

What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic



Acute Trauma

Single, isolated event or experience

EXAMPLES:

- Car accident
- Natural or Human created disaster
- Single act of violence
- Act of terrorism/mass shooting
- Sudden unexpected loss
- Medical emergency

What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic



Chronic Trauma

Repeated and prolonged experiences

EXAMPLES:

- Prolonged family or community violence
- Prolonged witnessing of family violence
- Long-term illness
- Chronic bullying
- Chronic poverty and related stressors
- Exposure to war, torture, or forced displacement

What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic



Complex Trauma

Children exposed to multiple traumatic events without proper support

EXAMPLES:

- Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse within caregiving systems
- Ongoing neglect by caregivers
- Witnessing domestic violence
- Other forms of chronic violence without support
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Predicator for adult traumatization and victimization

What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic



Historical Trauma

An event or series of events for a culture, country, and/or group of people that have multi-generational impacts

EXAMPLES:

- Single trauma
 - Pearl Harbor
 - September 11th
 - Killing of George Floyd
- Chronic trauma
 - War
 - Slavery
 - Forced displacement

What is Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Historical

Systemic



Systemic Trauma

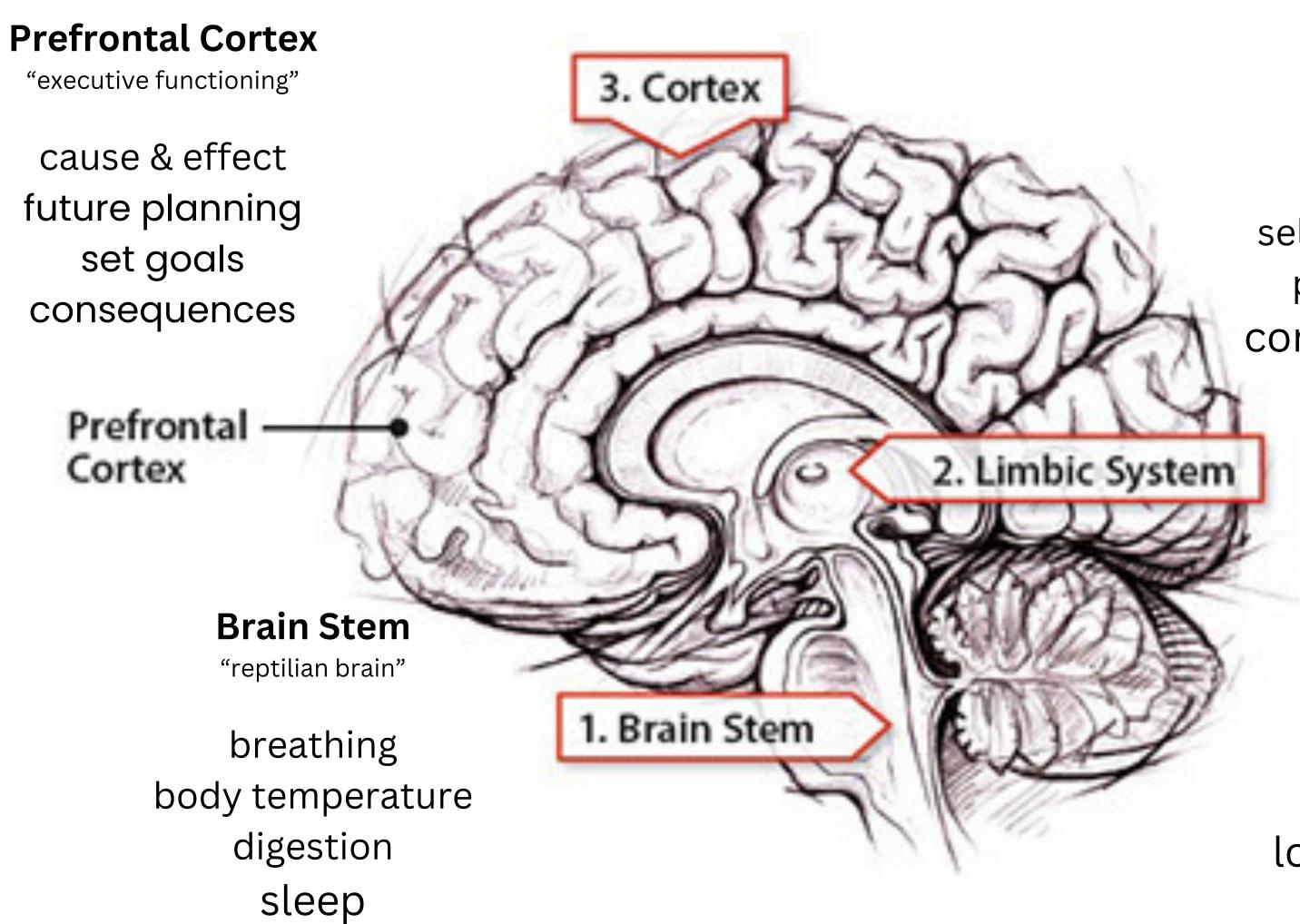
Multi-generational oppression rooted in oppressive beliefs, policies, and/or procedures

EXAMPLES:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Sexism
- Ableism
- Homophobia

Trauma & The Brain





Cortex

"human brain"

language
thought
self-awareness
perception
consciousness
memory

Limbic System

"mammalian brain"

emotion
behavior
motivation
long-term memory



https://www.youtube.com/embed/zWxFlfu2P2Y?si=x10NOnpKsIn1U7Hc&start=7

Trauma May Appear As

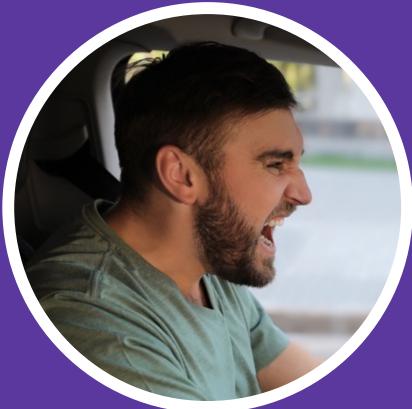
Emotional &
Psychological
Symptoms

Physical Symptoms Cognitive Symptoms Behavioral Symptoms









Recognizing Trauma in Survivors

Suspicion or distrust of systems, people trying to help

Difficultly in making decisions

Memory issues/rumination

Flight/Fight/Freeze

Sensitive or hurt feelings

Detached, might appear not to care

Isolating themselves away from others

Lethargy, depression, physical illness

Understanding the Effects of Harm

Trauma responses are NORMAL responses to ABNORMAL situations

Violence & Trauma

Intimate partner violence, rape, stalking – all of these forms of violence can create toxic stress on the body that is long-lasting and cumulative and can negatively impact a person's health and well-being for the rest of their life.

Howard Spivak, M.D. National Institute of Justice

Trauma Informed Approach

Information

Reflection

Adaptation

Resources

Opportunities

Case Study Activity

- What types of trauma has Abena experience?
- What are the impacts of trauma on Abena?
- Has Jason experienced any traumas?
- Have their children experience any traumas?



Lunch Break

be back at 12:30pm

Empowering Ministry



Guiding Principles

Meet survivors where they are

Define success for each survivor

Know your own biases

Prioritize safety



Guiding Principles

Meet survivors where they are

Define success for each survivor

Know your own biases

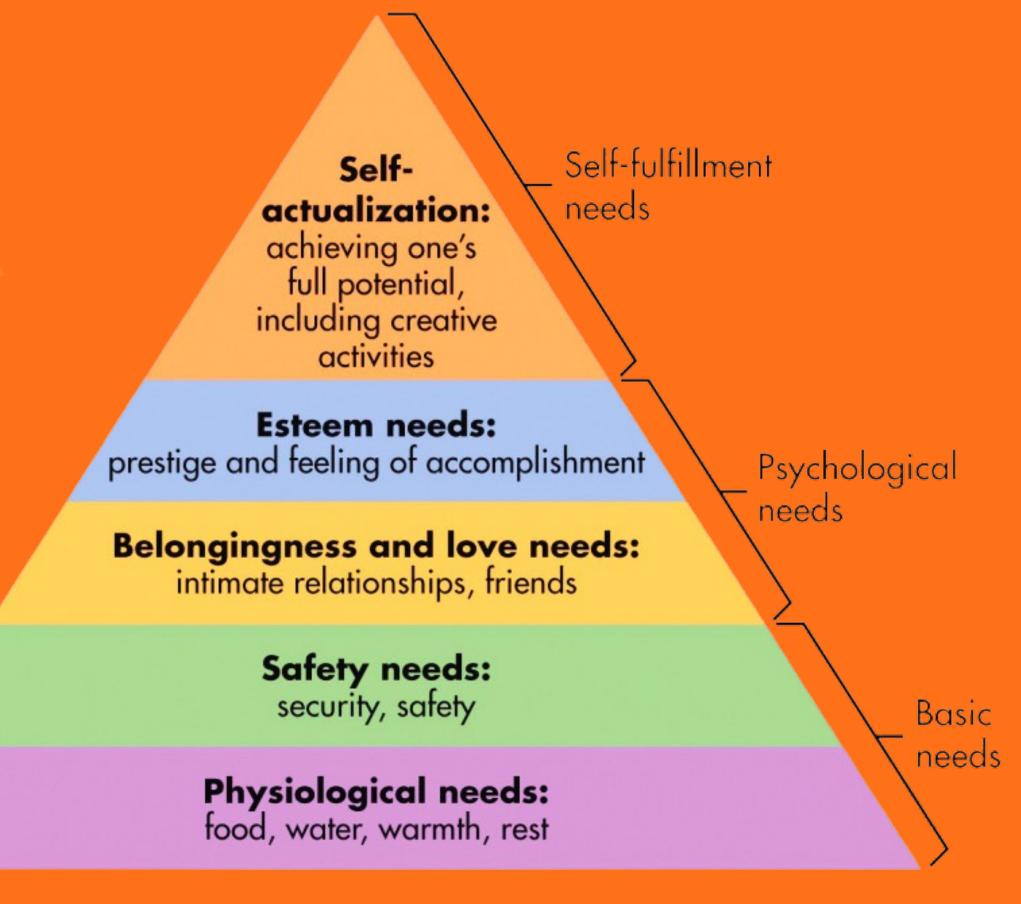
Prioritize safety

Maslow's Hierarch of Needs



https://www.youtube.com/embed/IETlvTNWhPg?si=S3nHJJ_cuFoVRUjn

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs





Guiding Principles

Meet survivors where they are

Define success for each survivor

Know your own biases

Prioritize safety

Stages of Change

Pre-Contemplation

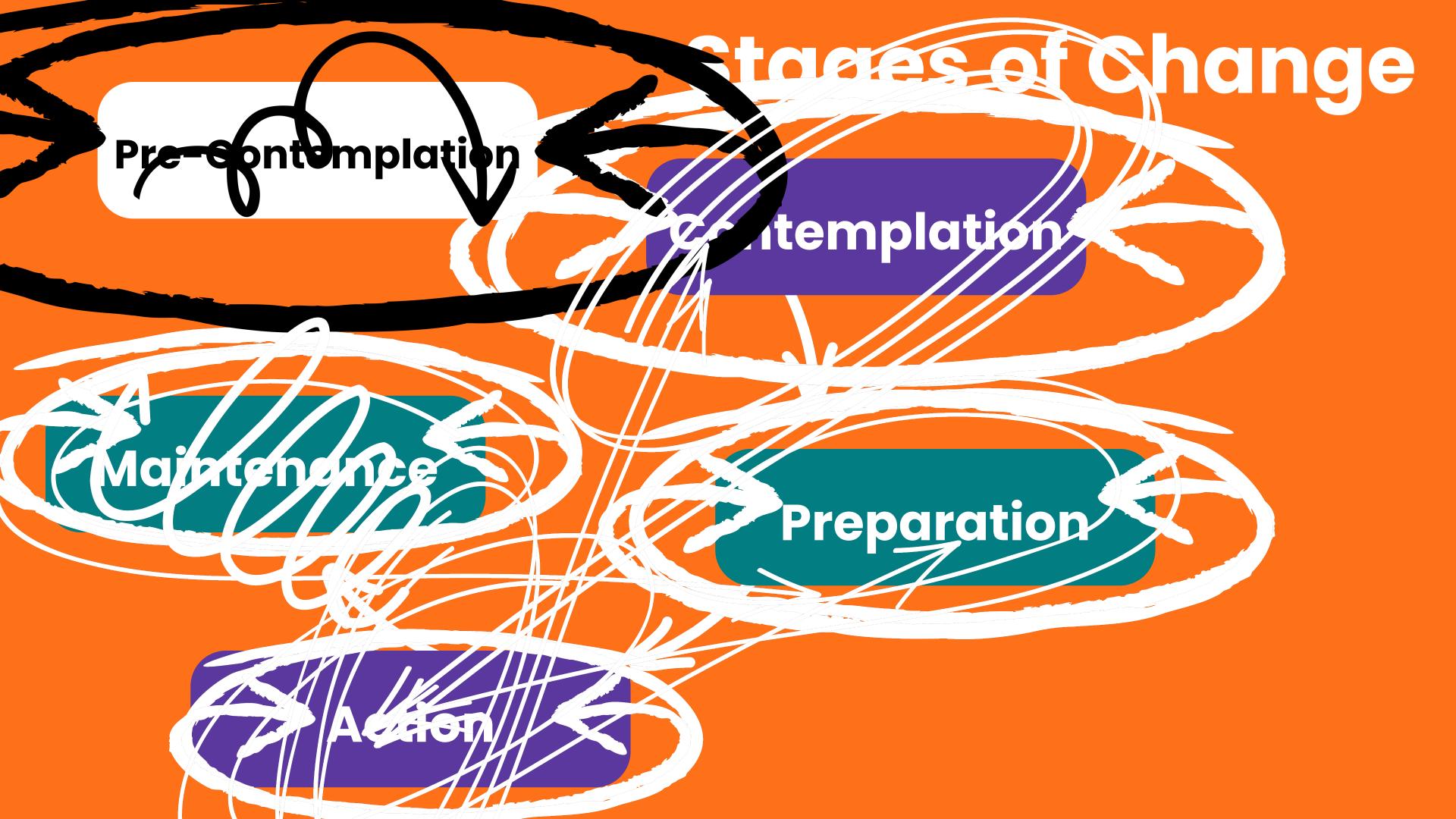
Contemplation

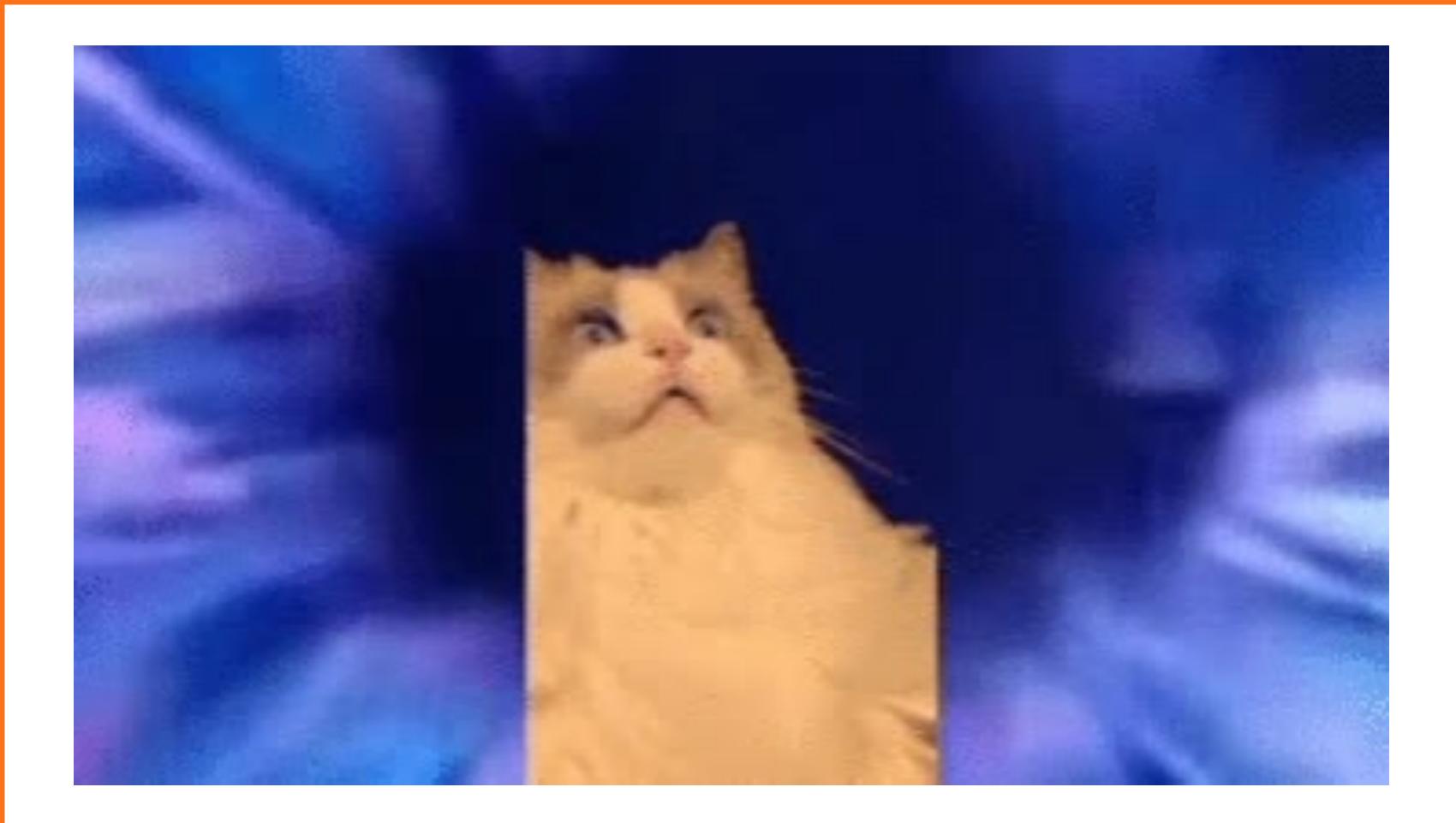


Maintenance

Preparation

Action











Guiding Principles

Meet survivors where they are

Define success for each survivor

Know your own biases

Prioritize safety





Guiding Principles

Meet survivors where they are

Define success for each survivor

Know your own biases

Prioritize safety



Safety of survivor, children, family, friends, property

Physical, psychological, spiritual safety

THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME
FOR A SURVIVOR IS WHEN
THEY DECIDE TO LEAVE AND
ARE LEAVING



Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services



Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services



Discussions happen in private

Conversations are with survivors alone

Information is not shared

This builds trust and safety

EXCEPTIONS:

Undisclosed abuse/neglect to a child, disabled person, or elderly person



Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services



Listen Actively



Empathize



Validate



Ask Strategic Questions



Problem Solve*



Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services

Share that the harm is not their fault



You didn't do anything to cause this.



The only person responsible is the person causing harm



Your spouse is the only person responsible for their own actions.



Communicate that no one deserves to be treated this way



Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and kindness.





Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services

Respect their right to make decisions in their own life

Respect their timeline and when they feel it is safe to take actions

The survivor is the expert in their own life





Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services

The first question we ask in any situation should always be about the safety of those involved

Survivors are experts at navigating their own safety

Not every situation will be easily solved

Sometimes staying is safer than leaving

Supporting choice keeps survivors connected

Consider personal safety and survivor safety and reassess on a continual basis





Strategies

Respect confidentiality

Believe & validate experience

Acknowledge injustice

Respect autonomy

Help plan for safety

Promote access to community services

Know what resources are in your wider community

Learn what services are provided by different resources

Might include housing, medical, childcare, mental health, food, and clothing resources

Have relationship with local family violence program

Keep information on hand and publicly displayed

YOU DO NOT HAVE OR NEED
TO DO THIS ALONE!



Empowering Ministry

Trauma-informed & Survivor Defined

Survivor chooses what services or programs to access

Services or programs meet survivor's goals

Faith Leader shares their knowledge and resources

Faith Leader assists in analyzing risks

Survivor is the Expert

be back in 15min

Activity

Improv Prototyping

- Instructions (2min)
- Setting the stage (3min)
- Action! (5min)
- Group discussion & in-group reenactment (5min)
- Large group reenactment (5min)
- Group discussion & in-group improved reenactment (5min)
- Large group reenactment (5min)
- Group discussion & in-group improved reenactment (5min)
- Large group reenactment (5min)



Reflection

- Reflect on how you would have handled this situation.
 - What opportunities do you see?
 - What ideas for action do you see?
- Partner up and share your reflections, build on your ideas from self-reflection.
- Move to groups of four and share and continue to develop your ideas.
 - Where are there similarities?
 - Where are there differences?
- As a large group, each group shares one important idea that stood out to them



Debrief

What?

What stood out in this training?

What did you observe?

How did you feel exploring these topics?



So What?

Why are your observations important?

What patterns or conclusions do you see?



Now What?

What action makes sense moving forward?

For you personally?

For your faith community?

What if...





Resources

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VIOLENCE FREE FAITH

a program of santolina consulting

www.violencefreefaith.org

