



BEACON
Specialized Living

Trauma Informed Services

Confidential

Introduction

- Beacon Specialized Living serves some of the most troubled and vulnerable persons in society.
- It is safe to assume that most (if not all) of the person we serve have suffered from, and still suffer from, the detrimental affects of past and current Trauma.
- Our Residents have suffered any combination of physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal trauma in the past.
- Some Beacon Specialized Living employees have also experienced past trauma. It is possible for both employees and Residents to be triggered by the events that occur during a typical shift.
- This training is an attempt to shed light on these facts and find a way to provide high quality services within an environment of current and past traumas.



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What is Trauma

- Trauma refers to intense and overwhelming experiences that involve serious loss, threat, or harm to a person's physical and/or emotional well being.
- These experience may occur at any time in a person's life.They may involve a single traumatic event or may be repeated over many years.
- These trauma experiences often overwhelm the persons coping resources.This often leads the person to find a way of coping that may work in the short run but may cause serious harm in the long run.



What is Trauma

- Physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse in childhood or adulthood
- In Childhood
 - Neglect or abandonment (food insufficiency, lack of money to meet basic needs, homelessness)
 - Death of a parent
 - Divorce
 - Family life that includes drug addiction, alcoholism, parental incarceration, violence
- Rape
- Serious medical illness or disease (disabling conditions, loss of function, invasive, and distressing procedures)



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What is Trauma

- War, combat, and civil unrest conditions including torture affecting soldiers and refugee civilians.
- Catastrophic losses of one's home, livelihood, people, and pets due to flood, tornado, hurricane, or other disasters of nature.
- Involved in or witnessing horrific events involving violence, gruesome accidents, or death/serious injury.



Secondary Trauma

- **Secondary Trauma Stress:** Refer to the presence of PTSD symptoms by at least one indirect exposure to traumatic material. *Example: witnessing a Resident in crisis.*
- **Vicarious Trauma:** Refers to changes in the worker resulting from empathetic engagement with the Resident. *Example: listening, helping the Resident through their own traumas.*

Employees can be traumatized by the things they witness at work. It is important for employees to be centered, prepared, and fully aware so they can approach these situations with insight and compassion.



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Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

- **Compassion Fatigue:** This is a less stigmatizing way of describing secondary traumatic stress. Employees with compassion fatigue may feel they have “heard it all” and are “incapable of being shocked”.
- **Burnout:** Refers to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced feeling of personal accomplishment. While it is also work-related, burnout develops as a result of general stress in the workplace.

Stay aware of how you are doing. Take care of yourself at work, and at home. You are doing very difficult work. Most people in the world are not capable of doing this work. What you are doing is remarkably important.



Compassion Satisfaction

- **Compassion Satisfaction:** Refers to the positive feelings that come from good performance as an employee at Beacon Specialized Living. It is characterized by positive relationships with colleagues, and the conviction that your work makes a meaningful contribution to the Residents and society.

For all the trauma that may be witnessed while working with troubled adults, there is just as much satisfaction to be gained! All employees at Beacon Specialized Living have the unique opportunity to MAKE AN ASTRONOMICAL DIFFERENCE in the lives of vulnerable adults.



Trauma Informed Policy and Procedure

The following slides demonstrate how Beacon Specialized Living will approach residents. It is based on policy.

- **Purpose:** To ensure that staff are aware of the effects of trauma and the care delivered by Beacon is informed by this awareness.
- **Policy:** Many of the residents of Beacon have been adversely impacted by life events that have involved abuse, neglect, or trauma. Beacon understands that our treatment must address and be informed by an awareness of this and the possibility that certain events may re-trigger or re-traumatize a resident.



Evaluate the function and intent of behaviors –

Generally speaking, all individuals (and those we support are no exception), want to do well. We must ensure that individuals receive

the right interventions to help them. This involves completing an assessment to determine the function of a behavior, identifying antecedents and consequences of this behavior. Direct Care Staff can/will be asked to track these items, rate progress on treatment plan goals and ensure lack of progress in notes for the clinicians.



Promote a culture of gentleness –

We must ensure that our gentle teaching approach which is non-averse, total support with positive techniques is used by everyone. Our residents should see us as supportive friends who are there to assist them. This approach to challenging behavior will likely eliminate more challenging behaviors which may be the result of the early life experiences and/or in response to incidents around them.

Be gentle and professional in all interactions.

Recognizing Re-traumatizing Events

Consider how frequently many of our residents have been moved between facilities. Or may have recently had their independence taken away. Evaluate the number of times our resident must repeat his/her history and relive emotional, physical, and/or sexual trauma. Some practices, like having a stranger help with hygiene activities or being in the dark at night, could serve as triggers. Watching an argument between other individuals who may remind you of someone from your past could be triggering.

Do what you can to avoid re-traumatizing Residents.



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Transform Language

- “*Attention-seeking, Manipulative, and Aggressive*” are all examples of non-trauma-informed language.
- In a true trauma-informed environment, we serve as “*caregivers, supporters, partners in care, and friends*”.
- **We use language that is respectful, courteous, and compassionate.**
- **We always use words that honor and uphold the Resident’s dignity and respect.**
- **We never swear at or around Residents, stomp or snap at them, or portray impatience.**



Reading Between the Lines with Behavior

Behaviors that we consider as maladaptive could very well have been what saved a Resident in situations related to trauma.

- *For example: In the past, aggression was the only tool someone had to keep themselves safe.*
- **It is important for Staff to understand that Residents often behave in a certain way because it has protected them in the past. Be patient. Be gentle and understanding when Residents act that way.**



The Role of a Caregiver

You have the unique opportunity to reverse the effects and impact of trauma, heal individuals, and create a treatment environment that is safe, comforting, and trustworthy.

Creating such an environment requires us, as professionals, to put ourselves in the position of someone experiencing distress and let go of any perceived “position of power”. It ultimately requires that we, as staff, makes efforts to always be available, kind, courteous, and respectful and to do whatever is needed to ensure that a person is valued and honored.



Thank You!

Thank you for the amazing and difficult work you do.