



**Southeast** (HHS Region 4)

**MHTTC**

**Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network**

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Leading Ourselves & School Communities Through and After Crisis Towards Healing

Presenter: Leora Wolf-Prusan, EdD

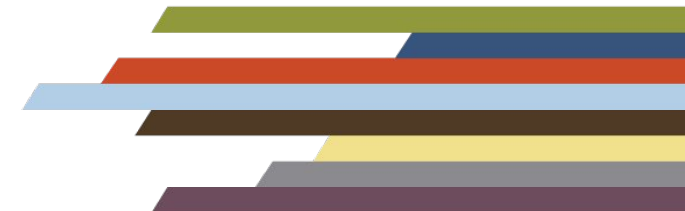
Moderator: Sarah Trello, MPH

School Mental Health Initiative

Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

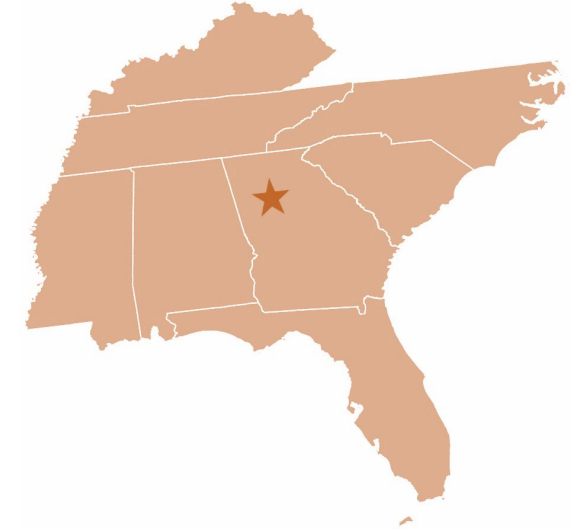
November 8, 2022



# About the Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

The **Southeast MHTTC** is located at the Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University.

**Serve states in HHS Region IV:** Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.



**Our Mission:** To promote the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based mental health services in the Southeastern United States.

**Our Vision:** Widespread access to evidence-based mental health services for those in need.



Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center  
Alabama | Florida | Georgia | Kentucky | Mississippi | North Carolina | South Carolina | Tennessee



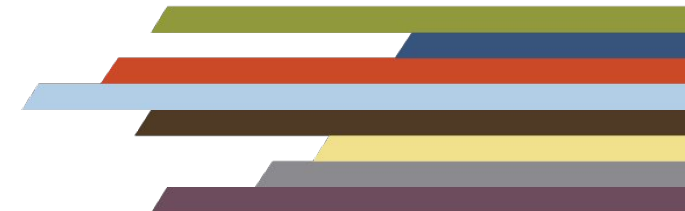
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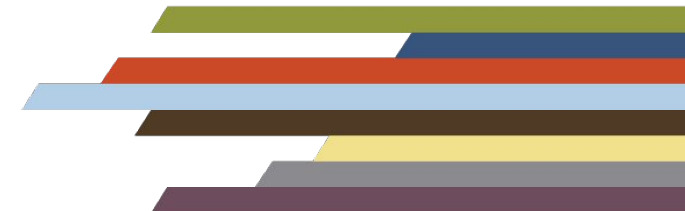
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a link to an **evaluation** form will appear on your screen.

Please take a few minutes to provide us with your  
thoughts as this is a very important part of our funding.

We appreciate your feedback!



# Today's Team



## **Leora Wolf-Prusan, EdD**

- *She/hers*
- Born in San Francisco, currently living in Berkeley / unceded Ohlone land
- Project Director, School Crisis Recovery & Renewal Project
- Loves apple crumble but only the crumble part



SCHOOL CRISIS  
**RECOVERY**  
and  
**RENEWAL**

## WHAT IS SCRR?

*Promoting effective and sustainable change in the ways school communities and school leadership builds the skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary to recover and renew after a crisis.*

[www.schoolcrisishealing.org](http://www.schoolcrisishealing.org)

School crisis readiness is essential. Response is critical.  
**And: what happens after matters, too.**

## **Our Session's Essential Questions**

**What makes our leadership trauma informed-always, in the wake of, and in the aftermath of crisis?**

**How might we continue our trauma-informed leadership during and after a crisis has ended (e.g., COVID 19, a student death, hurricane) to strengthen our school climate?**

# Grounding & Settling in





**Crisis response has a way of feeling reactionary**, even when there is adequate planning on the front end. Traditionally, crisis planning is a process by which the likelihood of an event is assessed, considering location, circumstance, and context. From that point, a set of protocols based on best practice may be developed. **The role of leadership within this process is to prioritize, communicate, and provide direction.**

What is often not considered in the process is **how we are to be as leaders** (e.g., relational leadership); who we involve in our thinking (e.g., inclusive leadership); and in **what ways our plans will mitigate/ increase risk, increase/decrease safety, and also potentially traumatize/heal those we serve** (e.g., complexity thinking).

The inevitability of crisis is a given. However, **how we intentionally hold our own humanity in what can be a protocol-driven process is what separates trauma-informed, healing-centered leadership from business as usual.** The distinction must be made in an organization hoping to transcend the bonds of business to move towards humanity and healing.



# What makes our leadership trauma informed- always, in the wake of, and in the aftermath of crisis?



Relational Focused Culture



Mindful & Reflective Practice



Trauma-Sensitive Communication



Self-Inquiry and Critical Inquiry

# Principles of A Trauma-Informed School

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Equity & Humility



Collaboration, Peer Support & Mutuality



Safety & Stability



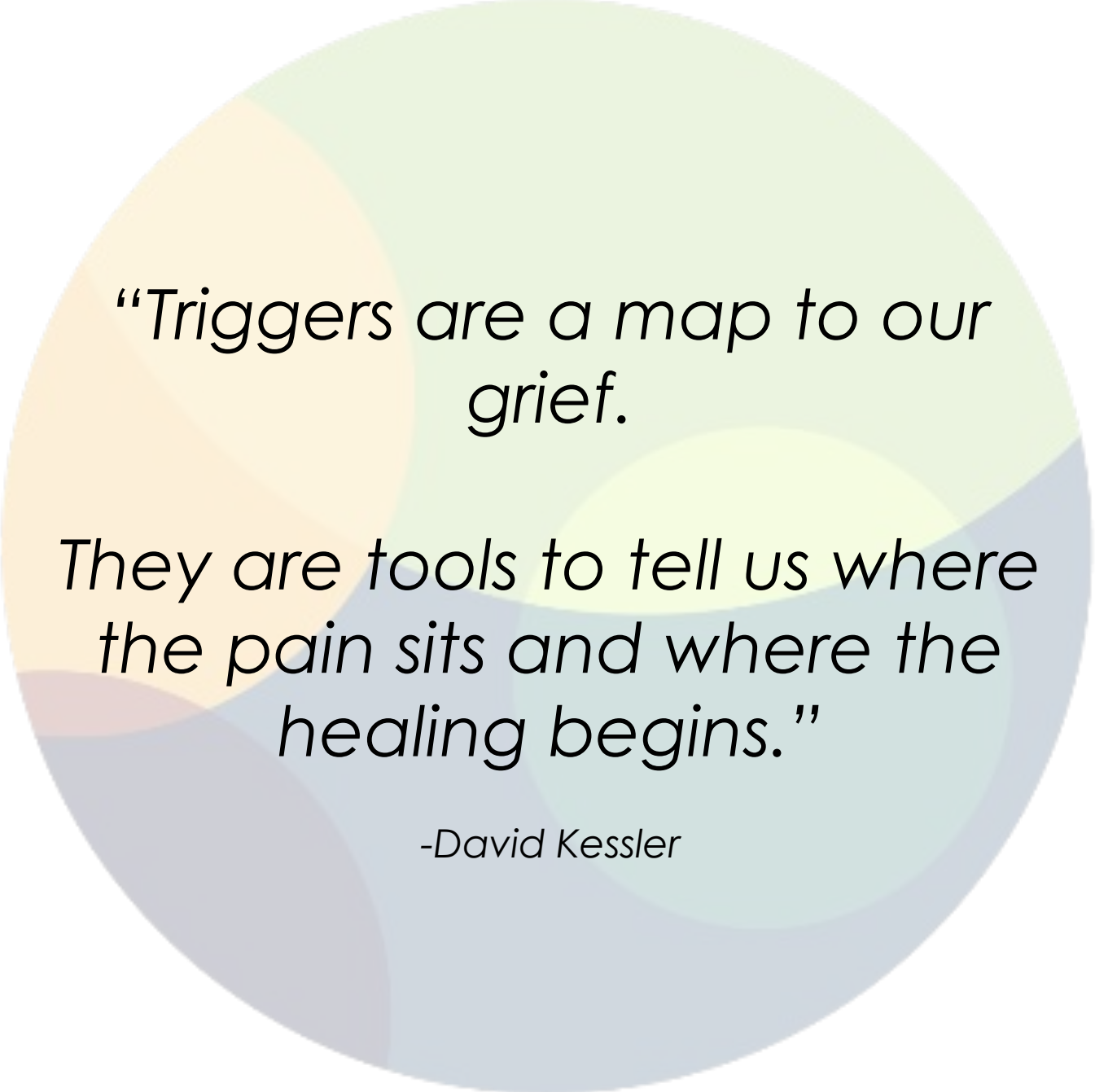
Trustworthiness & Transparency



Empowerment, Voice & Choice



Resilience, Growth, & Change

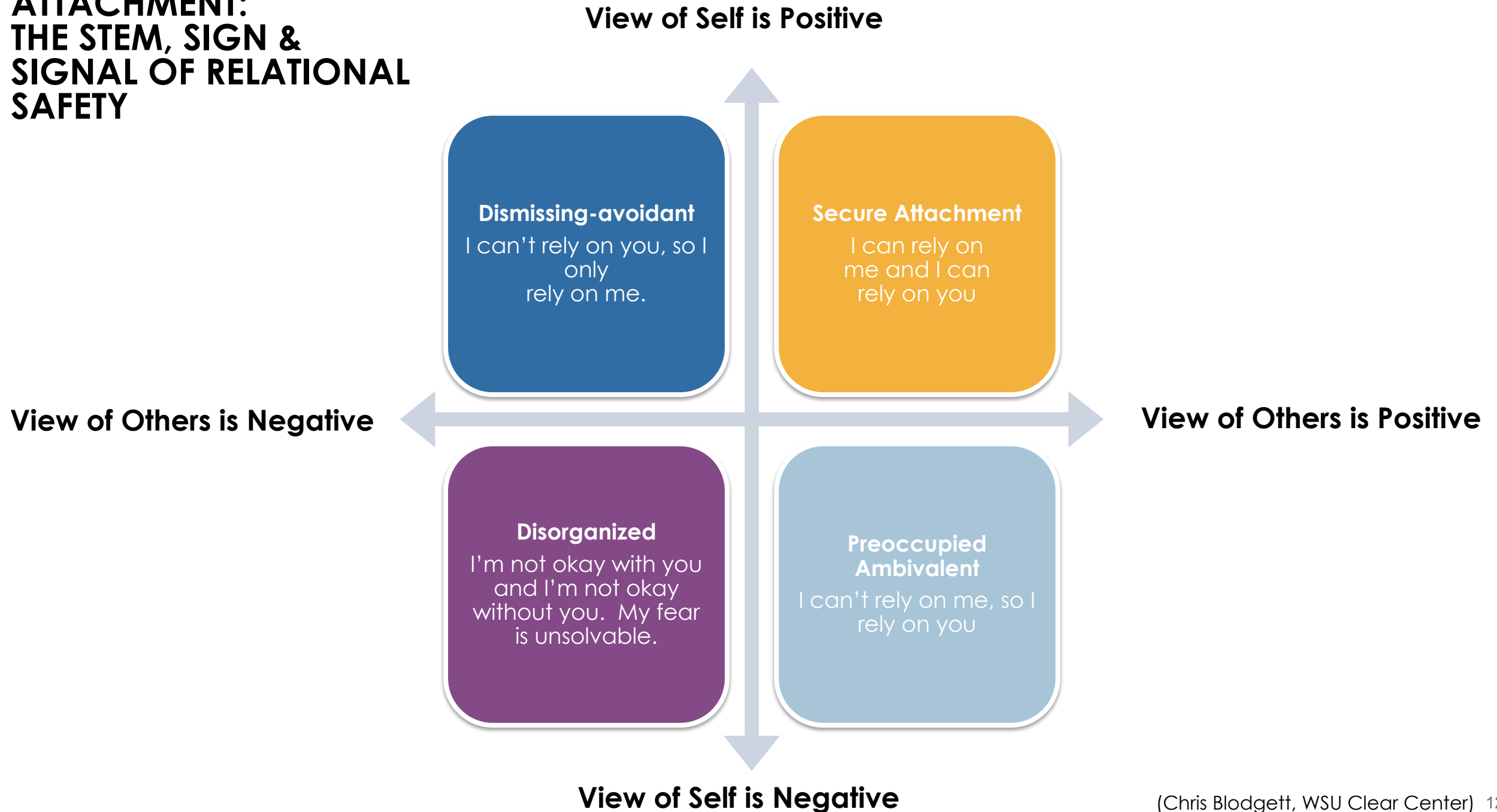


*“Triggers are a map to our  
grief.*

*They are tools to tell us where  
the pain sits and where the  
healing begins.”*

*-David Kessler*

# ATTACHMENT: THE STEM, SIGN & SIGNAL OF RELATIONAL SAFETY



# FIGHT

*Labels: "The Bully" or "Noncompliant"*

It might show up like:

- Verbal confrontation
- Throwing objects
- Physical aggression
- Feel unpredictable or reactive
- Active refusal
- Asks "why" questions

# FLIGHT

*Labels: "Overachiever" or "Hyperactive"*

It might show up like:

- Elopement
- Always moving/busy
- Avoids down time
- Perfectionism
- Obsessive over topic/performance
- Escape into thought/daydream
- Asks "how" questions

# FREEZE

*Labels: "Disengaged" or "The Dropout"*

It might show up like:

- Passive refusal
- Numbness
- Head down
- Avoid conversation
- Binging TV/media
- Often confused/unaware
- Avoids asking questions

# FAWN

*Labels: "Teacher's Pet" or "People Pleaser"*

It might show up like:

- Caves into peer pressure
- Rule follower to please teacher
- Fears saying "no"
- Hyper aware of the moods of others
- Asks lots of "what" questions

**What might be signals of these response patterns in your crisis experience? In your crisis leadership?**

**FIGHT**

**FLIGHT**

**FREEZE**

**FAWN**

## Chat + Consider...

- When you think about yourself, students and colleagues, which experiences and reactions feel most familiar?
- In the face of a crisis, what do you see/hear/feel in students, colleagues and yourself that aligns with these trauma responses?
- Reflecting back on a crisis that has impacted your school, what did you see, hear and feel under each Fs?
- Where do you see stress, trauma, and grief surfacing for staff and students as they experience crisis (past or present)?

Reflecting on **what is happening** and the behaviors that communicate the feelings of our staff and students, we know that some traumas and responses are socially validated, while others are not.

- Whose hurts has mattered most? What evidence supports your response?
- What experiences draw up greater empathy, and which experiences are more challenging for you to understand?
- How does this learning compel us differently?

# Leading Schools/ School Communities Through Big Things



## Trauma Organized

Organizations impacted by stress, operating in silos, avoidant of issues and isolated in their practices or service delivery. These organizations can be trauma inducing.

- Reactive
- Reliving/retelling
- Avoiding/numbing
- Fragmented
- Authoritarian leadership

## Trauma Informed

These are organizations that develop a shared language to define, normalize and address the impact of trauma on clients and workforce. They operate from a foundational understanding of the nature and impact of trauma.

- Shared language
- Foundational understanding of trauma and healing
- Understanding of the nature and impact of trauma

## Healing Organization

Organizations where staff policies, procedures, services and treatment models apply an understanding of trauma embedded within them. Their approaches to providing services are trauma-shielding or trauma-reducing.

- Reflective
- Collaborative
- Culture of learning
- Making meaning out of the past
- Growth- and prevention-oriented
- Relational leadership

# School Mental Health Crisis Leadership

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**The individual, collective, organizational, and systemic skills, knowledge, and competencies to create school conditions, climates, and cultures that empower others to navigate uncertainty and harm.**

**This leadership is based on awareness and acceptance of the responsibility and accountability to help all students, staff, and partners repair, reconnect, regulate, and restore.**

**We start with us:  
Leading Ourselves**

# Landscape and Mirror

*What needs healing and transformation inside me in order to sustain transformation and healing in my classrooms, schools, organizations?*

*What needs healing and transformation inside us to stabilize and reimagine our school's way of being?*



# Reflection Questions for School Crisis Leaders

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What is your relationship to ambiguity? To loss of control? To threat, a loss of regularity, and normalcy?



What is your personal relationship to crises? To grief? How might that impact your professional relationship to crisis management and grief sensitive leadership?



How might your relationship and responsibility to information (first vs. secondary responders) impact the way you become ready for a crisis or respond to one?



What is your personal narrative of grief, crisis, and/or trauma...and how might that impact how you lead organizationally?

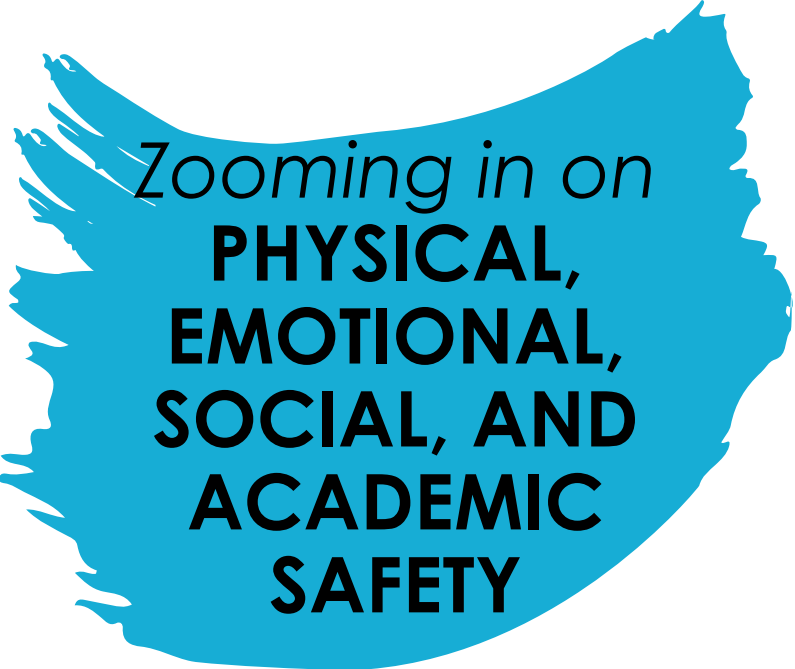
# In, Among, With, and Through

1. LEADING *In* GRIEF
2. LEADING *Among* GRIEF
3. LEADING *With* GRIEF
4. LEADING *Through* Grief

Notice, Name, Need, and Nurture.

<https://optify.io/2020/09/18/the-four-intersections-of-leadership-grief/>

<https://optify.io/2021/02/04/leading-through-grief/>



Zooming in on  
**PHYSICAL,  
EMOTIONAL,  
SOCIAL, AND  
ACADEMIC  
SAFETY**

**“Safety is structural, institutional,  
organizational, intergenerational,  
familial, and interpersonal.”**

*RYSE co-director Kanwarpal Dhaliwal*

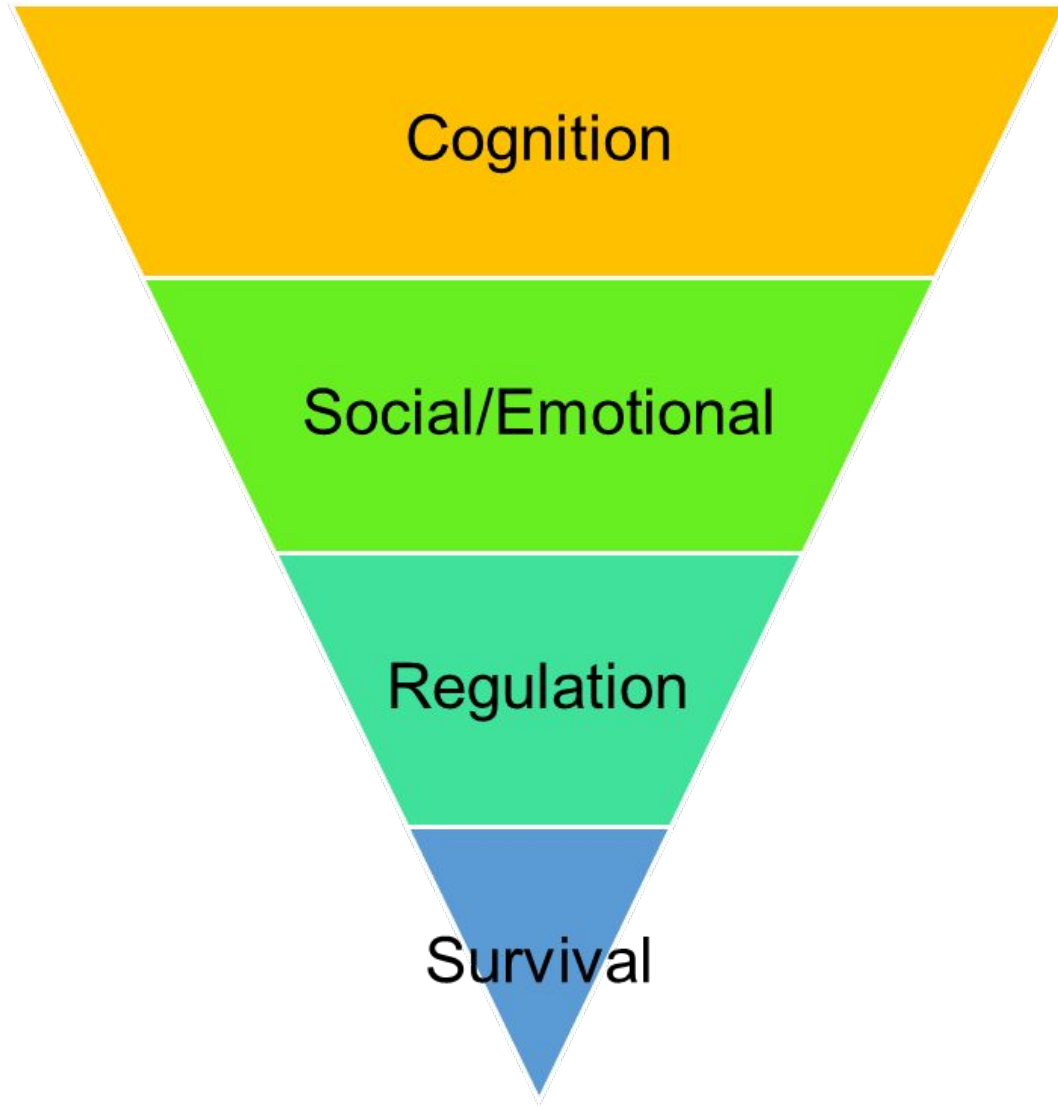
**“Feeling safe is the treatment and  
creating safety is the work.”**

*Dr. Peter Levine*

***Reflection questions:***

- When this safety is present, how do you feel? Physically? Emotionally?
- What is the definition/meaning of safety to you personally?
- How is that similar for you in your professional role? Are there differences?

**Resourced brain and body allocation**



Cognition

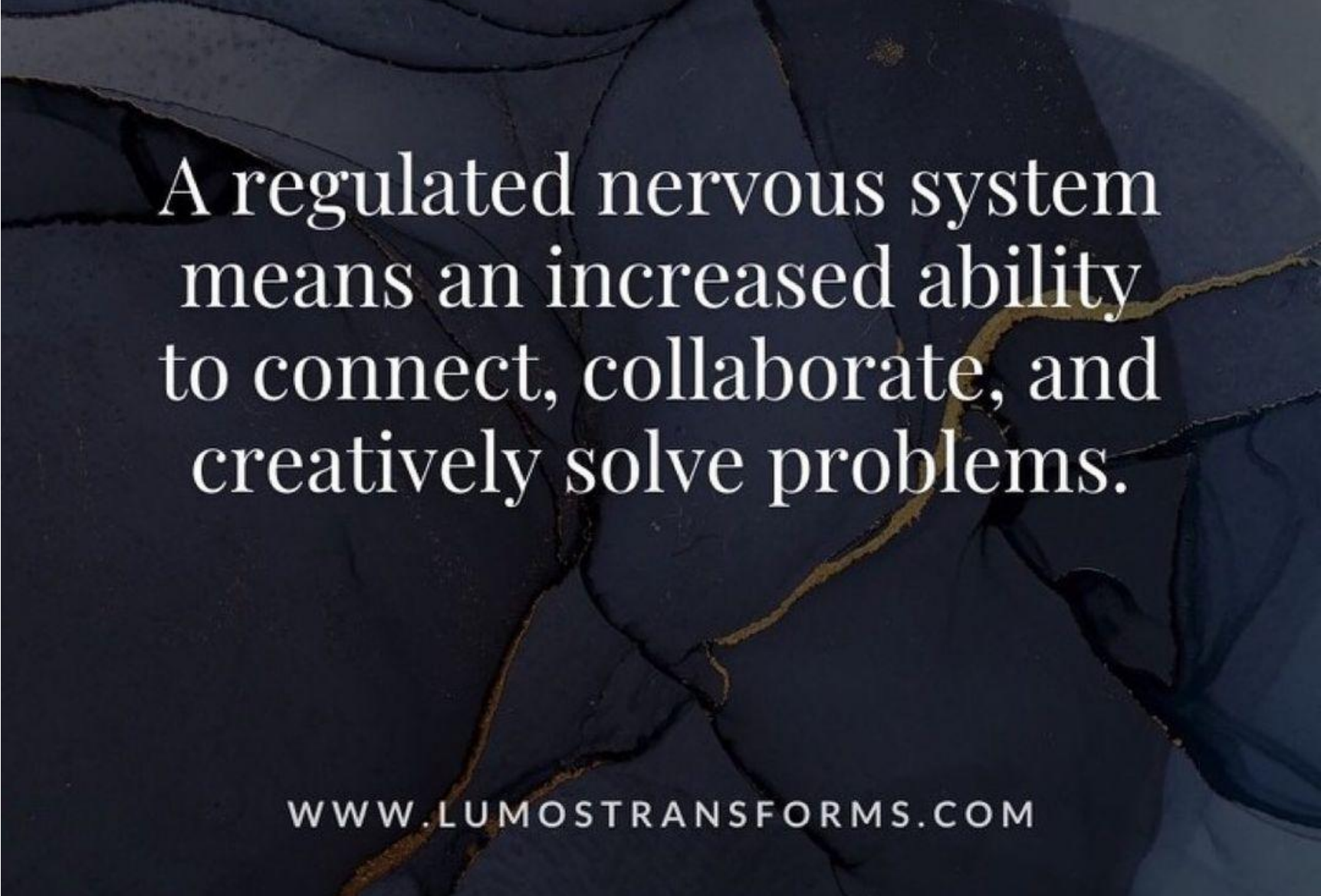
Social/  
Emotional

Regulation

Survival

**Resourcing brain and body allocation**





A regulated nervous system  
means an increased ability  
to connect, collaborate, and  
creatively solve problems.

[WWW.LUMOSTRANSFORMS.COM](http://WWW.LUMOSTRANSFORMS.COM)

**Re-arriving: I heard**

**Re-orienting: I feel**

**Re-membering: I want to hold**



**Leading our school systems:  
our teams, our colleagues,  
our partners, our ecosystems**

# Safety vs Protection → From Trauma Informed to Healing Centered

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*“The biggest problem with contemporary approaches is to risk the illusion of safety as a human right that can be controlled as a variable in advance - it cannot. In fact, there is no such thing as safety in Aboriginal worldviews. We have no word for it in our languages.*

*Safety provided by an invisible hierarchy is complete anathema to our way of being. There is no agency in safety, which places a person in a passive role at the mercy of authorities who may or may not intervene when needed. So we have no word for safety or risk...however we have plenty of words for protection.*

**Protection has two protocols:  
The first is to look out for yourself.  
The second is to look out for the people around you.**

*This is such a wonderful way to live: knowing that you have the power to defend yourself and the ones you love while also being intensely aware that at any given moment there are dozens of people who are watching your back as you watch theirs.*

*This is the interdependence that our kinship pairs and network of pairs offer.”*

*-Tyson Yunkaporta*

# Renewing our Leadership: Reimagining what should and could be



## Root Cause Reflection & Analysis

- What might be the underlying issues that contributed to the crisis?
- Where is there need for deeper reflection?
- What may have surfaced through the crisis that we need to address?



## Meaning Making

- What are the stories we are telling about the rupture- as individuals and as a collective?
- Who is defining the storytelling?
- What outcomes do we see from the stories being told?
- Whose stories are being centered and uplifted? Why?



## Restoration and Identity Shifts

- What might it look like to move forward without moving on?
- How are we redefining ourselves and our school community?



## Healing & Repairing

- Where might harm have been caused during response and recovery? How do we make it right?
- How do people define healing as individuals?
- How do we create a collective acknowledgement or affirmation of that healing?
- Who needs an apology? Who needs to apologize?

# Barriers



# Generators

- Large caseloads-overextension due to work demands
- Large percentage of clients (in our case, students) who have trauma experiences
- Lack of personal support in the workplace
- Cultural clash between students and school (and teachers serve as the unintentional cultural broker)
- Moral injury
- Barriers to helper seeking help—concerns about confidentiality, fear of stigmatization
- Isolation; Onus on the individual
- Toxicity in the workplace
- Lack of resources, personnel, and time to complete a job; overextension
- Absence of peer support and reflective supervision
- *Others?*

- Learning from those who have experienced chronic illness; structural in-access to healing
- Leadership and modeling
- Low Impact Disclosure or Healthy debriefing
- Boundaries (navigating, negotiating)
- Connection to purpose
- Shared responsibility
- Connection and meaning making
- Reflective supervision
- Cultural agreements for addressing rupture & repair
- Grief navigation
- Boundary consciousness and responsiveness
- Hope match
- Vicarious resilience
- *Others?*



**Leading with our students  
& alumni**

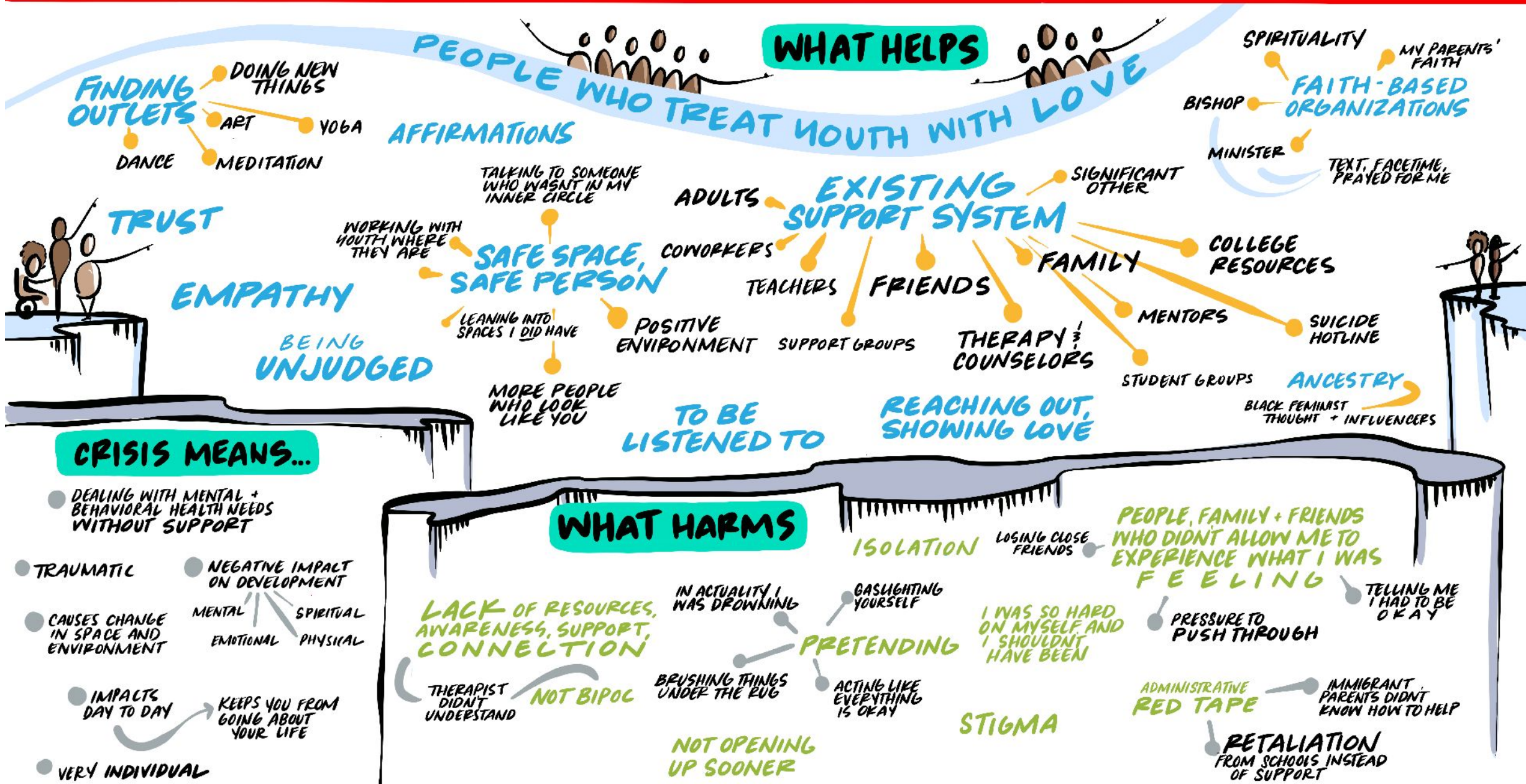
# What might harm and help young people as they navigate[d] school-based crises?

## The following eight questions guided the listening sessions:

1. How would you define crisis in your terms?
2. How do you think a school administration defines and handles crisis?
3. What did crisis look like for you?
4. What has helped and harmed you in your recovery and renewal process after a crisis occurred?
5. Did you reach out for support? If yes, who did you reach out to?
6. How can schools support youth after crisis? What helps and what harms?
7. How can communities better support youth after a crisis? What helps and what harms?
8. How can providers support youth after a crisis occurs? What helps and what harms?



# LISTENING SESSIONS ON SCHOOL CRISIS AND RECOVERY



# LISTENING SESSIONS ON SCHOOL CRISIS AND RECOVERY

## HOW TO HELP YOUTH AFTER CRISIS: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YOUTH WHO HAVE BEEN THROUGH CRISIS

### WHAT HELPS

#### SCHOOLS

**KNOW WHAT CRISIS IS**

BROADER DEFINITION

PROPER REPRESENTATION

CAN YOU UNDERSTAND THE YOUTH?

PEER TO PEER SUPPORT

CHECK YOUR BIAS

**ASK AND LISTEN**

WHAT DO YOU NEED + WANT?

**COMMUNICATE**  
WHAT RESOURCES ARE

**CREATE A PLAN**

YOUNG PERSON STEERS

YOUTH VOICE, YOUTH CHOICE

**FOLLOW UP**

NOT JUST THROUGH EMAIL

CHECK IN AT HOME, DORM

### WHAT HARMS

NOT GIVING STUDENT CONTROL

LEAVING IT UP TO ADMINISTRATION

INCLUDE TEACHERS + OTHER SUPPORTS

#### COMMUNITY

**BE A CONNECTOR**  
BETWEEN SUPPORT SYSTEMS

DON'T LEAVE IT TO ONE GROUP

**TRAINING**

STUDENTS

HOW TO TALK THINGS THROUGH

TEACHERS, FAMILY, PROVIDERS

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS IN CRISIS, WHAT TO EXPECT

ABOUT CRISIS, MENTAL HEALTH

BE CAREFUL HIRING COUNSELORS

STIGMA

JUDGMENT

SYSTEMS STEERING YOUTH AWAY FROM COMMUNITY

**SHARE EXPERIENCES**

MAKE THINGS WE GO THROUGH LESS TABOO

GROUPS

SO YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALONE

**BE IN COMMUNITY**  
WITH LIKEMINDED INDIVIDUALS

**YOUTH EVENTS**

MENTORING PROGRAMS

MENTAL HEALTH FAIR

OPEN MIND  
OPEN HEART

#### PROVIDERS

**PERSPECTIVES + REPRESENTATION**

DIVERSIFY STAFF AND PROGRAMS

MORE PEOPLE TO TALK TO

**LISTEN**

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**PROVIDE RESOURCES**

MAKE THEM EQUITABLE

FUND THEM

CHOOSING IGNORANCE

NEGLECT  
"IT'LL RESOLVE ITSELF"

**Closing time.**

## 1. Intentions

- How might adapting and adopting a crisis leadership stance support your personal work, your personal goals?
- What values of yours connect to this work?

## 2. Concerns

- What worries you about your team, your school community, your skills when you imagine this coming year?
- What might get in your way from leading with safety, dignity and belonging at the forefront?
- Where are our potholes and pitfalls?

### ICBD: Intentions, Concerns, Boundaries, and Dreams

## 3. Boundaries

- What do you need to feel efficacious and supported in this work?
- How might you preserve your safety, dignity, autonomy and belonging?
- What shared working agreements will help your team center safety, dignity and belonging?

## 4. Dreams

- If this work (recovery, renewal) comes alive, what will be true?
- How will you feel? Where will you be?
- What data will change?

THANK YOU. TRULY.

SO... what's your one elegant next step?



# Register for Upcoming Sessions

School Mental Health Crisis Community of Practice:  
A Three-Part Coaching Series for Leaders

Session 1: 11/29, 12–1 pm EST

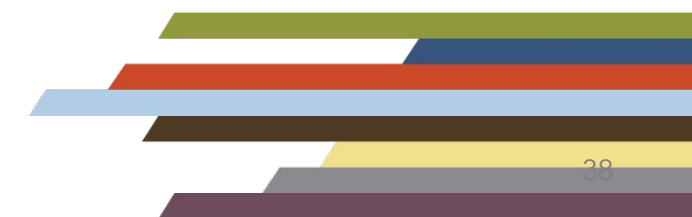
[Register here](#)

Session 2: 12/6, 12-1pm EST

[Register here](#)

Session 3: 12/13 12-1pm EST

[Register here](#)



# Upcoming SCRR Opportunities



**Trauma Informed School Systems for School Crisis Recovery & Renewal: Drop-In Hours to Elevate our Practice** (September – November 2022)

[Learn more and register](#)

**Life After Loss Table: A space for to process, make meaning, and integrate experiences of student death and loss as educators** (September – December 2022)

[Learn more and register](#)

**School-Based Suicide Postvention from a Liberated Lens: A Community of Practice** (October 2022 – May 2023)

[Learn more & register](#)

**Honoring Grief in our Classrooms** (October 2022 – March 2023)

[Learn more and register](#)

**SCRR's Winter 2022 Network of Practice** (December 8, 2022)

[Learn more and register](#)

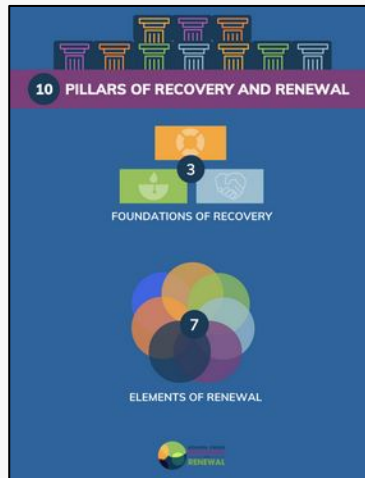
**A Moment of Pause: Time to Cultivate Trauma Informed Communication** (October – November 2022)

[Learn more and register](#)

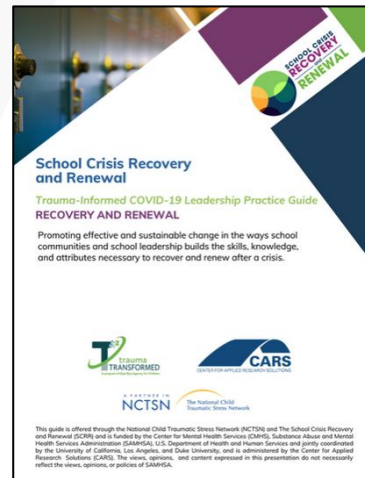
**Trauma Informed School Systems for Crisis Recovery and Renewal** (December 1, 2022)

[Learn more and register](#)

# SCRR Resources <https://schoolcrisishealing.org/scrr-our-resources/>



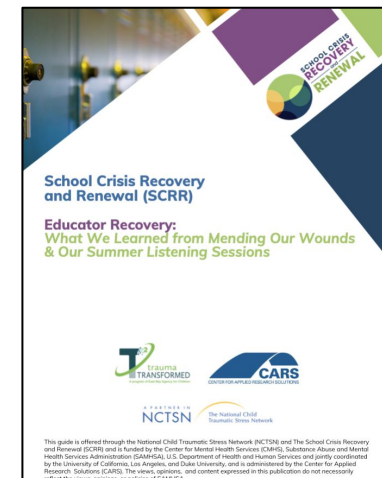
10 Pillars of School Crisis Recovery and Renewal



Trauma-Informed COVID-19 Leadership Practice Guide for Recovery and Renewal

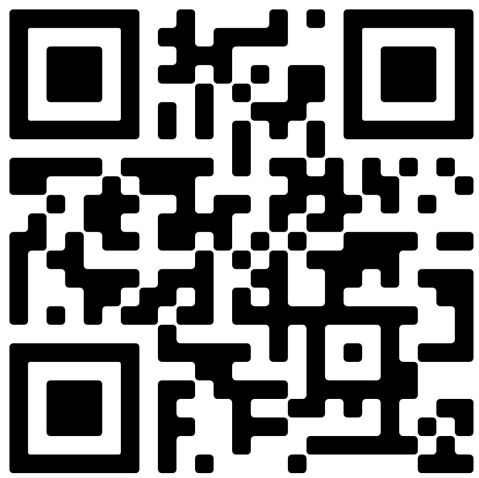


What Helps & What Harms Students' Crises Recovery? Young Adult Reflective Listening Sessions



School Crisis Recovery & Renewal (SCRR) Educator Recovery: What We Learned from Mending Our





Please scan the  
QR code to join  
our SCRR  
community!



SCAN ME

### Contact Info

**Email:** [SCRR@cars-rp.org](mailto:SCRR@cars-rp.org)

**Phone:** (888) 597.0995

**Website:** [www.schoolcrisishealing.org](http://www.schoolcrisishealing.org)

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SCHOOL CRISIS  
**RECOVERY**  
and  
**RENEWAL**

# OUR SCRR Project TEAM



SCHOOL CRISIS  
**RECOVERY**  
and  
**RENEWAL**

The SCRR Project is a collaborative effort between **The Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS)** and **Trauma Transformed (T2)** and strongly informed by partnership with the **National Center for School Crisis Bereavement** and our team of school crisis recovery and renewal experts from across the country.

Funded by SAMHSA, we are part of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.





## OUR GOAL

To promote evidence-based, culturally responsive crisis continuum wrap around services to promote effective and sustainable change in ways school leadership builds the skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary to recover and renew after a crisis.

## OUR ROLE

We offer a collaborative SCRR model in order to provide training, technical assistance (TTA), and resource dissemination to school leadership, mental health providers, educators, and staff that promotes long-term recovery and renewal after school crisis.



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We appreciate your feedback!



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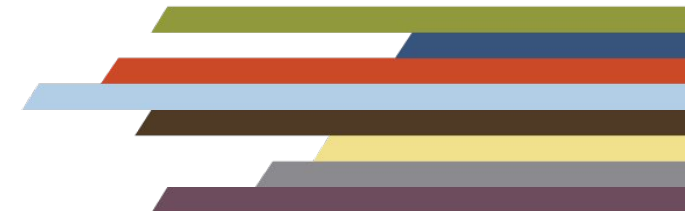
<https://southeastmhttc.org/listserv/>

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This training is offered through the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and The School Crisis Recovery and Renewal (SCRR) and is funded by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and jointly coordinated by the University of California, Los Angeles, and Duke University, and is administered by the Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS). The views, opinions, and content expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of SAMHSA.

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the impact of substance abuse and  
mental illness on America's communities.

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