



Trauma Informed Care

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AIMS

To gain an understanding of:

- What is trauma?
- Impacts and effects of trauma
- Trauma informed care
- Trauma-informed frameworks for practice
- Self-care

Self-care and group agreement

- If you need to take a break, feel free.
- If you need to talk to someone:
 - Chat with a trusted person from church
 - Contact the Presbyterian Counselling Services (Jericho Road) 1800 818 133 OR
 - Lifeline 13 11 14
- Respect and listen to others

Why is trauma-informed care important for the church?

- The heart of Jesus and God.
- We want ministry-places to be safe – for all involved.
- It aims to minimise re-traumatising.
- It opens us to listening.



Why is trauma-informed care important for the church?

'Rebuilding broken lives is not a personal calling or one of the church's marginal ministries. It is a fundamental expression of the gospel. Jesus declared his mission was 'to proclaim good news to the poor'...'to set the oppressed free' (Luke 4:18)'

Darby Strickland, *When it's Trauma*, page 243

How many Australians have experienced a traumatic event in their lifetime?

- 1 in 10
- 1 in 5
- 1 in 2
- 1 in ?



An estimated **57%** to **75%** of Australians
will experience a potentially traumatic
event in their lifetime.

What is trauma?

“Traumatic events...overwhelm the
ordinary adaptations to life”

Herman, 1992

Types of Trauma

Acute Trauma

- Single incident of high distress
- Natural disaster
- Time bound
 - E.g. sudden death, car accident, injury

Complex Trauma

- Accumulative/repetitive
- Often involve trusting relationships
- No end/resolution
 - E.g. child sexual abuse, domestic violence, chronic health

Factors which can affect our experience of trauma

Past history

Age & life-stage

Personality

Supports

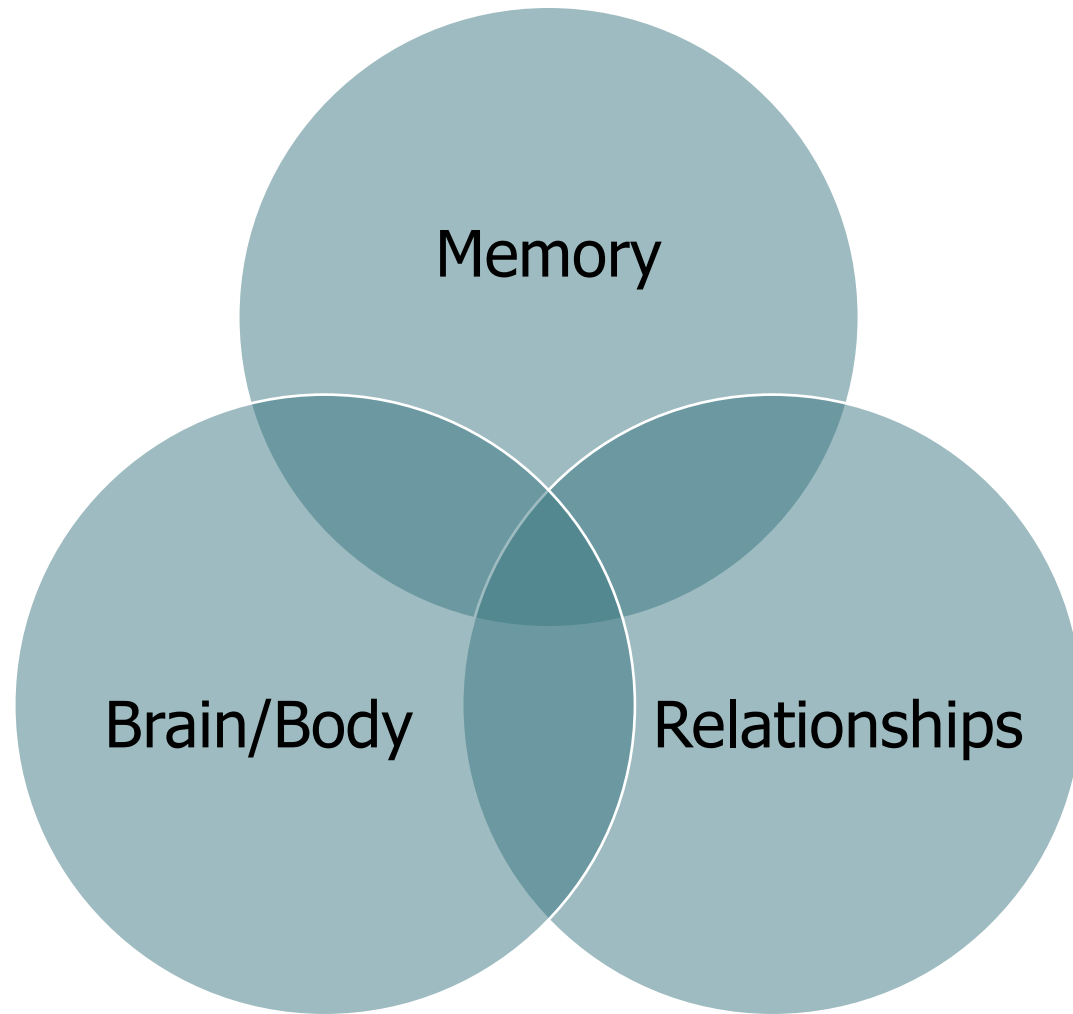
The event itself

Spiritual beliefs

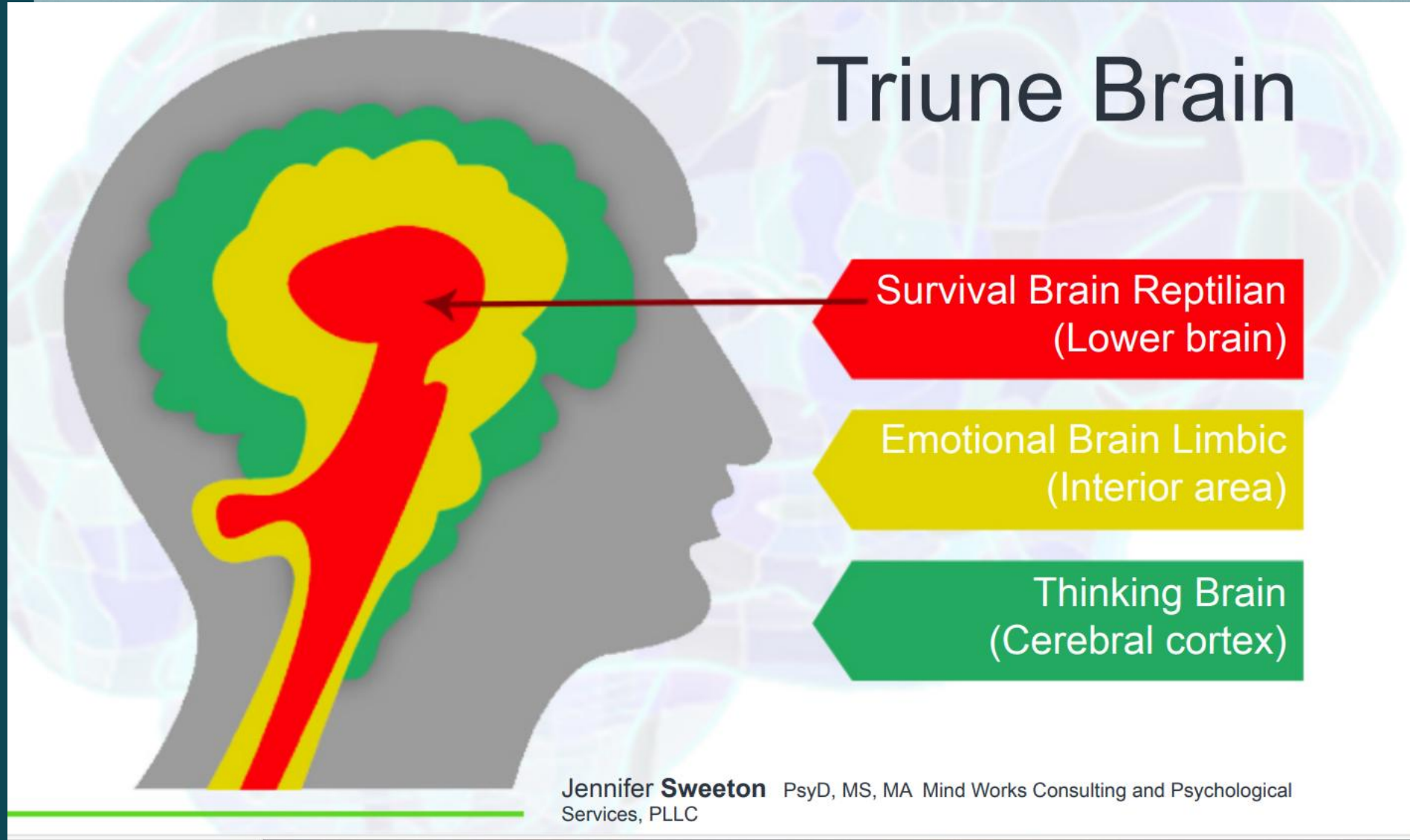
Culture

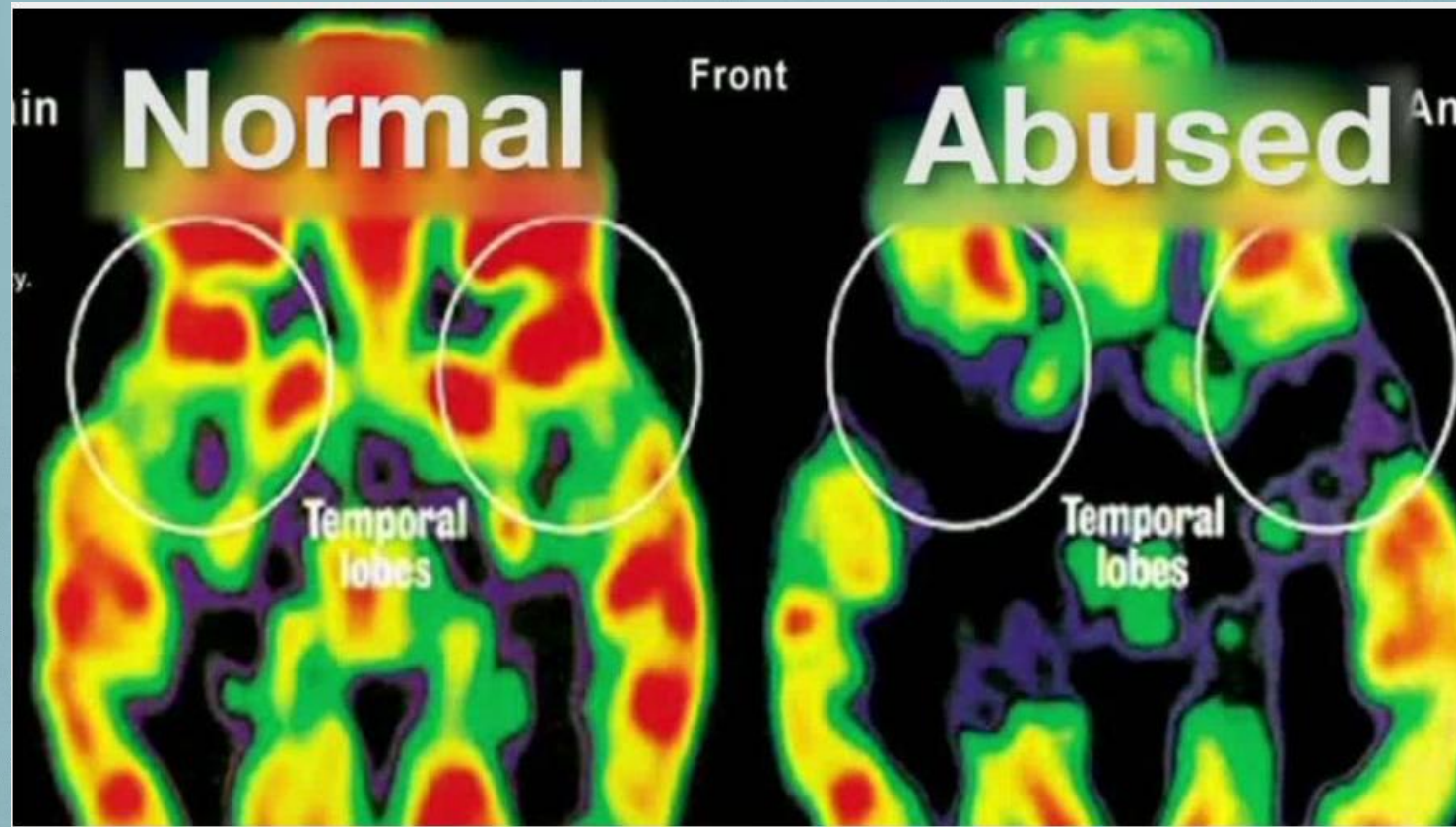
Community response

How trauma can affect response



The brain and stress





<https://salud-america.org/4-ways-childhood-trauma-changes-childs-brain-body/>

Stress Response



freeze



fight



flight



chronic pain

intrusive memories

feeling numb

overwhelm

hypervigilance

feeling 'out of body'

poor concentration

self-destructive behaviours

insomnia

shame

Hand model of the brain – Dan Siegel



Trauma and Relationships

- Isolation
- Helplessness
- Loss of trust
- Crisis of faith
- Shame
- Anger



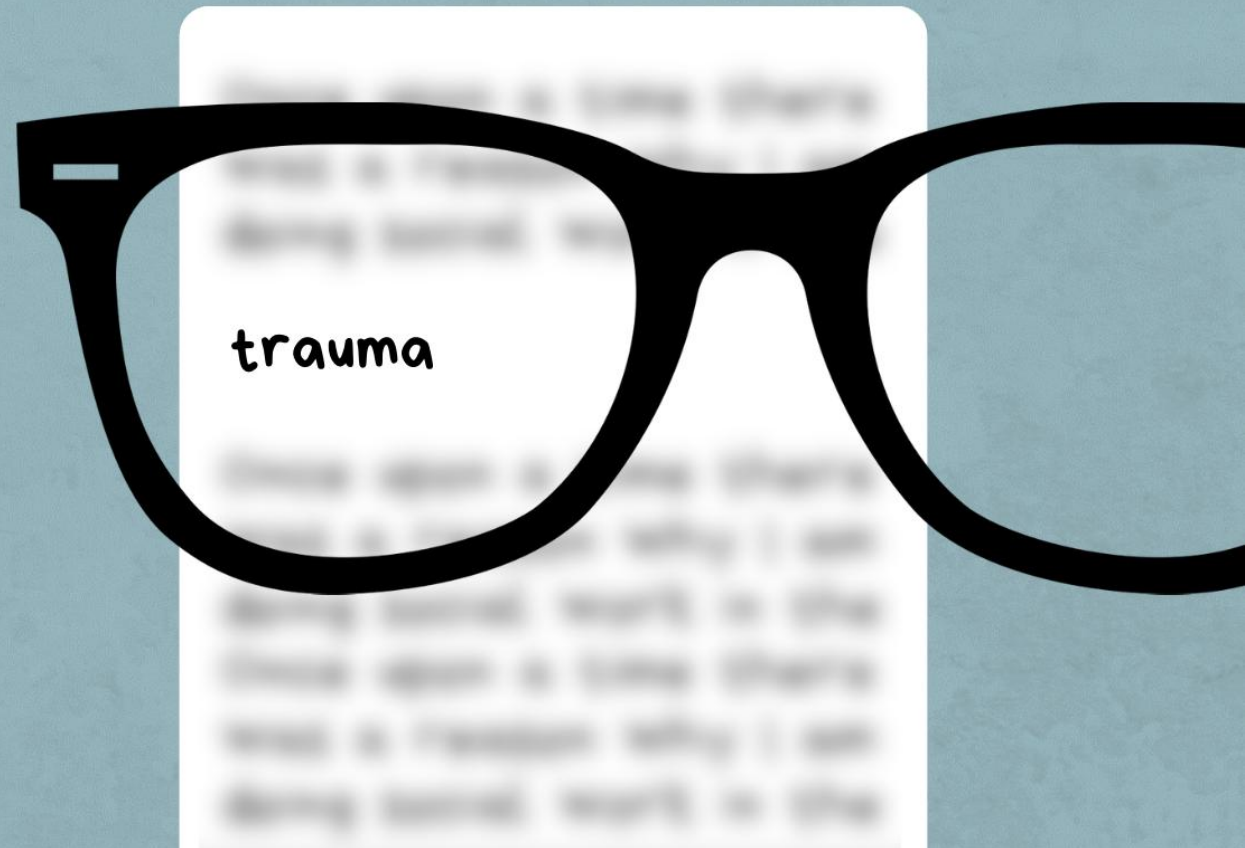
Trauma and Relationships

- "This guy is out of control!"
- "Why does she overreact to everything?"
- "What he's saying doesn't make any sense!"
- "She doesn't remember anything I tell her!"
- "She seems so detached/aloof"
- "How can they think God has forgotten them?"



What is trauma-informed care?

- Mindset/lens
- It is an approach to ALL people, not just those who we know are experiencing trauma



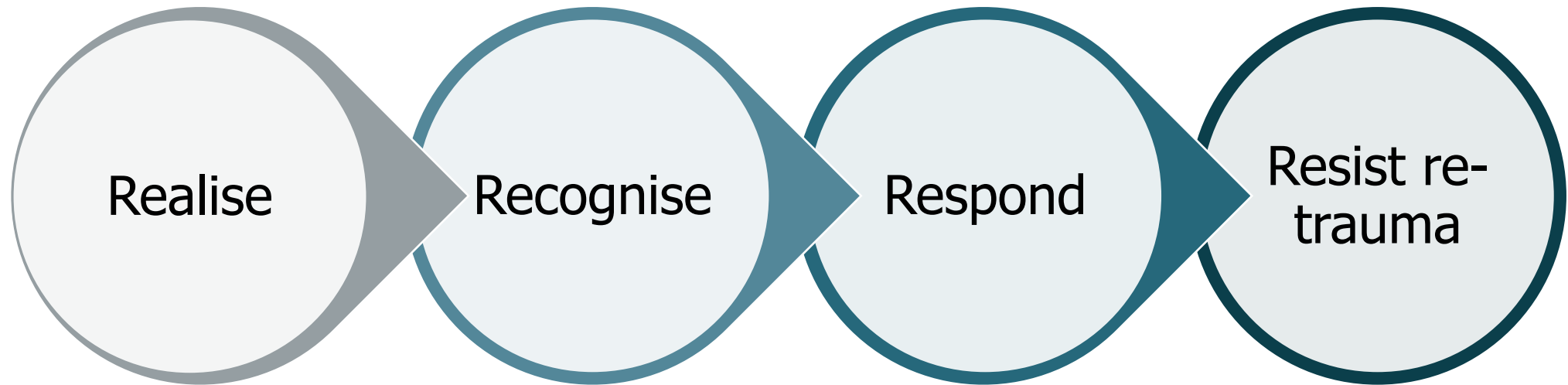
What is wrong
with you?



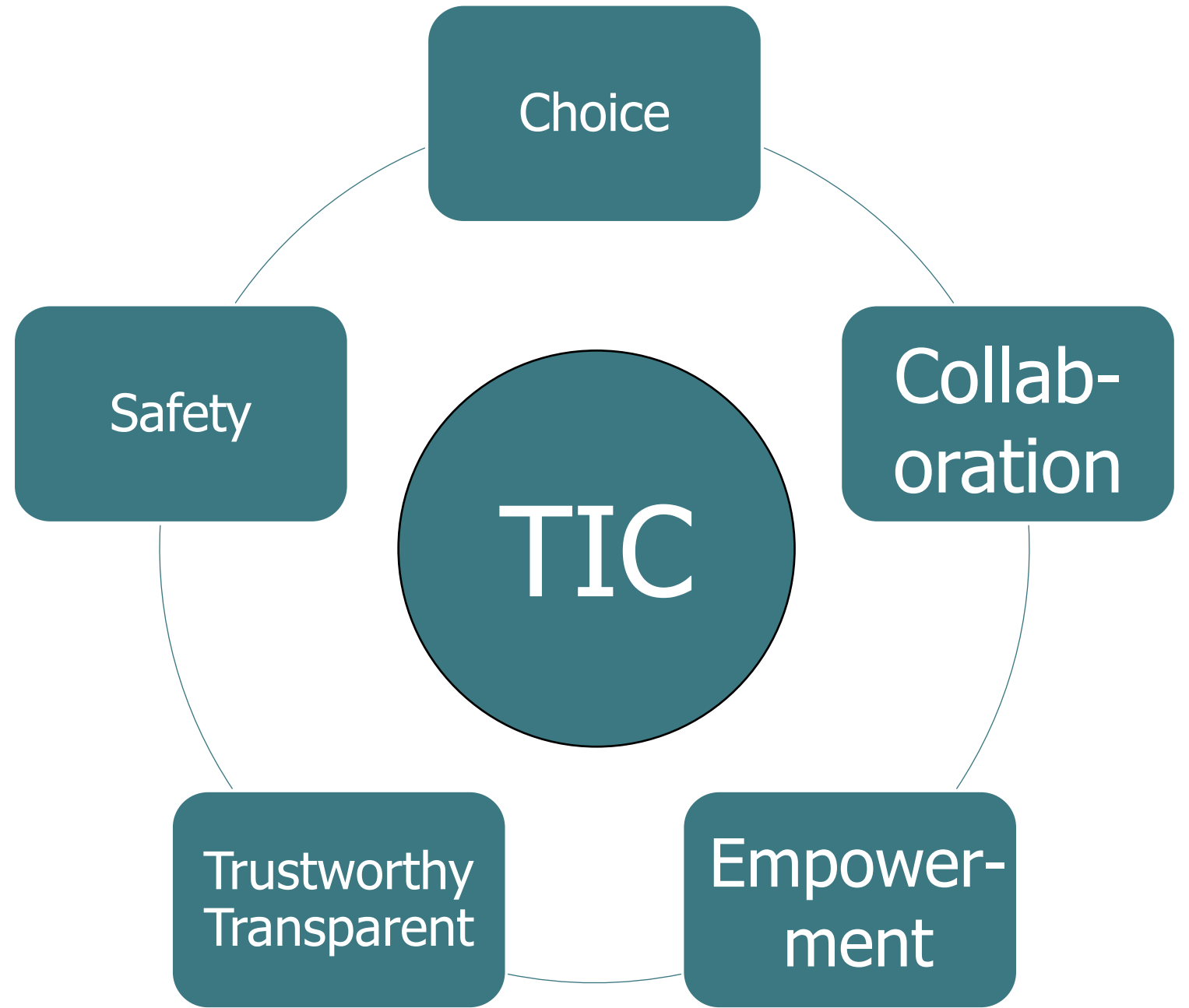
What might
have **HAPPENED**
to you?



The Four Rs of Trauma-Informed Care



The Five Principles of Trauma-Informed Care



1. SAFETY

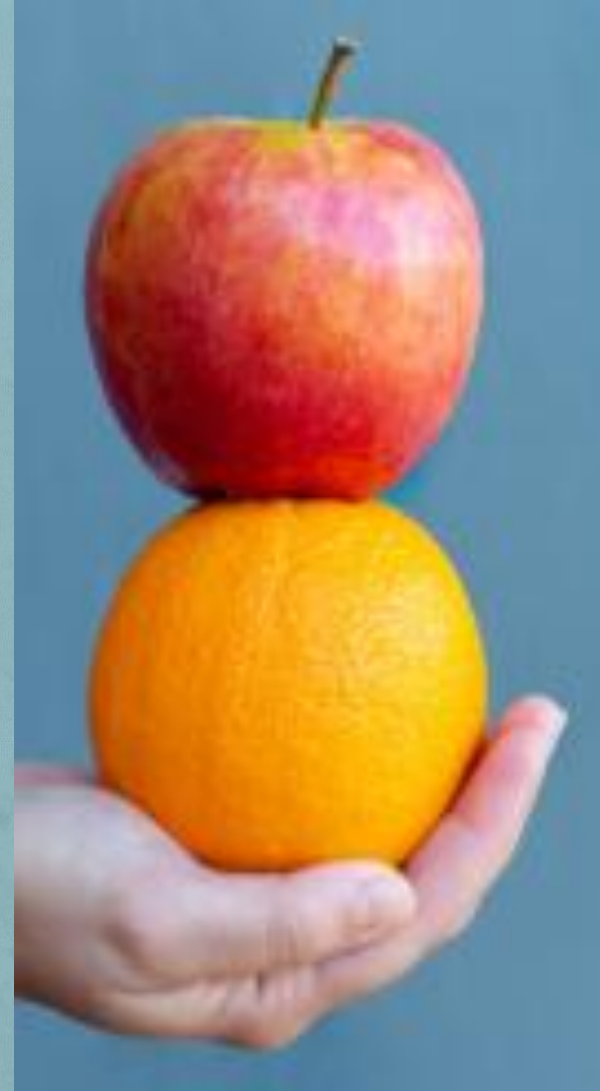
- Build a sense of safety both physical and psychological
- Keep the person informed
- Do what you say you will do
- Confidentiality
- Practical examples



**"What do you need
to feel safe?"**

2. CHOICE

- Listen
 - Validate concerns
 - Offer choices where possible
 - Explain
-
- Practical examples



3. COLLABORATION

- Ask what others need – don't impose your solution
- How is partnership developed in your church?
- Invite input where possible
- Be clear about what and how others can input



4. TRANSPARENCY & TRUSTWORTHINESS

- Keep your word
- Does your behaviour build and maintain trust?
- How does Session and CoM communicate plans and decisions with the congregation?



5. EMPOWERMENT & VOICE

- Validate people's feelings
- Listen to what they need
- Don't take over
- Recognise strengths



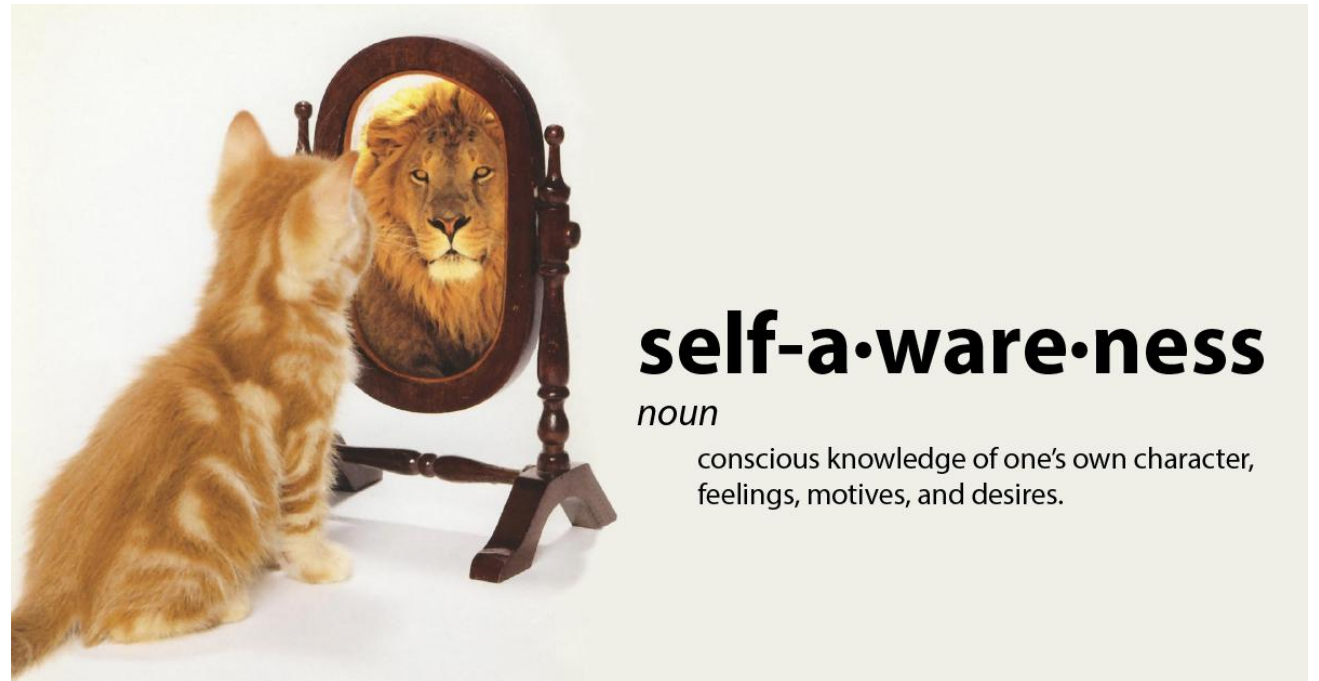
Other Trauma Informed considerations

- Team relationships; staff, elders
- Organisational communication
- Organisational structures
- Decision-making processes
- Your church culture



Self - Awareness

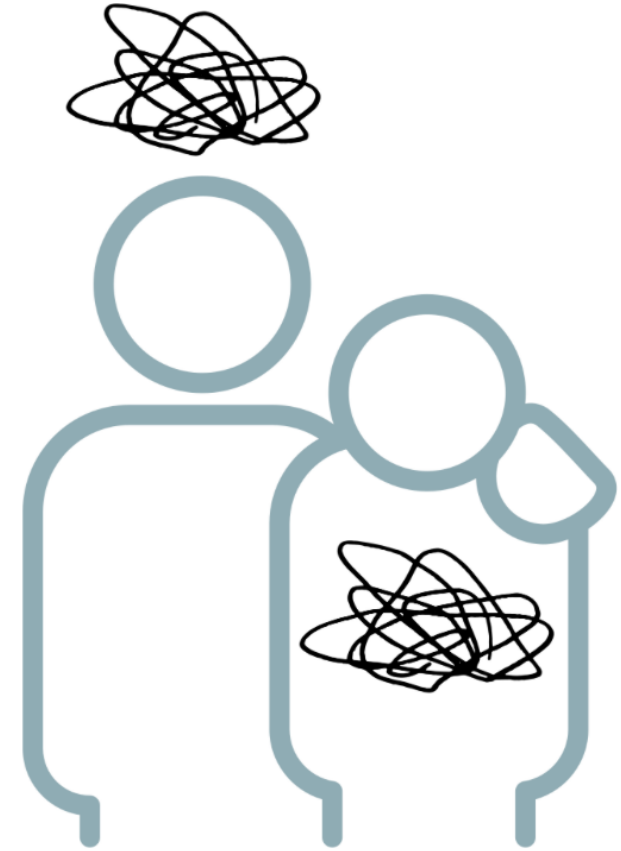
- How do we come across?
- Personality, values & strengths
- Our own trauma & triggers
- Our conflict management style



Vicarious Trauma

Watch out for:

- Cynicism
- Intrusive thoughts
- Chronic fatigue
- Emotional exhaustion
- Anger, shame
- Feeling disconnected
- Physical illness and absenteeism



And remember...

‘Our role is to reflect God’s love and truth while entrusting other people’s stories to his care, remembering that only he can redeem, restore and heal. (Is43:11)’

Darby Strickland, *When it’s trauma*, p. 293

Self - Care



SOCIAL

activities that help
nurture your relationships with others

PHYSICAL

activities that
improve your
physical health



MENTAL

activities that
stimulate your
mind



PRACTICAL

tasks that help
prevent future
stress



EMOTIONAL

activities that help
you connect
and reflect



SPIRITUAL

activities that
nurture your
spirit



Where to from here...

- The key question

It's about doing church care better

Your ministry spaces

Looking after yourself

The redemption story...



Resources

- Dr Stephen Midgley *"Understanding Trauma: A Biblical Introduction for Church Care"*
- *Darby Strickland*
- www.mentalhealthinstitute.org.au
- *Blueknot.org.au*

