



Aligning what we know with what we do

***Trauma is pervasive & life-shaping; we adjust  
organizational practices to support staff &  
client's coping capacity, honor their strengths,  
and avoid re-traumatization***

# Our Community

**Trauma-Informed “*Principles into Practice:*”**  
**Alaskan Learning Community** September 2020 – February 2021



## Our Community: click on links to check out your colleague's websites

- [Campfire Alaska](#)
- [Thrivalaska](#)
- [Youth Advocates of Sitka](#)
- [Alaska Family Services](#)
- [Goldbelt Heritage Foundation](#)
- [Alaska Center for Children & Adults](#)
- [Bering Strait School District](#)
- [Fairbanks Native Association Headstart](#)
- [Sitka Counseling](#)

# The New York Times

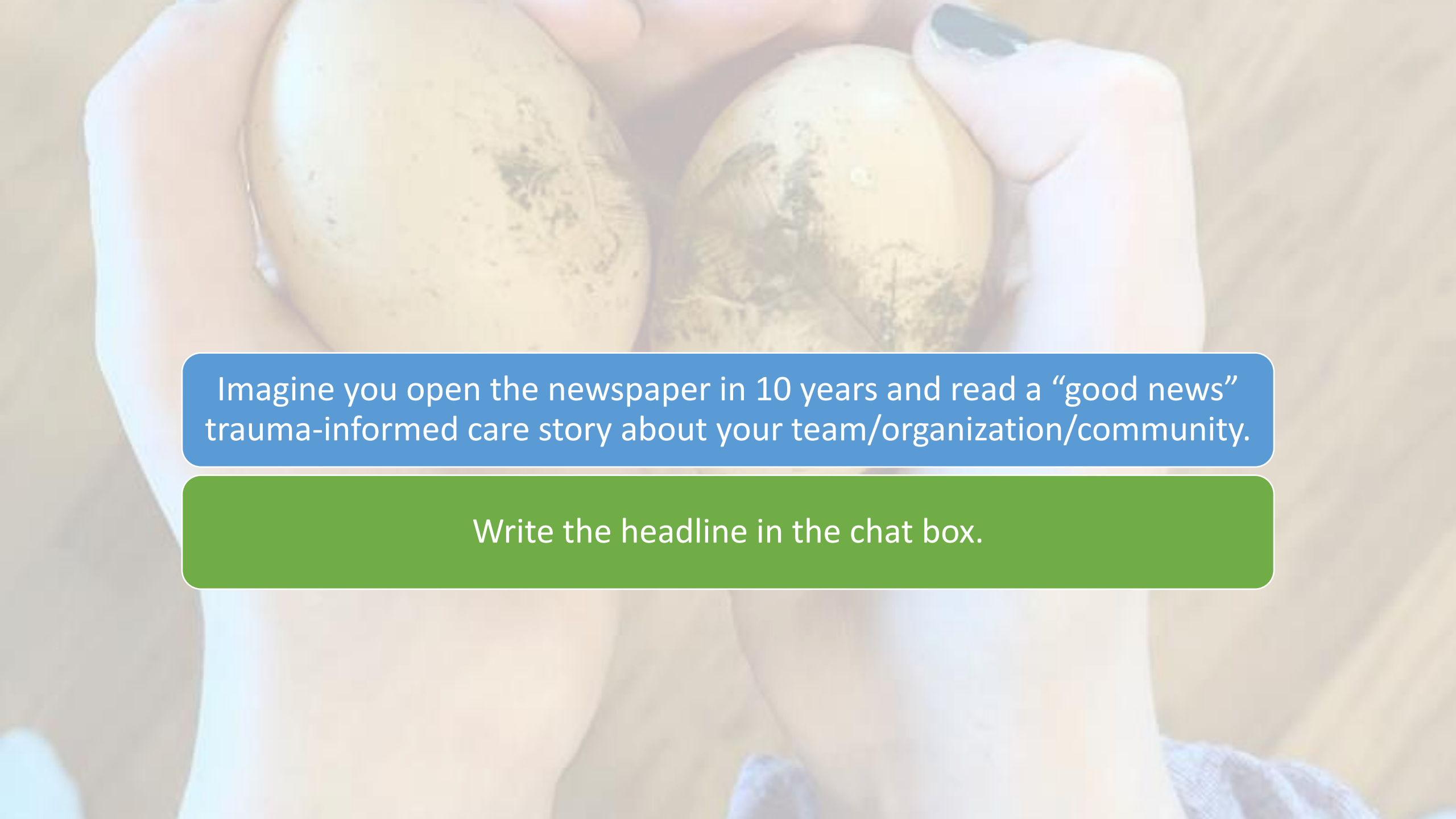
## ALASKAN AGENCY WINS NATIONAL "WORKFORCE WELLNESS" AWARD FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

With an annual staff turnover of ZERO, and client satisfaction rates soaring, a small Alaskan town is leading the way in trauma-informed, culturally responsive workplaces.....

SEPT.

1ST 2030





Imagine you open the newspaper in 10 years and read a “good news” trauma-informed care story about your team/organization/community.

Write the headline in the chat box.

# Community Agreements



## **In Every Chair, A Leader**

Each person engaging in this conversation has a unique and valuable experience that is their truth.

## **Speak with Care for Others**

We each hold the responsibility to choose our words and questions carefully with the intent to learn.

## **Value Each Others Time**

We all share the responsibility to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and engage.

## **Listen Deeply**

This is a rare and valuable opportunity to connect with others through the sharing of life experience.

## **Safe Space for Meaningful Conversation**

All notes taken are non-attribution to ensure anonymity of all dialogue participants.

## **Our Value of Humor**


Laughing is also an important way to relate with one another.

## **Be Present and Engaged**

Cell phone ringers off, be mindful of being fully present and listening.

## **Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other**

Note restrooms, exits, other amenities. Ask that participants help one another when possible.



**Trying to implement  
trauma-specific  
clinical practices  
without trauma-informed  
organizational culture  
change is like throwing  
seeds on dry land.**

Sandra Bloom  
Sanctuary model founder

# A continuous process (*not a program*)

## Principles Into Practice:

- Co-creating change through identifying current areas of strength & growth, brainstorming new strategies, testing out in the real world
- Discovery/seeing what's possible
- A “home” for trauma-informed change in your organization
- Giving people a view of “change in action”





## Realize

- Prevalence of trauma

## Recognize

- Trauma responses
- The impact of adversity is not a choice

## Respond

- With trauma-informed principles & practices

## Resist

- Re-traumatizing

A young child with blonde hair, wearing a grey and orange long-sleeved shirt, stands in profile on the left side of the frame, looking towards a green chalkboard. The chalkboard is covered in faint, colorful chalk drawings and text. The background wall is made of concrete blocks and shows signs of wear and peeling paint. A white cloud-shaped graphic is in the top left corner.

# PAUSE + REFLECT

WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION DO  
WELL TO RECOGNIZE + REDUCE  
ELEMENTS OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT  
THAT MIGHT BE RE-TRAUMATIZING?  
WHAT CAN YOU DO BETTER?

## SAFETY

All people associated with the organization feel safe - Physically, Emotionally, Socially & Morally  
Consistency, Predictability, Respect

## TRUST & TRANSPARENCY

Above board, straightforward communication; clear & appropriate boundaries  
Trauma-informed supervision  
Treating shared information with great care

## COLLABORATION

An emphasis on leveling power differences and valuing all voices; open communication  
Acknowledging differing sources of expertise

## EMPOWERMENT

Recognizes, encourages & builds on the strengths of everyone; healthy conflict resolution  
Boosting Resilience

## PEER SUPPORT

Being able to count on others in an open & caring way; asking for & offering help

## HUMILITY & RESPONSIVENESS

Committed to Equity; proactive about meaningful attention to cultural identities of clients and staff; inclusive of the many aspects of human identity; responsive to issues of systemic racism & injustices



**What do we mean  
when we talk  
about Safety**



**The first task of recovery is to establish the survivor's safety. This task takes precedence over all others, for no other therapeutic work can possibly succeed if safety has not been adequately secured.**

Judith Herman

b. 1942

psychiatrist, author, trauma expert

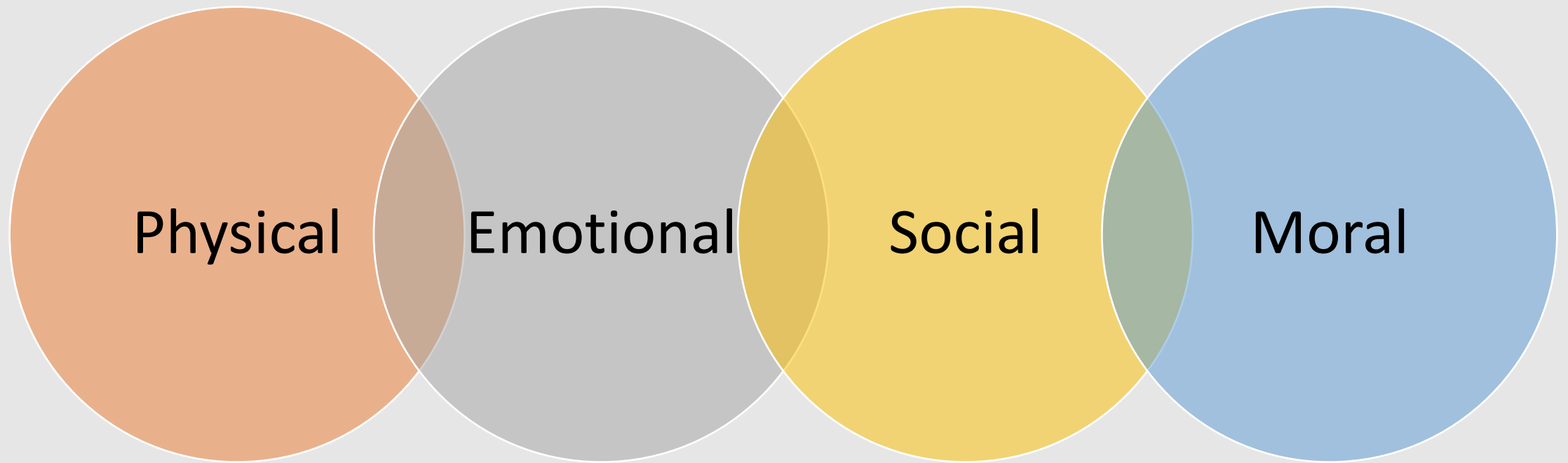


**We base our work on the knowledge that people act better when they are safer, more connected and happier. So we make our workplace as safe as possible; we shape our schedules & actions to maximize connection. And we have fun.**



# How does Safety “flip the script” on Trauma





**SAFETY DOES NOT EQUAL COMFORT.**

# What does physical safety look like for us?

- More likely this is where clients'/students'/children's unsafe behaviors show up
- The type of safety organizations pay most attention to
- Being safe in our environments; safe from bodily harm



# What does emotional safety look like for us?

- More likely this is where our unsafe behaviors show up
- Being safe inside our bodies
- Expanded “[window of tolerance](#)” for uncomfortable feelings
- High “emotional intelligence”
- Ability to self-regulate and co-regulate



# What does social safety look like for us?

- More likely this is where our unsafe behaviors show up
- Being safe with others
- No teasing, name-calling, shaming
- Trust levels are high
- Open communication is evident
- No “meetings after the meeting”



# What does moral safety look like for us?

- More likely this is where system's & organization's unsafe behaviors show up
- Being & feeling free to “do the right thing”
- Mistakes are treated as mistakes
- Saying “yes” only when you mean it; “no” when you mean it
- Learning & knowing the “ouch” of boundary violation
- Not keeping a harmful secret or colluding with someone who's doing something wrong
- No organizational “cover-ups” or pressure to hide concerns



**PAUSE +  
REFLECT**

**WHAT INFORMATION, IF IT  
WAS FLOWING THROUGH OUR  
ORGANIZATION, WOULD REALLY  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**





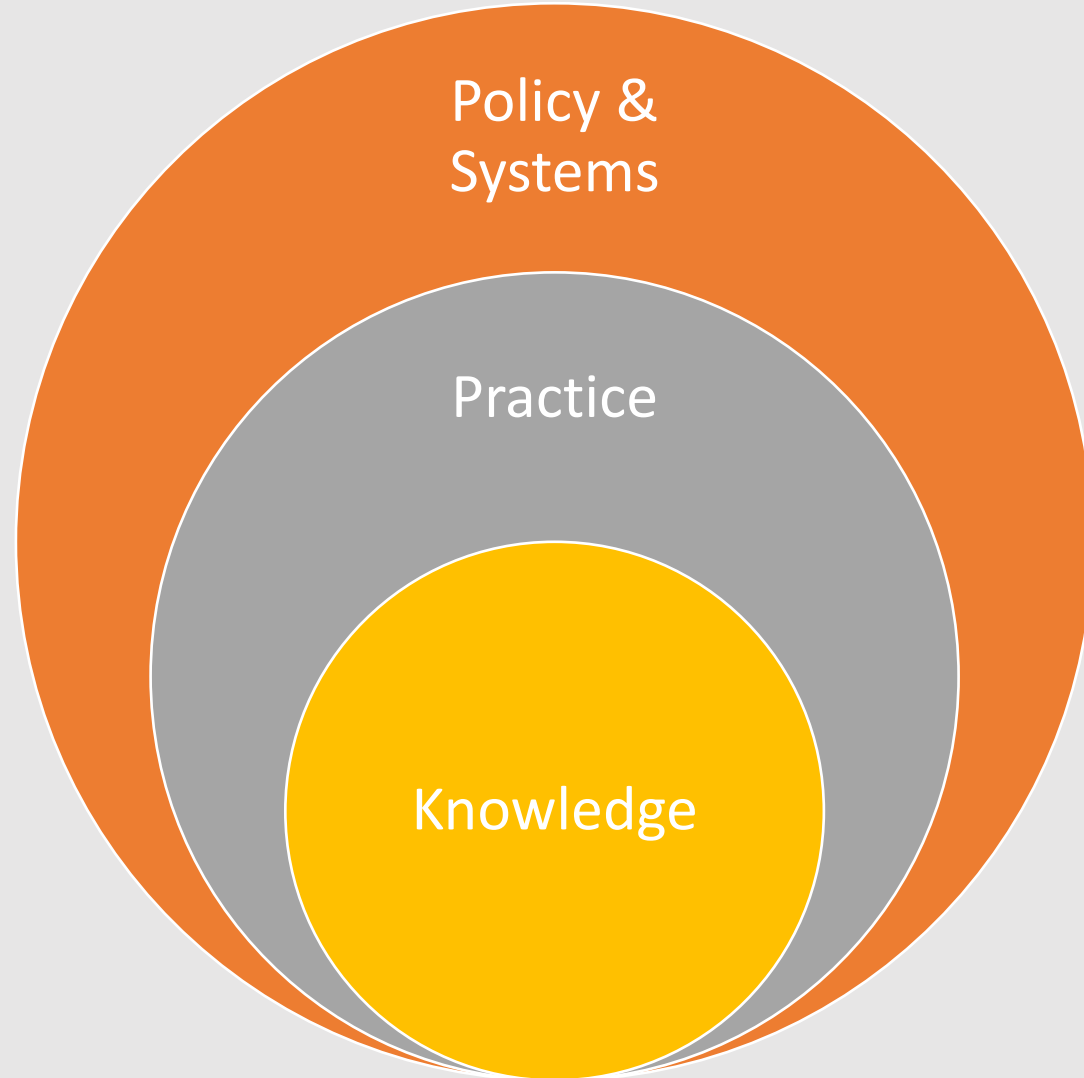
# Practice Ideas: Things to consider



- Start with the Willing
- Expect resistance
- Cost-neutral options
- Actionable Now options
- Start small & persevere w/ curiosity, hope & stamina
- A Demonstration Project
- Walking-the-talk

*“The world is changed by your example, not your opinion”* - Paulo Coelho

# Practice Ideas: Things to consider





# Practice Ideas: Things to consider



# Personal Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Learn 3 new techniques to embody safety
- Identify a professional boundary that you can improve & clarify, *e.g. when you check work email*
- Remind yourself to H.A.L.T. (*ask am I hungry, angry, tired, or lonely?*)
- Bring to mind & write/talk about a time you didn't feel safe to "do the right thing" – *note any lessons learned*



# Personal Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Make a “Safety Plan”
  - See example – 5 things to help “in the moment”
  - This is a “tool” from [Sanctuary Model](#)
- Assess stressors
- 5 minutes of yoga
- T.A.P.
  - Take a breath
  - Acknowledge the feeling
  - Proceed with intention



# Team Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Draft a team charter/motto/statement of intent
- Learn fingerhold or grounding techniques as a group & reinforce their use
- Schedule a watch party of [\*Paper Tigers\*](#)
- Schedule a “*mandated reporter*” training for your team
- Add a “*Safety Tip of the month*” to your team meetings – be sure to include social, emotional & moral safety



# Team Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Start Team Meetings with *breathing exercises* (*breath = the shortest route to safety*)
- Start Team Meetings with a mindful minute
- Start Team Meetings with a Sanctuary Model-inspired *“Community Meeting”*
- Bring a bag of oranges to next in-person team meeting (*smell of oranges may contribute to lowering anxious feelings*)
- Share strategies from personal *Safety Plans*
- Write *6 word poems* about Safety



# Organization Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Check for adequate lighting in all areas
- Do regular environmental scans for needed repairs
- De-escalation Preference Tool *(individualizing de-escalation plan for each client or student based on personal preferences, individual triggers, sensory issues, past traumas etc. – PDF example will be shared)*
- Trauma training (pre & post test *to check for knowledge change*)
- Review policies (e.g. bullying & harassment, restraint & seclusion)

# Organization Practice Ideas: SAFETY



- Put on your “[trauma glasses](#)” & review signs in lobby and bathrooms
- Create a space and calming space for staff; don’t use it for storage!
- Make time to debrief every time after a critical incident
- Consider emotional & moral safety in COVID-related communications
- Think of 3 ways predictability can be increased for staff



**PAUSE +  
REFLECT**

**HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN  
THERE HAS BEEN CHANGE  
OR PROGRESS WITH THE  
SAFETY PRINCIPLE?**





# Follow-up consultation/next steps

- “SAFETY Principle” Resources to follow this Webinar  
[www.forgefacilitation.com/resources](http://www.forgefacilitation.com/resources)
- Agency Assessments: ASAP
- Technical Assistance/Consultation Calls *Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Monday 14<sup>th</sup>*
- Next Webinar: Trust & Transparency October 6<sup>th</sup> 10 - Noon

## Curated list of places to begin with trauma-informed organizational change planning

- [The Trauma Informed Care Implementation Resource Center](#) at Center for Health Care Strategies (practical implementation tools and fantastic resources, including [this](#) previously shared guide for making the case to leadership (or your board) for trauma informed change.
- [Resilience for All Ages Trauma Informed Primer](#) (great tips on organizational change at the end & consider adapting their “*statement of intention*” for your staff.)
- In addition to the comprehensive surveymonkey assessment you all completed, school and headstart programs may want to consider this shorter [schools-specific assessment measure](#)