

Pathways Toward Trauma-Informed Practices

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Something to consider about change

If it was so easy, all organizations would change to match the latest research.

A cultural shift is really difficult--but it is definitely doable!

"Change is hard because people overestimate the value of what they have—and underestimate the value of what they may gain by giving that up."

— James Belasco and Ralph Stayer
Flight of the Buffalo (1994)

Something to consider about change

"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things."

— Niccolo Machiavelli
The Prince (1532)

Creating a structure for change

- Understanding Adult Learning Theory
- Change supported in the data (what needs to change and why?)
- Creating new and broad-based knowledge
- We feel, then we think – a personal or emotional connection
- Clear actionable steps
- Progress monitor

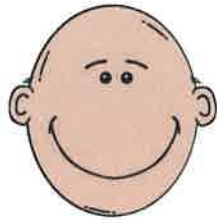
Key principles of Adult Learning Theory. Adults...

1. Want to know *Why* they need to learn something.
2. Want to be seen and treated by others as capable of self-direction.
3. Have vast experience and expertise.
4. Are ready to learn *when* they need to know something to cope effectively.
5. Need learning oriented to context of real-life situations.
6. Are generally influenced more by intrinsic motivations.

Malcom Knowles

Key to adults changing:

Head



Heart



Soul

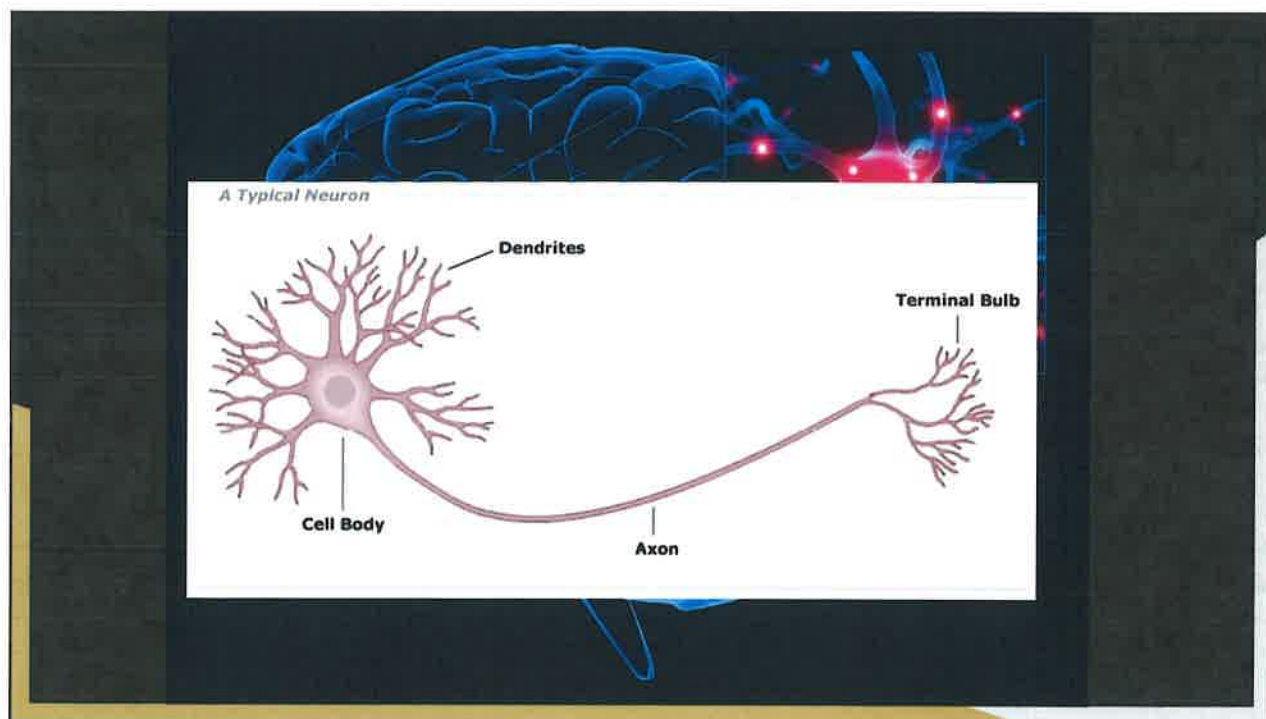


What motivates us...
...really?



What is your why?







Building New Pathways

The brain is remarkably plastic - moldable.

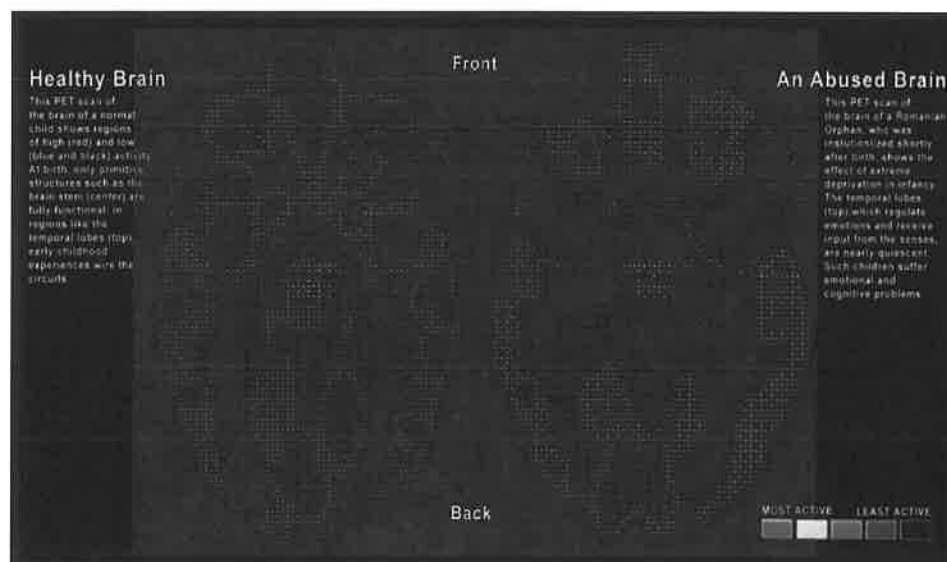
Creating a new pathway that eventually becomes easier to "walk."

The trick is getting the person to practice things they are not conditioned for--new neural pathways.

And Adversity Complicates Things

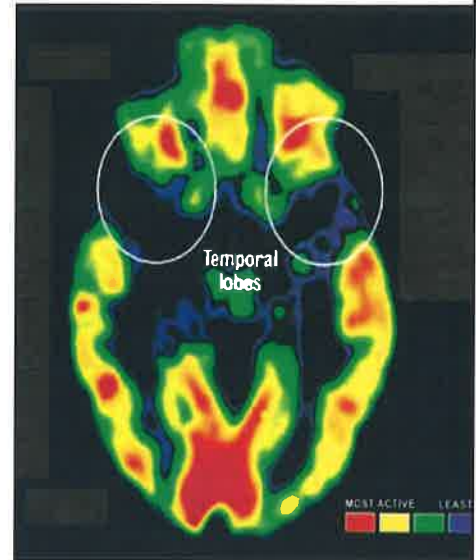
- **Childhood Adverse Experiences**
 - Neglect, maltreatment, intense negative incidents
 - **3** out of **5** children
- **Complex Traumas**
 - This kind of trauma we, without question, would make a DHS phone call
 - **1** out of **4** children experience this

Romanian Children Brain Studies



Behaviors

- For students who are Triggered
 - Their amygdala takes over - the emotion and survival center
 - Exhibit impulse control issues
 - Fight or Flight is initiated more frequently
 - Retaining information and complying with direction is difficult
 - Tendency to self-medicate (adapt)



London Taxi Study



Back to Adult Learning

Teaching about adversity and the body's adaptation to its environment has been a significant "why" for our community.

After sharing Adverse Childhood Experiences...

Others are beginning to understand themselves - sometimes for the *first* time:

- A high school young man
- An elementary girl
- The Women's Crisis Center
- Not a divorcee!

Our Hearts were ready...

Providing clear information, next steps, and results provide a new path to walk.

Four phases for change

From the Self-healing Communities Model:

1. Leadership expansion
2. Focus
3. Learning, and
4. Results

Leadership Expansion

Widespread understanding of adversity, neuroscience, the ACES study, and resilience.

A united leadership team on the topic (with opportunities to deepen their competence around the topic).

Keep it at the forefront of the meetings and conversation.

Focus

There must be a consensus on what to change in the school:

- Chronic absences
- Referrals
- Self-regulation
- Tardies
- Drugs

Learning

Once the areas of focus are agreed upon, learn everything there is to learn about the topic.

Present opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding.

Cognitive Dissonance and Disequilibrium

Results

Whatever the focus, review the data that you are trying to change—is it changing? Why is it? Why isn't it? Etc.

Four great questions:

1. Is what we are doing working?
2. How do we know?
3. Is there something else that we should be doing?
4. And, how do we know?

Elements of a Trauma-Informed School

Safety – ensuring physical and emotional safety

Trustworthiness – maintaining appropriate boundaries and making tasks clear

Choice – prioritizing choice and control (for people who have had control taken away, having small choices makes a big difference)

Collaboration – maximizing collaboration

Empowerment - prioritizing empowerment and skill-building

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Growth Mindset - Carol Dweck's work

Brain training - what is a synapse, anyway?

ACES training

CLEAR

Concurrent Southern Oregon Activities

Self-Healing Communities Grant

ACES Trainers trained

Southern Oregon Success

Josephine County Community Network

Agency Alignment

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year one:

- All administration read Carol Dweck's *Growth Mindset*
- Created a culture of growth mindset vs. a fixed mindset

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year one:

Brain Train - Staff trainings around the brain and a connection to how adversity impacts the brain, student development, and adult health.

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year one:

Research on evidence-based practices that impact student behavior

Discovery of CLEAR: Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year one:

Offer to have one school pilot CLEAR the following year.

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year two:

Pilot CLEAR school engages in professional development and the CLEAR coaching/consulting model

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year two:

Visitors from other schools and districts attend CLEAR training

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year two:

Formal ACES Training done for all school district staff: teachers, classified, custodians, maintenance, bus drivers--everyone.

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

Year two:

Elementary schools and the alternative high school are invited to consider CLEAR for the following year.

4 more elementary schools and the alternative HS volunteer for the training.

Grants Pass School District's Pathway

- Year three:
- Six schools are participating in CLEAR (a three-year commitment); other schools are observing and will have that opportunity the following year
- Community ACES presentations
- Parenting classes (a collaboration)

Other Models

Lincoln Alternative School in Walla Walla, WA

- Principal led
- Staff training in ACES
- Student training in ACES
- Class tools developed to help students self-regulate and cope

Other Models

Phoenix-Talent School District

- Superintendent led
- Staff training in ACES
- Student training in ACES
- Class tools developed to help students self-regulate and cope

Other Models

The Phoenix/Talent School District is using the Five Operational Steps of District Planning (adapted from the Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction):

1. Engage local district and partner leadership;
2. Perform and review results of assessment of current community ACE/trauma status;
3. Review ACE/trauma research and literature;
4. Provide training for all staff and partners--ACE/trauma background and prevention and intervention strategies; and
5. Implement school-wide classroom strategies and community-wide prevention strategies.

Other Models

The Phoenix/Talent School District is also using the Pax “Good Behavior Game”

In a very short period of time, elementary classrooms using the game saw a 65% reduction in behavioral referrals.

The district has shifted to a no-expulsion policy; no students have been expelled for the past three years.

Staff participate in a monthly trauma-informed focus topic

Other Models

The Gladstone School District uses a neurodevelopmental lens for its multi-tiered systems of support

Is developing “Care Coaches” to train and support staff

Other Models

Gladstone Implementation Activities

- Adverse Childhood Experiences-Steps Toward Day-to-Day Trauma Sensitive School Practices.
- Training for PLC Care Leaders in “Neuro-Developmental Skills and Demands-Culture of Care Foundations for PLC Care Leaders.”

Other Models

Gladstone Implementation Activities

- Weekly Culture of Care Leadership meeting
- Monthly PLC Grade Level Care Leaders meeting with identified focal areas (From the ARC Attachment Model)
- Monthly PLC Care meetings with identified focal areas (From the ARC-Attachment Level).

Trauma-Informed Practices Guide

Through the Southern Oregon Education Service District, a resource guide for schools.

While it is not complete yet, it will be soon and will be posted on the SOESD's website for schools to utilize.

[Sneak Preview](#)

Trauma-Informed Practices Handout

After learning about the Grants Pass journey and what next steps it is taking, take a few minutes to reflect on your own school district or organization.

1. What level of trauma-informed understanding do feel your staff have?

	Low Understanding		High Understanding	
Licensed?	1	2	3	4
Classified/Support?	1	2	3	4
Administration?	1	2	3	4

2. What do you believe needs to happen to increase your staff's understanding of adversity and its impact on human development?

3. What do you believe needs to happen to help staff understand trauma-informed practices?

4. What is it that your district does really well?

5. What is it that your district could improve upon?

6. What is one thing that you could do to take a step toward trauma-informed practices?

From a Hopi Nation Elder...

“Gather yourselves! Banish the word struggle from your vocabulary... We are the ones we have been waiting for.”



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