Assessment and Treatment of Traumatized Populations

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed as an advanced clinical selective for graduate students in the School of Social Work who wish to increase knowledge and skills for practice with traumatized populations. Students will develop a working understanding of traumatized populations from diverse backgrounds, affirming and respecting their strengths and differences. Although the assigned readings and focus of class sessions will be on traumatized adults, supplemental readings will be identified for students aspiring to work with traumatized children or adolescents. Such students will have the option of focusing their role plays on applying the treatment modalities covered in this course to work with children or adolescents, based on the supplemental readings. This course is grounded in the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based intervention strategies. It will focus on skill building and will include multiple perspectives in the advanced application of theories, models and skills utilized in varying treatment modalities, with emphasis placed at the micro and mezzo levels of practice. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course students will:

1. develop assessment skills for the diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as the impact of trauma on other disorders;
2. demonstrate understanding and skills in the core components of the treatment of trauma, such as treatment stages, psychoeducation, the therapeutic relationship, and safety and arousal reduction techniques;
3. describe the key features distinguishing alternative evidence-based treatment approaches for trauma-related symptoms;
4. demonstrate skills in at least one trauma treatment modality;
5. demonstrate evaluation skills by accurately appraising how well others evince skills in at least one trauma treatment modality;
6. identify steps practitioners can take to prevent or ameliorate their own vicarious/secondary trauma;
7. demonstrate the ability to adapt intervention models and strategies to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin;
8. demonstrate the ability to tailor and integrate clinical interventions based on the context in which they are delivered; and
9. demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and ethical decision-making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in clinical intervention with traumatized adults.
III. **TEACHING METHODS**

This class will be taught using a variety of methods with an emphasis on experiential learning for the purpose of building skill and confidence. The nature of the course content requires a didactic approach as well. Therefore, PowerPoint lectures, role-plays, videos, class discussions, small group and dyad exercises, and guest speakers will all be utilized. For success in this class, you must be willing to participate, take risks and “stretch” out of your comfort zone. You are expected to ask questions to clarify expectations, provide me with constructive feedback in a timely manner and meet with me individually as needed and/or when requested. All in-class discussions related to personal values, beliefs, or life experiences must be kept confidential.

Use of Canvas for this course: This class uses Canvas – a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at [http://canvas.utexas.edu](http://canvas.utexas.edu) for confidential communication such as posting and submitting assignments. Readings that are not in the required text, assignment guidelines and assignment grading rubrics are all posted to Canvas. Students can access Canvas Help 24/7 by calling 855-308-2494. Students are expected to set notifications in Canvas so they receive announcements updates as soon as they are posted. **If anything is getting in the way of your learning, let me know as soon as possible so we can discuss it and problem solve!**

IV. **REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS**


Additional assigned readings will be uploaded to Canvas.

V. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Participation and Attendance:**

- **10pts**

  Being present, on-time and engaging in class is very important. I will be keeping track of attendance, participation, and timeliness of assignments. A pattern of absences, late arrivals or early departures (more than 3), or a pattern of poor preparation or participation may result in disciplinary action.

**Self-Care & Trauma Stewardship**

- **10 pts**

  Understanding the impact of one’s own trauma responses is critical in providing ethical, trauma-informed care services. You will complete the **Self-Care Assessment & Maintenance Sheet** created by the University of Buffalo School of Social Work and complete short answer questions from the book **Trauma-Stewardship**. See Canvas for worksheet and questions.

**Collective Trauma Impact Paper:**

- **8-10 pages, APA format**

  The purpose of this paper is to take a deep investigation into the historical, cultural and generational trauma that marginalized communities have experienced. You will choose which marginalized community to focus on; examples will be discussed in class. You will identify individual, family, and community experiences and symptoms of the trauma, as well as the societal outcomes that have resulted. In addition, you must provide examples and discussion of specific evidenced-based & other relevant interventions that address
community healing at the micro and macro level. Assignment details and rubric can be found in Canvas.

**Evidence-Based Trauma Intervention: Student Choice**

**30pts.**

1. **Online Certification in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**

There is an online training for $35 called *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy* (TF-CBT), available through the website of Medical University of South Carolina. The 10-hour course trains you in the basics of using TF-CBT model that is widely accepted in therapeutic practice. You can complete the course for 25 points credit. Upload or bring your printed Certificate to the class. Link to the training is:

2. **Create an Evidence-Based/Informed Intervention Guide:**

You choose a specific trauma intervention and create an interactive training guide for social work students. The training guide should be an organized package of information that includes: a detailed overview of the intervention and theories/frameworks that shape it, examples and explanation of specific skills clinicians use and the components of how it facilitated; summary of research that show its effectiveness with appropriate populations, additional resources (videos, links, published handouts) that offer more, and ethical considerations. Additional assignment details are posted in Canvas.

**Group Project: Trauma Profile & Clinical Intervention Demonstration:**

**30pts.**

The purpose of this project is for students to perform an assessment of a public figure who has experienced trauma and demonstrate appropriate clinical interventions. This project will be completed in small groups of four. Students will need to provide a detailed assessment of this person, creating an in-depth profile that tells their “story”: a bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment, history of trauma, trauma responses & criteria met for diagnosis. Students will also select clinical intervention(s) that address their client’s needs & demonstrate the intervention methods to the class. The clinical intervention must be strengths-based, evidenced-informed with a research analysis on why this method was chosen with this particular client. See detailed assignment requirements and rubric in Canvas.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment:</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Care and Trauma Stewardship</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Trauma Impact Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence Based Interventions:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete Online Training or Invention Guide</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project: Trauma Profile &amp; Demonstration</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 pts.</strong></td>
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### VI. GRADES

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>87.0 to 89.999</td>
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<tr>
<td>84.0 to 86.999</td>
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<tr>
<td>80.0 to 83.999</td>
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<td>74.0 to 76.999</td>
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<tr>
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### VII. CLASS POLICIES

Social work students must adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the UT School of Social Work and the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their own conduct. Find the MSSW Handbook at [http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/current/forms/](http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/current/forms/)

**A. Professional Conduct in Class:** The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another’s opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

**B. Student Privacy & Confidentiality:** Class discussions or role plays can on occasion bring up strong emotions or raise issues of a personal nature. For student privacy, it is recommended that students not discuss matters of a highly sensitive nature in class. If you need to talk, come see me after class. Your privacy and confidentiality will be protected unless the matter must be reviewed by the School of Social Work or must be reported by law (please refer to the MSSW Handbook and Title IX requirements). I will connect you with resources in the community if your personal needs exceed what can be provided by me or by UT services.

**C. Client Privacy & Confidentiality:** If class work prompts you to reflect on past or current client contact, and sharing information about that contact is necessary for the learning process, it is your professional obligation to protect the client’s privacy and confidentiality as much as possible by sharing judiciously and anonymously (this applies to information shared about staff at your field agency as well).

**D. Classroom Civility:** A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues.
Personal Pronoun Preference: Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

E. Unanticipated Distress: Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the instructor. The instructor can be responsive and supportive regarding students’ participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at https://cmhc.utexas.edu/.

F. Grading Policies: If you are confused by a grade or the feedback you receive on an assignment, please make an appointment to meet with me. I enjoy talking face to face with students about how they can improve and may give some credit back on the assignment.

Assignments are due on the posted date by midnight. (except presentations due by class time). Assignments turned in after due date are considered late. Students will lose 5% of the assignment point value per calendar day that an assignment remains un-submitted. On subsequent days, papers must be submitted to Canvas by noon to avoid the additional 5% penalty. If you anticipate a problem turning in an assignment on time, please contact me in advance. **You have one free late day per semester to be used at your discretion, but you must indicate in Canvas that you are using your “pass” when you submit the assignment or it the pass will not be applied.**

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

A. THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

B. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT & CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another’s opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect and professionalism.

C. UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the instructor. The instructor can be responsive and supportive regarding students’ participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is
desired. If counseling is needed, students can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at https://cmhc.utexas.edu/.

**D. POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.** Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

**E. POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/).

**F. USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

**G. DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT.** Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

**H. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS.** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy
day, the professor will excuse the absence.

I. TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University’s Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SHSSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX may also be found at https://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf

J. CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University’s policy on concealed firearms may be found here: https://campuscarry.utexas.edu. You may also find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the school’s website.

K. CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on education supervision, and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedures for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work education.

L. USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

M. SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

N. BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

O. EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:
• Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
• If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
• In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
• Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions to do so by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention
IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings, assignment guidelines, grading rubrics and other essential information will be on the Canvas website. Check Canvas regularly and use it to ask questions about the course schedule. Changes to the schedule may be made at Professor Simmons' discretion and as circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced. Professor Simmons will make every effort to announce changes with as much advanced notice as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Course &amp; Syllabus Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td><strong>What is Trauma?</strong> ACES Study</td>
<td></td>
<td>Van der Kolk, Part I: The Rediscovery of Trauma, p1-47</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td><strong>Identifying Trauma</strong> Assessments, &amp; Interviews, DSM Diagnosis</td>
<td>Self-Care &amp; Trauma Stewardship Reflection</td>
<td>VDK, Part II: Brain on Trauma, pgs. 48-102</td>
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<td>June 17</td>
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<td>June 19</td>
<td><strong>Trauma Responses:</strong> Trauma of Abuse: Sexual, Physical, Emotional Developmental Trauma</td>
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<td>VDK, Part III: The minds of Children pg103-169</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td><strong>Community Trauma &amp; Generational Trauma</strong></td>
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<td>VDK, Part IV: The Imprint of Trauma, pg. 170-201</td>
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<td>June 24</td>
<td>Mass shootings, Natural Disasters, Targeted Violence</td>
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<td>June 26</td>
<td><strong>Complex Trauma &amp; Intervention Planning</strong></td>
<td>Collective Trauma Impact Paper</td>
<td>VDK, Part V: Chapters 13-15pgs 204-262</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Components of Trauma Interventions:</td>
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<td><em>Guest Speaker: Seanna Crosbie, LCSW-S</em></td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td><strong>Secondary Trauma</strong> Compassion Fatigue, Self-Care, Countertransference</td>
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<td>VDK, Part V: 16-18pgs 263-308</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td><strong>Trauma Focused CBT</strong></td>
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<td>VDK, Part V: Chapters 19,20 pg 309-336</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 10</td>
<td>Somatic Experiencing &amp; Mindfulness</td>
<td>Epilogue and the Appendix</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday July 15</td>
<td>Trust Based Relational Intervention</td>
<td>Evidenced Based Intervention Paper OR TF-CBT Certification Completion Due</td>
<td>Readings TBD</td>
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<td>July 17</td>
<td>EMDR</td>
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<td>Shapiro: EMDR Article</td>
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<td>Monday July 22</td>
<td>Trauma Profile Presentations</td>
<td>Trauma Profile &amp; Demonstrations</td>
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<td>July 24</td>
<td>Trauma Profile Presentations</td>
<td>Trauma Profile &amp; Demonstrations</td>
<td>No Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday July 29</td>
<td>Wrap Up</td>
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**IX. Bibliography**


Online resources about trauma:

1. National Center for PTSD: [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)
   Created by the Veterans Administration (VA). A wealth of information and resources, especially for PTSD in vets but applicable to other populations too. Offers continuing education, some for free. Listing of evidence-based treatments, although somewhat limited. Citations for research papers.
2. The Professional Consultation Program: (866) 948-7880 or PTSDconsult@va.gov
   Very helpful program associated with the National Center for PTSD at the VA. Offers free phone or email consultations with experts in PTSD for anyone treating any veteran in any setting. This service is also extended in some cases of mass trauma such as natural
disasters and mass shootings. Can ask questions or request a virtual consultation meeting.

   A trauma-focused non-profit funded by several federal government departments. Good source for working with trauma in children. Articles, training, a list of evidenced-practices, sections for parents and school personnel, and more.

4. Other places to find resources include federal agencies such as SAMHSA or the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), international groups such as the Red Cross and World Health Organization (WHO), and specialized groups such as Traumaweb, an evidence-based Israeli center for the study of trauma.

5. For information about specific therapeutic approaches, there are often international or national associations that give information specific to that approach. For example, the EMDRIA (EMDR International Association) is a good source for information about EMDR, and the Somatic Experiencing Trauma Institute has information about SE.

Recommended books about trauma:

*Waking the tiger* by Peter Levine  
*In an unspoken voice* by Peter Levine  
*Somatic experiencing* by Peter Levine  
*Trauma-proofing your kids* by Peter Levine  
*The courage to heal* (and workbook) by Laura Davis  
*A terrible thing happened* (for children) by Holmes et al  
*Black & blue* by Anna Quindlen  
*A general theory of love* by Lewis, et al  
*My stroke of insight* by Jill Bolte Taylor  
*Healing trauma* by Dan Siegel & Marion Solomon  
*Mindsight* by Dan Siegel  
*The developing mind* by Dan Siegel  
*Brainstorm* by Dan Siegel  
*The whole-brain child* by Dan Siegel  
*Parenting from the inside out* by Dan Siegel  
*Growing up again: Parenting ourselves, parenting our children* by Clarke & Dawson  
*Wherever you go, there you are* by Jonathon Kabat-Zinn  
*Meditation for beginners* by Jack Kornfield  
*The new people making* by Virginia Satir  
*Feeling good* by David Burns  
*The dance of anger* by Harriet Lerner  
*Daring greatly* by Brene Brown  
*The gifts of imperfection* by Brene Brown  
*The power of vulnerability* by Brene Brown  
*Tiny beautiful things: Advice from love and life* by Dear Sugar by Cheryl Strayed  
*Trauma competency: A clinician’s guide* by L. A. Curran  
*The body remembers: The psychophysiology of trauma and trauma treatment* by B. Rothschild