

Trauma-informed Design Academy Community Agreement



Adopting a trauma-informed approach requires us to do a fair amount of introspection. Many of the assignments are designed to be thought-provoking and may result in a fair bit of self-examination. Anything shared privately with your instructor(s) will remain private.

In order to foster a safe, brave learning community, the following agreements and expectations will apply to the course discussion forums, synchronous meetings, and any other interactions associated with this class.

Safety

We recognize that we all have a right to safety, and that learning about and engaging in trauma-informed care and design requires us to talk about difficult and uncomfortable situations and topics. It is important for us to understand the difference between feeling unsafe and feeling uncomfortable. Participants should reach out to their instructor(s) and/or personal support system if they feel unsafe at anytime while engaging in this course. We also encourage participants who recognize they are safe to work through the discomfort and vulnerability that is inherent in trauma-informed work.

Privacy

We recognize that in order to fully engage in this course, participants may sometimes share private details. Participants are expected to maintain the privacy of all others in this course, and should not repeat anything mentioned in the chats, posted on assignments, or shared during our in-person discussion with anyone outside this class.

Recognize

In order to adopt a trauma-informed approach, we must strive to overcome historical and divisive biases in our society and ourselves, such as racism and how intersectionality with other marginalized groups compounds the impact on individuals. This includes acknowledging that we were systematically taught misinformation about our own group(s) and about members of other groups.



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Trust

Participants have come to the course to learn, grow, and share. We trust that people are doing the best they can and expect members of this community to be mindful of others' feelings and opinions.

Respect

Participants are expected to listen respectfully to each other without interruptions.

Share the Air

Participants are expected to share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion. If you have a tendency to dominate discussions, take a step back and help the group invite others to speak. If you tend to stay quiet, challenge yourself to share ideas so others can learn from you. If you are sitting in silence, consider what might be behind your silence and how you may want to share.

Not Experts

We recognize that we are each multicultural individuals and can only speak from our own reality and experiences. Participants are expected to recognize that our experiences and opinions, while valuable, are not the same as research-informed knowledge.

No Blame

Participants should not to blame themselves or others for mistakes or misinformation, but address the mistruths and accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after learning otherwise.

Restorative Approach to Addressing Harm

We recognize that participants may be at different stages of learning on the content and discussion topics, yet may make mistakes. We also recognize that there may be a difference between intention and impact. When an action or statement impacts a person



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negatively, we will be focused on addressing the impact. We will use approaches such as asking for clarity, calling-in, and calling-out with care, respect, and the goal of helping each other learn. However, if a participant continues to cause harm after the issue has been addressed, their grade will reflect their disrespectful participation. Repeated violations of these agreements and expectations could result in unsuccessful course completion.

Participants agree to abide by the following practices when engaging in this course:

- Anyone who is telling a story that could contribute to harm or trigger someone, should offer a trigger warning before telling the story.
- When recounting something someone said, instead of using euphemism, participants should refer to it (e.g., “the n-word,” “the r-word” when referring to someone with an intellectual disability).
- If a participant is triggered during a synchronous meeting, they (or someone else who notices) will say “Pause,” and we will immediately stop to address it.
- Anyone who causes harm will be immediately interrupted. They will be told, “This is a violation of our community agreement.” If the person does not work to repair the harm, they will be asked to leave the discussion or meeting.