

Hosting a Trauma-Informed Meeting

A guideline on how to use Trauma-Informed Principles to host a meeting

Preparing for the Meeting

- Send out meeting agenda 3-7 days ahead of time so people have time to reflect on and prepare for content, provide contact details, allow people to add items to agenda, or ask questions about agenda
- Have water and healthy snacks available- try to limit processed sugar
- Have fidget toys
 - Helps with focus
 - Have a few options- too many though can be a distraction
 - Basket on the table or few piles- Accessible to all
 - Options: Rubber bands, crayons and paper, stress balls, play dough, pipe cleaners
- Room Environment
 - Be mindful of space- too big or small?
 - Ensure there is access to the door
 - Seating- not too close
 - Temperature and ventilation
 - Noise pollution and/or privacy
 - Outside distractions and potential interruptions
 - When variables can't be controlled- debrief the group on what things may come up

Starting the Meeting

- Description of expectations and reminders about caring for yourself
 - Length of meeting
 - Moving around to be comfortable- standing, walking, stretching
 - Directions to restrooms
 - Break times, however can leave when needed
- Right brain activity
 - Icebreaker or sharing
 - People can connect before moving into content
 - Remind people that they can “pass”
 - Model the game to set clear expectations

- o Activities should not include touching or revealing personal trauma information

During the Meeting

- Think about materials and different learning styles
 - o Many formats as possible: paper, screen, etc.
 - o Provide materials in advance
 - o Explain concepts through text, visuals and verbal means
- Language
 - o Explain acronyms
 - o Have a list of frequently used acronyms on the wall
 - o Reflect on the choice of words that you use
- Take breaks
 - o Have scheduled breaks
 - o Let people know they can take breaks as needed
- Make sure meeting is over by the stated time

Adapted from work by Mandy Davis, LCSW, Portland State University