Urban Land Institute - Building Health Places Initiative | 7.26.22

Learning, Being, Doing:
The Call for Trauma Responsive Design

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// Licensed Clinical Social Worker
// Certified Clinical Trauma Professional
// Design Researcher & Strategist
// Founder of **Social Workers Who Design**

Urban Land Institute Building Healthy Places Initiative

SOCIAL WORKERS WHO DESIGN

I am a **social worker + design research strategist.**

I study **trauma** in the context of **design**.

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I practice being a **trauma responsive designer**.

Personal Gratitude Acknowledgement

My work is inspired by and built from the ongoing work of Laura van Dernoot Lipsky, Tad Hirsch, Alisha Moreland, Renee Linklater, Resmaa Menakem, Rhea V. Almeida, Gabor Maté, Roxane Gay, the Social Work Health Futures Lab, and many thoughtful, deeply compassionate designers, builders, and social workers worldwide.

I recognize that this work has transformed me and will continue to transform others. And because of this, it is inherent to practice compassion and commit to rest.

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Let’s take a moment…

Let’s take a moment…

Visual neurons by Victor Saenger. See more of his work here: https://medium.com/nightingale/drawing-neurons-from-sound-and-music-in-real-time-87b88a799fd5

.GOV

CHIBYDESIGN

Greater Good Studio

manatee

HOPELAB

IDEO.ORG

UXCamp DC

SVA NYC DSI Design for Social Innovation

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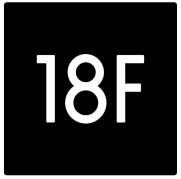
18F

THIS IS HCD
DOING DESIGN
Deep dive discussions on design and innovation methods.
THIS IS DOING.

Lesley
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DISMANTLING
REASSEMBLING
tools for
alternative futures
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OCAD University
July 22-23, 2021

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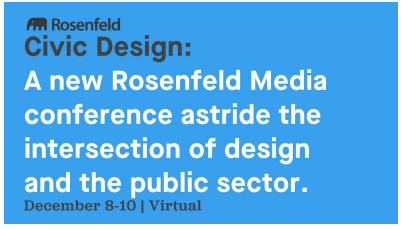
STRONG FEELINGS

THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL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A new Rosenfeld Media conference astride the intersection of design and the public sector.
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SOCIAL WORK+ DESIGN

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Global Social Work
Statement of Ethical Principles

International Federation of Social Workers

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people.

Central to social work are the principles of: **social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities**.

Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work **engages people and structures** to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.

A Social Model of Design
by Victor Margolin and Sylvia Margolin (2002) from the
Social Design Reader

“We believe that many professionals share the goals of designers who want to do socially responsible work, and therefore **we propose that both designers and helping professionals* find ways to work together.**”

In this context, the helping professionals that Victor and Sylvia were referring to are **social workers**. Other professionals to take into consideration are those working in clinical, mental health, and/or behavioral counseling, criminal justice systems and reform, abolitionists, activists, care, health, and human services.

Practicing Without a License: Design Research as Psychotherapy
by Tad Hirsch (2020)

“A growing number of design research projects intentionally recruit vulnerable participants. […] **Our ability to entice participants to share their most personal stories and feelings raises the potential of using rapport to exploit participants in order to ‘gain source material.’**”

In this paper, Hirsch introduces the notion of “trauma-informed research” and suggests enhancements to better prepare researchers for emotionally fraught work. He encourages us to develop these ideas more fully in future work.

DEFINING TRAUMA

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Trauma is a response to anything that is overwhelming and that happens too much, too fast, too soon, or too long.

It is coupled with a lack of protection or support. It lives in the body, stored as sensation: pain or tension - or is a *lack of* sensation, like numbness.

It does not impact us all in the same way.
Context is critically important.

This integrated definition of trauma is attributed to Karine Bell, Resmaa Menakem, and Bessel van der Kolk.

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Trauma is connected to memories.

It is this relationship and adaptation to memories that influence our ability to feel safe with one another. Human connection and social support assist with feelings of safety.

Being heard and truly seen by people around us is the reciprocity needed in design.

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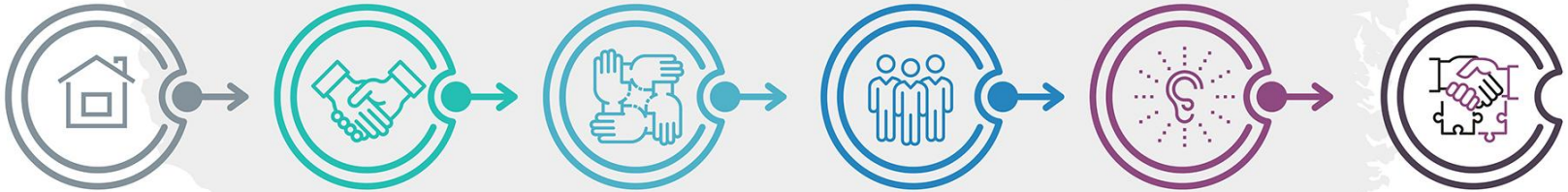
6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The CDC's Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR), in collaboration with SAMHSA's National Center for Trauma-Informed Care (NCTIC), developed and led a new training for OPHPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work. Participants learned SAMHSA'S six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach, including:



1. SAFETY

2. TRUSTWORTHINESS & TRANSPARENCY

3. PEER SUPPORT

4. COLLABORATION & MUTUALITY

5. EMPOWERMENT VOICE & CHOICE

6. CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, & GENDER ISSUES

Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. On-going internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. The training provided by OPHPR and NCTIC was the first step for CDC to view emergency preparedness and response through a trauma-informed lens.

https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm

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Trauma Informed

Having knowledge or an understanding of trauma.

Trauma Responsive

Reacting quickly and responding readily by using one's growing knowledge and understanding of trauma.

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Health Care for Homeless Veterans

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

mercy HOUSING

PRACTICE MATTERS

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Practicing Without a License: Design Research as Psychotherapy
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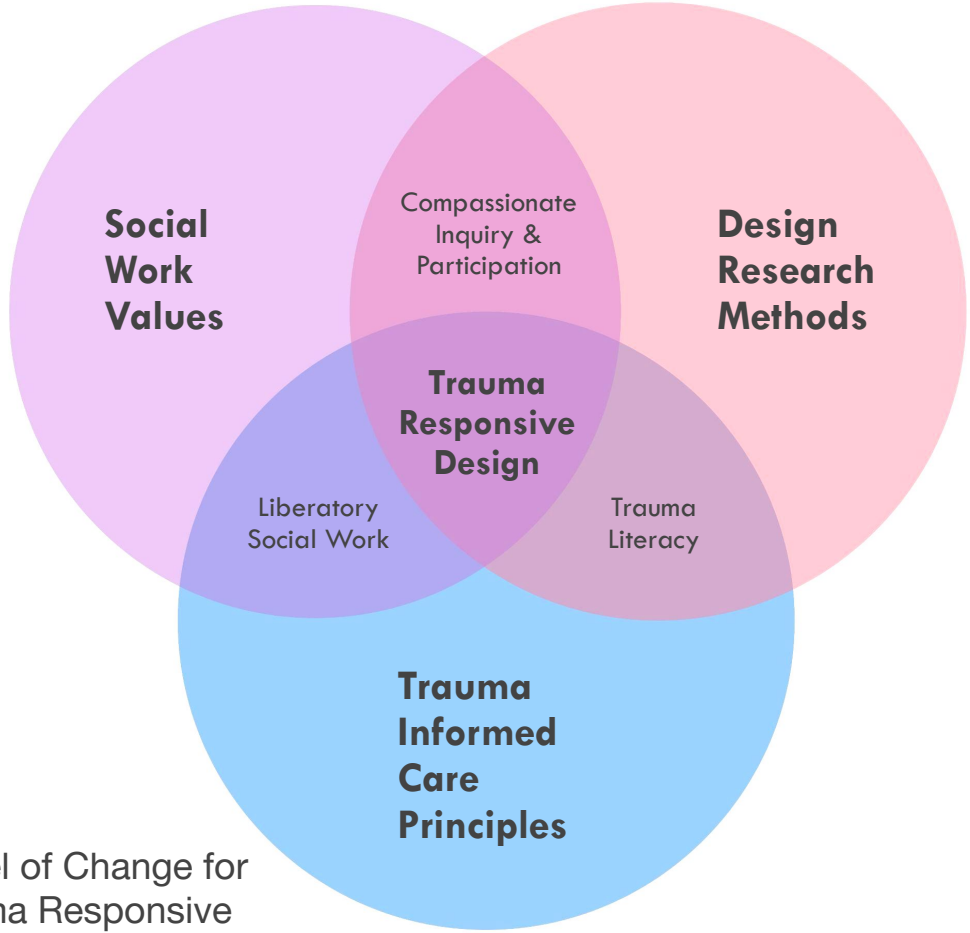
Credit: Rachael Dietkus, 2021



Model of Change for Trauma Responsive Design Research

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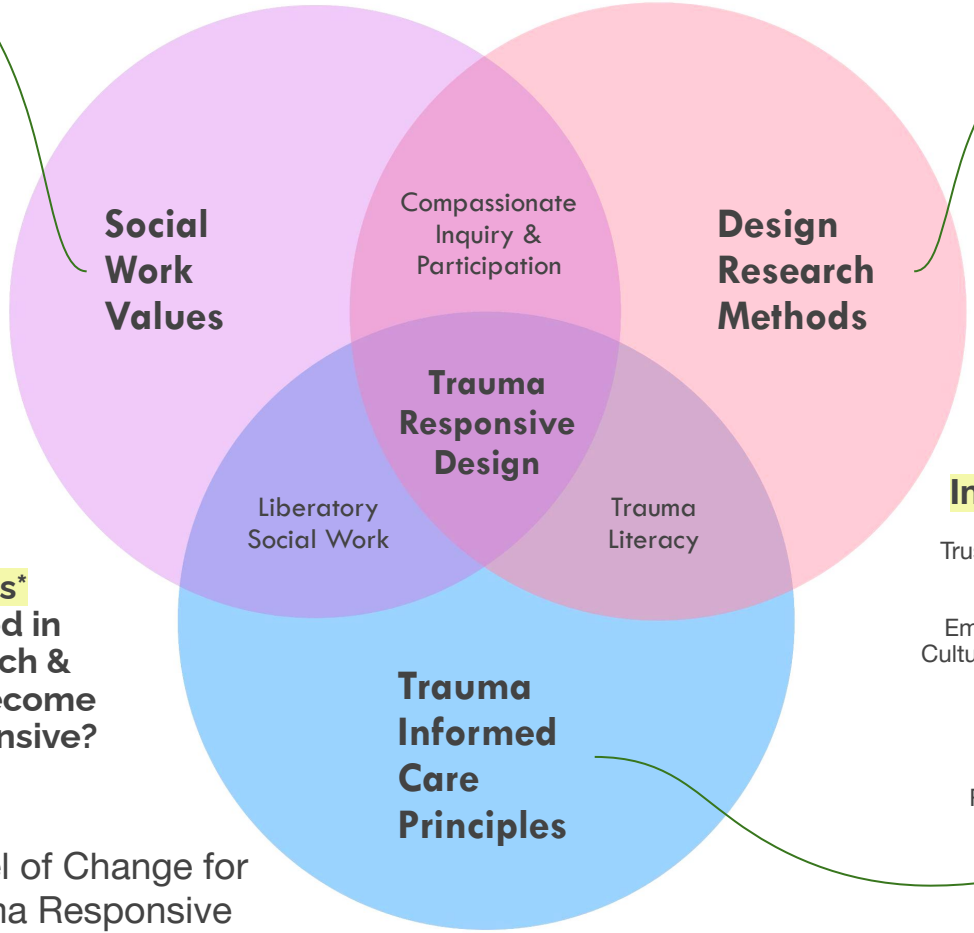
Identify Values
Dignity & Humanity
Human Rights
Social Justice
Self-Determination
Right to Participation
Confidentiality
Whole Person
Ethical Use of Tech
Integrity



Select Methods
Co-Design
Co-Production
Equity-Centered
Liberatory Design
Anti-Racist Mindsets
Systems Redesign
Reflective Practice

What are the pre-conditions* of care needed in design research & practice to become trauma responsive?

Integrate Principles
Safety
Trustworthiness & Transparency
Peer Support
Collaboration & Mutuality
Empowerment, Voice & Choice
Cultural, Historical & Gender Issues

Knowingness & Context
Healing-Centered
Mattering & Reciprocity
Reflexivity & Sensemaking

Model of Change for Trauma Responsive Design Research

Credit: Rachael Dietkus, 2021
*inspired by Liz Ogbu and The Preconditions to Healing

Questions
+ Discussion

THANK YOU!

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PRINCIPLES FOR TRAUMA RESPONSIVE DESIGN

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1.

Safety

People feel psychologically, emotionally, and physically safe when participating in any of our design processes.

2.

Trustworthiness & Transparency

All design decisions are conducted with transparency. This builds and maintains trust with everyone involved, as well as anyone who might ever use our designs.

3.

Peer Support

Individuals who are brought into the design process can involve the people *they* care about. This is crucial for building trust, establishing and maintaining safety, and building power.

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4.

Collaboration & Mutuality

Designers recognize that care and healing happens through compassion, critical consciousness, and meaningful shared decision-making.

5.

Empowerment, Voice, & Choice

We strengthen and empower the experience of the communities we are inviting in or going to, while recognizing that every experience is unique and may sometimes require a more personalized approach.

6.

Cultural, Historical, & Gender Issues

Designers identify and understand their biases and avoid stereotypes via personas. Truth is centered, authentic relationships are valued, and the historical and generational impacts of trauma are acknowledged and addressed.

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7.

Knowingness

8.

Healing-centered

9.

Context / Contextualizing

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10.

Mattering

11.

Sensemaking

12.

Reflexivity / Reciprocity