

SAFETY & RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF LOSS

Poverty and Opportunity Forum
April 11, 2024

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AGENDA

- Introduce Groundworks Collaborative
- Share about a tragic event
- Describe our steps to address challenges and opportunities:
 - SAFETY
 - RESILIENCE
- Reflection & Discussion

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Name competing priorities of maintaining a client-centered service approach within policy and practices
- Identify a framework for building and maintaining an organizational wellness culture
- Review supports for coping with adverse events to support a path towards resilience
- Reflect on wellness and resiliency for your organization

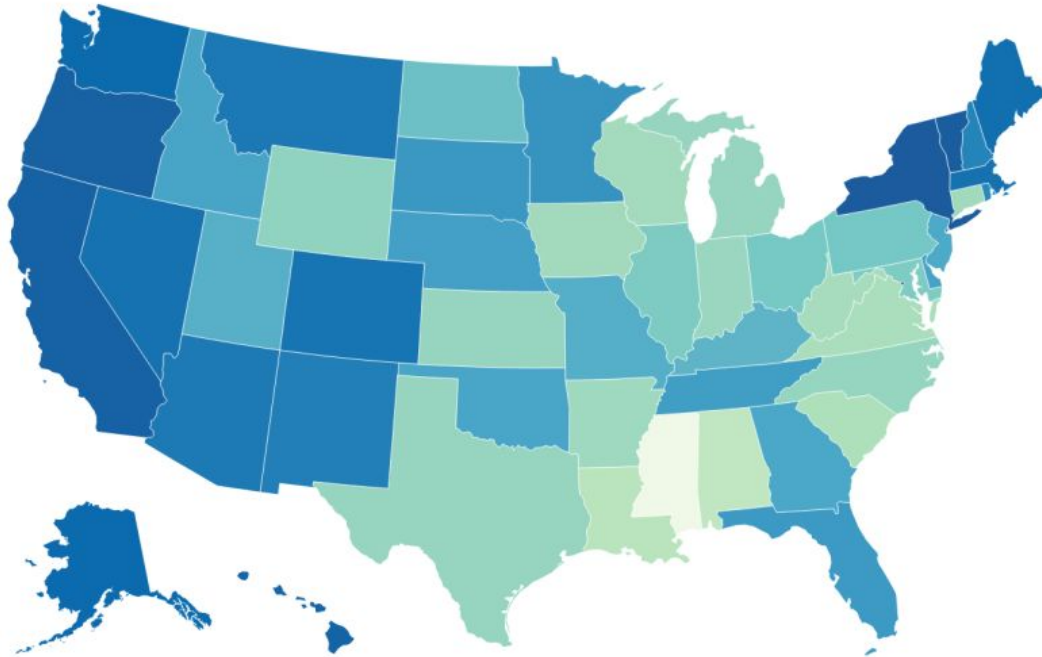
BEFORE WE GET STARTED...

- Trigger warning
- Sensitive subject matter, coming with a client centered approach
- Spirit of vulnerability/Curiosity and feedback

Homelessness by state

Vermont had the second highest rate of people experiencing homelessness per capita...

Number of people experiencing homelessness per 10,000 residents



Based on a point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness in each state by volunteers and service providers in early 2023.

Map: Erin Petenko • Source: U.S. HUD Annual Homelessness Assessment Report • Created with Datawrapper

Brattleboro

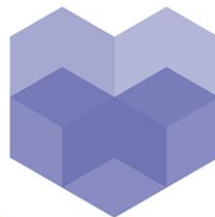
308 households
on Coordinated Entry
Master List

219 households
sheltering in Brattleboro
motels

supportworks



healthworks



groundworks

COLLABORATIVE



foodworks



changeworks



housingworks



basic needs met with dignity



APRIL 3, 2023





PAUSE

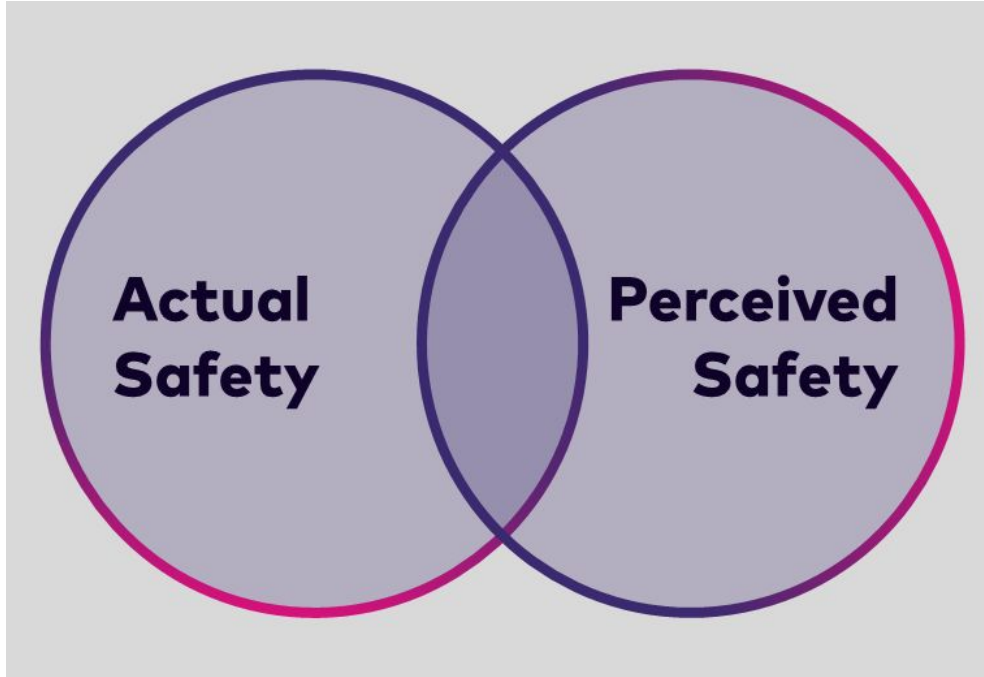
SAFETY

RESILIENCE

SAFETY IN THE CULTURE AT GROUNDWORKS

PRE	POST
One of many factors to consider	Primary focus and consideration in the work; discussed in training and supervision
"I feel fine" – "I know this client"	Familiarity / Comfort does not mean there is no risk: Use of Broset Violence Checklist
Focus on clients, less on environment and staff preparation	Programmatic boundaries – staff and clients
Lax training schedule	Robust Trainings: CPI, mental health, Motivational Interviewing, substance use, trauma
Tracked critical incidents, but did not have thorough process & system	Expanded Event Report Structure and workflow
Boundaries varied with individual staff, different shifts.	Established communicated programmatic boundaries with restorative justice approach

DEFINING SAFETY



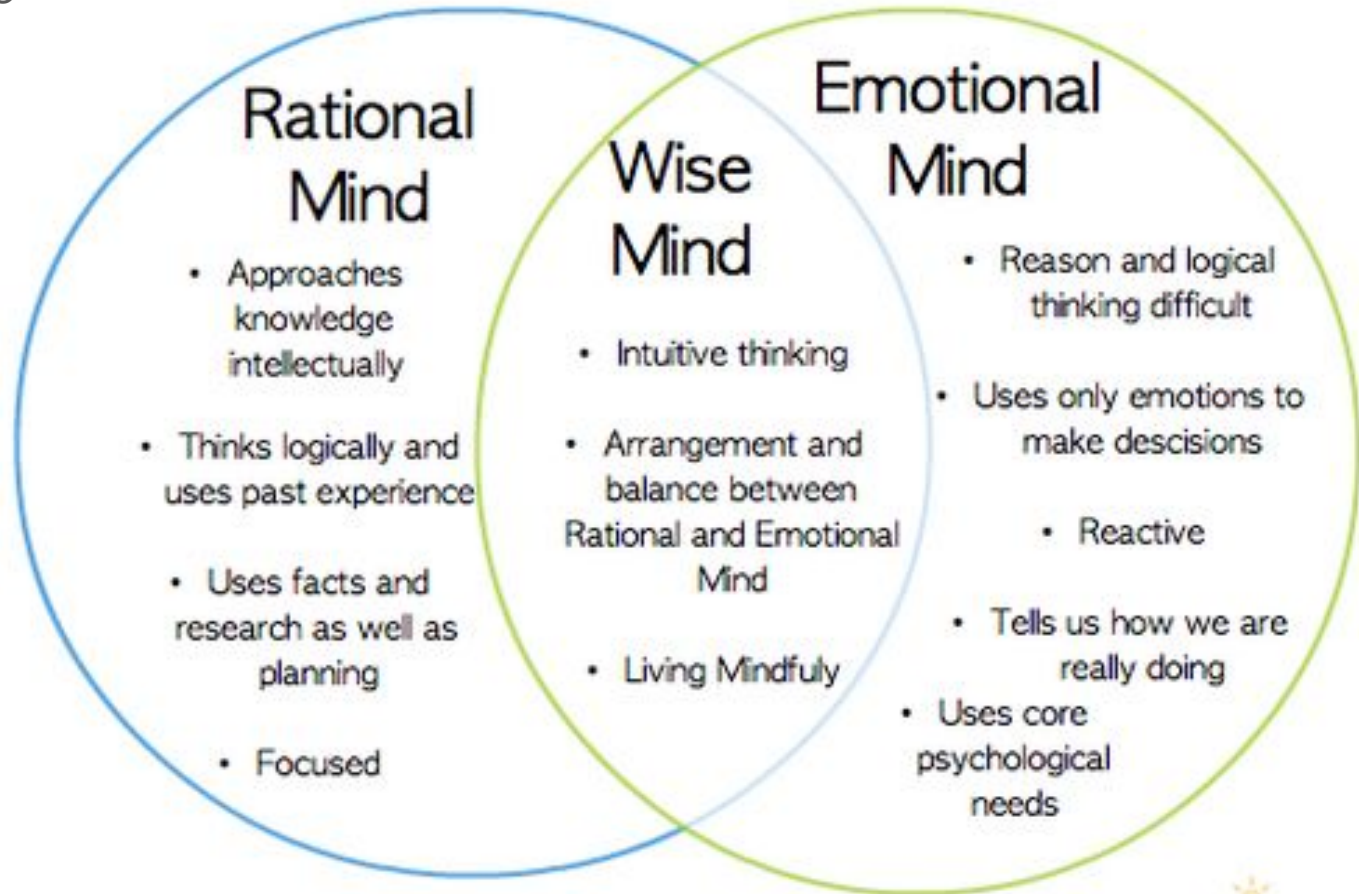
Basic definition of safety:
the condition of being
protected from or unlikely to
cause danger, risk or injury

However, safety is not an
objective state.

It is individually felt and
shaped through individual
worldview.

WATCHING FOR BIAS

The power of emotion in our initial experiences after Leah's death continues to hold an important frame for how we approach our work.



EVALUATING RISK

Goal: To reduce risk & increase safety

Decisions and policies adjusted after April 3rd were careful to use language that left room for flexibility

Different individual risk tolerance

Different risk tolerance in our programs

Brøset Violence Checklist:

Behavior	Definition	Observed?
Confused	Appears obviously confused and disoriented. May be unaware of time, place or person	
Irritable	Easily annoyed or angered. Unable to tolerate the presence of others.	
Boisterous	Behavior is overtly 'loud' or noisy, e.g. slams doors, shouts out when talking, etc.	
Physically Threatening	Where there is a definite intent to physically threaten another person, e.g. the taking of an aggressive stance; the grabbing of another person's clothing; the raising of an arm, leg, making of a fist, or modeling of a head-butt directed at another	
Verbally Threatening	A verbal outburst which is more than just a raised voice; and where there is a definite intent to intimidate or threaten another person, e.g. verbal attacks, abuse, name-calling, verbally neutral comments uttered in a snarling aggressive manner	
Attacking Objects	An attack directed at an object and not an individual, e.g. the indiscriminate throwing of an object; banging or smashup windows; kicking, banging or head-butting an object; or the smashing of furniture	
Total		

Each item in the checklist is either present (1) or absent (0) in the scoring system and scoring is conducted in relation to the patient's normal baseline behavior.

(0) – small risk of violence

(1-2) – moderate risk of violence

(>3) – very high risk of violence*

*very high risk resident – interventions should be implemented immediately to prevent a potential episode

EXPANDED EVENT REPORTING

PRE

- Significant incident – usually involving an act or threat of violence
- Program discharge
- Overdose

POST

- Calls to emergency service
- Calls to crisis
- Calls to police non emergency line
- Overdose
- Act or threat of violence
- Loud verbal confrontation
- Call to ACT
- Medical emergency
- Call for wellness check
- Program discharge
- Visitor asked to leave
- Facility issue – ex. power outage for extended time
- Staff injury

Event Report Data Summary October 2023 to January 2024

*Client's departure from program without notice to staff - was excluded from below Data, there were 42 instances of that in the reporting period.

of Incidents by Location & Month

# of Incidents	Month				Grand Total
	October	November	December	January	
Location of Incident					
54 South Main Building and Campus (Not Drop-in Program Related)	2	3	2		7
Chalet	2	1	2	2	7
Drop-In Center Program	21	27	19	13	80
Foodworks				1	1
Great River Terrace	2		1	2	5
Motel		1	1	1	3
original incident occurred off property		1			1
Quality Inn	1				1
Grand Total	28	33	25	19	105

RESILIENCY



RESILIENCY

PRE	POST
<p>Organizational Culture: Strong and scrappy, gritty and tenacious, martyrs for the cause</p>	<p>Organizational Culture: Strong, because we uphold boundaries determined, resourceful, tenacious, creative, and resilient</p>
<p>Wellness Approach: Self-Care was a buzzword and a personal responsibility</p>	<p>Collaborative Approach to Wellness & Community Partnership Supports: Organizational framework that supports individual needs (for staff and clients)</p>
<p>Feedback: not always welcome, unskillful, unidirectional "My door is always open."</p>	<p>Embrace Culture of FEEDBACK & LEARNING Focus on effective SUPERVISION</p>
<p>Communication lacked structure</p>	<p>COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY for organization-wide risk reduction</p> <p>Organization-wide focus on Engagement: Event Debriefing & Safety Working Group</p>

ENGAGEMENT



Engagement: Mutually beneficial interaction that results in participants feeling valued for their unique contribution

COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO BUILDING SUPPORTS

Trauma Specialists

3 weeks paid off (Pause)

Mental Health Leave (40 hrs)

Group Processing AND Individual Therapy

Donations of Massage, Yoga, Art Classes

Walks

Big Day Out

Additional Trainings

FOOOOOOOD!



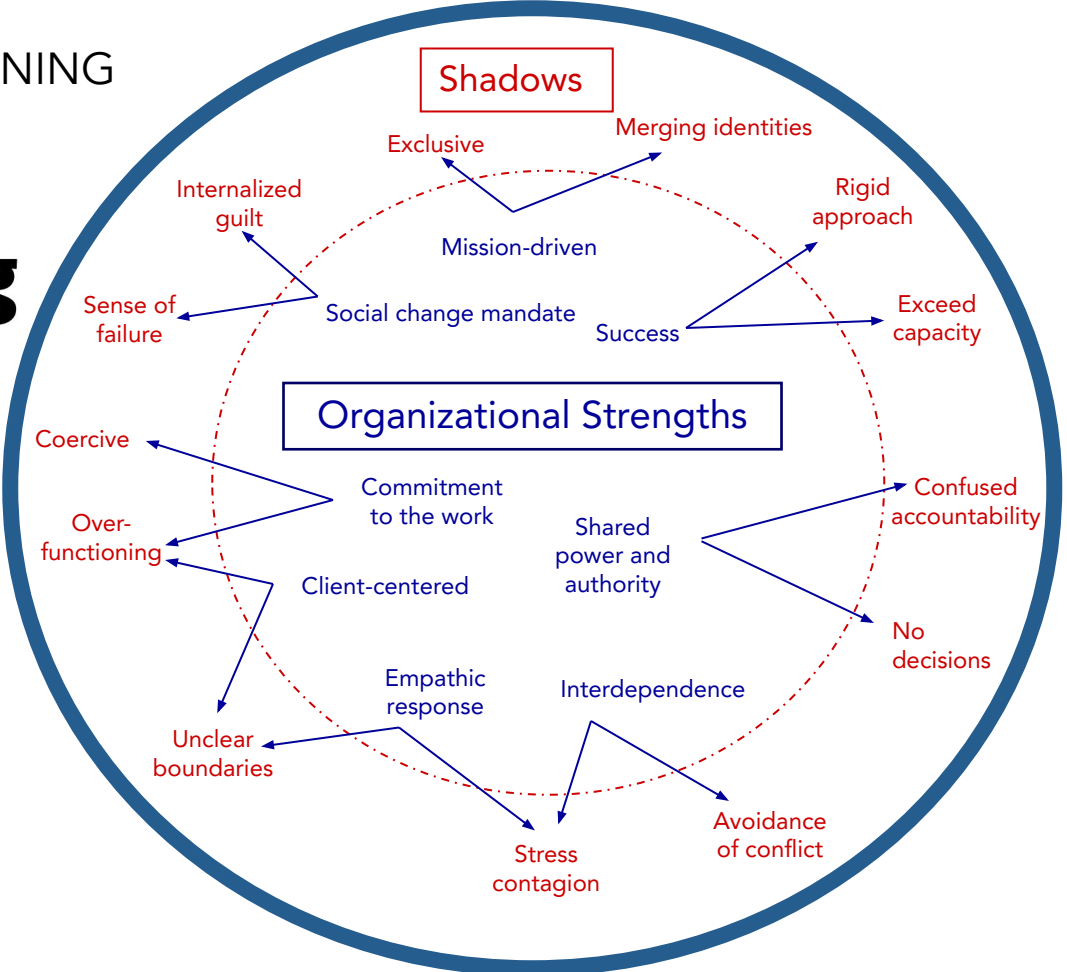
COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY

- Daily Huddles
- Emergency notification text and email alerts to all staff at multiple worksites (AlertAware)
- Debriefing: short-, medium-, and long-term follow up post incidents
- Leadership Team to program meetings
- Client Listening Sessions
- Safety Working Group

CULTURE OF FEEDBACK & LEARNING

Trauma and Healing in Organizations

Vivian & Hormann, 2002



SUPERVISION



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Achievements

- 18 of 21 people from the Morningside have been housed
- Marked 1 year anniversary with former & current staff & clients
- Confidence and clarity in who we are & what we do

Sticky Wickets

- New events to learn from are always arising
- Staff Turnover
 - Agency overall on par with trends
 - Near full exit of Morningside staff
- Key leadership transition

On the Horizon

- Plans to reimagine Morningside House and bring back beds & services
- Facilities upgrades for safety
- Leadership transition and restructure
- Team building
- Ongoing adaptability

ACTIVE REFLECTION: THINK, PAIR, SHARE

SAFETY – What are aspects of your organization that would benefit from looking at with fresh eyes? Things accustomed to? Not talked about? Or met with *that's just the way things are*?

RESILIENCE – Does your organization have an approach that is rooted in Self care or resilience based approach? What are areas to deepen? How could you go about it, from your respective role in your organization?

“And when great souls die,
After a period peace blooms,
Slowly and always
Irregularly. Spaces fill
With a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
To be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
Better. For they existed”



M. Angelou

When Great Trees Fall

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES:

NAEH:

https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Working-in-Homeless-Services-A-Survey-of-the-Field_12-5-23_FINAL.pdf

NHCHC Resiliency Toolkit:

<https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Organizational-Leadership-and-Resiliency-Toolkit-2022-New.pdf>

OSHA: Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/osha3148.pdf>

National Coalition for the Homeless: Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Bias Motivated Violence towards People Experiencing Homelessness in 2016-17.

https://nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/hate-crimes-2016-17-final_for-web.pdf

Trauma and Organizations

<http://organizationaltraumaandhealing.com/resources>

Supervision

https://hbr.org/2022/11/make-the-most-of-your-one-on-one-meetings?ab=at_art_art_1x4_s04

CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS

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