

RETHINKING STORY RETELLING: WHAT WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT TRAUMA RECOVERY

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Session Summary: In restorative practices, stories are how we learn and communicate. Traumatic stories at times need to be retold. Because retelling a traumatic story can become a negative reinforcement, we need to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of such harmful effects.

Practitioners equipped to recognize the difference in trauma between shock and the grieving process can therefore be appropriately responsive. We will cover the differences in investigating what we can do to assist someone in releasing the shock of trauma, and in moving into the grieving process.

Learning and longstanding resiliency is severely compromised when a person is stuck in any level of a hyper-vigilant fight, flight, or freeze state.

Recognizing when traumatic story retelling can be avoided, means using alternatives. These alternatives emerge from a new understanding of the learning process that underlies recollection in the brain.

With correct timing, the effects of painful memories can be blunted by substitution with memories of safety and ease.

We will investigate the experience of safety beyond the concept of physical safety, to explore how psychological and emotional safety is reflected in our physiology.

Learning Objectives:

~recognizing signs and symptoms of any harmful effects of traumatic story retelling as a criteria for choosing alternatives to retelling

~assisting someone in releasing the shock in order to begin the necessary grieving process.

~exploring alternatives to story retelling in the context of current research or memory and learning.

--being inspired to work in collaboration with subject matter experts in our communities, as well as to work for policy and systems embracing of restorative justice practices in our schools and communities