TAUNTON WELCOMES REFUGEES

charitable incorporated organisation number 1183921

4h. A Working Definition of Trauma-informed Practice

Trauma-informed practice aims to increase our awareness of how trauma can negatively impact on individuals and communities, and their ability to feel safe or develop trusting relationships, even with those who seek to support them.

1. Recognising the signs, symptoms of trauma and responding appropriately

- The purpose of trauma-informed practice is not to treat trauma-related difficulties (which is the role of trauma-specialist services and practitioners) but instead, to enable people to access health and care services.
- in the short term to ask, 'What does this person need?' rather than 'What is wrong with this person?'.

2. Preventing re-traumatisation

- Re-traumatisation is the re-experiencing of thoughts, feelings or sensations experienced at the time of a traumatic event or circumstance in a person's past. Re-traumatisation is generally triggered by reminders which may or may not be potentially traumatic in themselves.

3. Establishing trauma-informed practice

Offering Safety

The physical, psychological and emotional safety of those we support (as well as volunteers) can be enhanced by:

- people knowing they are reasonably safe
- that processes are be in place that will seek to prevent re-traumatisation

- that there are appropriate policies, practices and safeguarding arrangements in place

Offering Trustworthiness

Asylum seekers and refugees have often had very negative experiences of others, where they have been severely let down. Building trust will be a key part of our work through:

- explaining what we are doing and why
- only offering what we can deliver
- our expectations being made clear

Creating a Trauma-informed Environment

We will try to minimise unpleasant and maximise positive experiences by:

- having quiet and private spaces available where needed
- avoiding sudden or loud noises wherever possible
- ensuring trustees and volunteers have good listening skills
- ensuring project leaders and volunteers know what to do if someone appears to be in difficulty
- encouraging activities that support mental health and well-being (physical activity, engagement with the natural world, creative arts etc.)
- offering choices or instructions in a clear and simple way, as trauma often affects the ability to process information quickly or remember detail.
- encouraging activities that re-instate a person's feeling of dignity, value and self-worth (including being part of decision-making processes)