

GROUNDING GUIDE:

Trauma Informed Practices

What does it mean to be Trauma-Informed?

Being trauma-informed means recognizing that people carry stories we may never hear. It means showing care and compassion even when we don't know the full context. Whether someone is quiet, tense, withdrawn, or short with you — those may be their dashboard signals blinking. You don't need to be a therapist to notice the signs or respond with steadiness.

It's a lens, not a checklist.

The 5 Core Principles

- Safety — I create emotional and physical safety in how I show up.
- Trustworthiness — I stay steady in tone, timing, and presence — even when things are hard.
- Peer Support — I walk beside others without absorbing what isn't mine. Presence is powerful — fixing isn't required.
- Collaboration — I offer choices and include others in the process.
- Empowerment — I help people feel like they still have power, even in tough moments.

The takeaway: You don't have to master all five. Each one gives you a path to support someone.

Everyday Practices

These are the small shifts that ripple:

- Pause before responding
- Offer choices (e.g., "Would you prefer here or over there?")
- Lower your volume and relax your body
- Assume someone is activated, not disrespectful
- Ask a teammate if they're okay
- Name your own dashboard status ("I'm feeling distracted today")
- Step away briefly to reset even before any issues arise.
- Ask yourself: "What's my energy right now?" and "What do I need in this moment?"

What's one practice you'll lean into today — and why?

Reflection Prompts

These questions are designed to support insight and connection — not judgment.

Which of the 5 principles do I already practice?

→ When does it come naturally?

When have I unintentionally escalated a situation — and what could've shifted?

→ Was it my tone, urgency, or assumptions?

How can I access greater compassion without needing the backstory?

→ What helps me lead with care instead of waiting for context?

Use This in a Team Setting

These ideas can bring this Module into shared spaces with care:

Start-of-shift or meeting ideas:

- Kickoff reflection: "Which principle feels within reach today?"
- Invite 2–3 people to share or use a sticky note wall or chat box.

The "Tap Out" System:

- Create a silent or agreed-upon cue for when someone needs to pause without needing to explain.

Mid-Shift Reflection

- Ask yourself: "What if I am seeing this person on their worse day?"

End-of-shift reflections:

- Ask yourself: "What's one thing I held with care today?"

Compassion Rounds (Weekly, Monthly, or Quarterly):

- Reflect on and celebrate moments where team members handled a situation with compassion.

💬 *Small shifts ripple.* When we model care, we make it safer for others to do the same.

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