

# Think Trauma Participant Worksheets

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## 2.1 Understanding Power of the Relationships

When has your relationship with a young person helped them deal with a problem they've faced for a long time? Think about one of the following as an example.

When you were able to:

- Model a new way for the youth to handle a problem they've had for a long time.
- Listen to them when they needed to vent.
- Helped them understand the mistakes you made when you were younger.

## 2.2 Building Trust

What are ways that you have gained trust from youth?

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## 2.3 Discovering Early Warning Signs

Consider the following questions for discovering youth early warning signs. In the blanks, insert the specific behavior challenge that happened (i.e., "threw the chair"). For this exercise, work individually first and pretend you are interviewing the youth you wrote in Handout 1.1 about an incident where they lost control. After completing this exercise, talk as a group about other early warning signs you may have uncovered and add it to the blank spaces at the bottom of Handout 2.3.

1. What were you feeling in your body just before you \_\_\_\_\_ ?
2. What thoughts were going through your head just before you \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What feelings did you have before you \_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. Tell me some signs that I can look for that will let me know you are getting upset.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What would your friends or family say you do just before getting really angry? OR really sad? OR really (*insert any emotion that leads to behavior challenges*)?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Here are some things I notice about myself before I get so upset that I explode. (*Share some of your early warning signs as an adult or when you were the youth's age*).

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Examples of Possible Early Warning Signs:

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\_\_\_\_\_

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### 2.4 Coaching Youth to Handle Trauma's Impact on Decision-Making

Consider these four reasons for poor decision making and think of tips you'd give a staff member to help youth better deal with these challenges.

- 1) Expecting danger, and as a result, misinterpreting people and situations as threatening.

**Example:** "frequently tell youth your intentions are to help them, not to hurt them, even if this doesn't feel like it is the case to the youth."

- 2) Less self-control and difficulty thinking through consequences of decisions.

**Example:** "help youth 'size up' their response to the problem. If their response is much bigger than the actual size of the problem then the problem will get worse."

- 3) Drawn to peers who have experienced similar life events and may be inexperienced at dealing With problems in healthy ways.

**Example:** "find an older youth who is respected and has dealt with problems in a healthy way. Connect youth with this person or use this person as an example for dealing with problems."

- 4) Increased sensitivity to rewards during adolescence may make the above worse.

**Example:** "pay close attention to when youth do things well—even very small things—and giving them verbal praise."

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## 2.5 What You Can Do to Build Trust

Below are the strategies described in Module 2 to help build trust with youth.

- ✓ Communicate with respect and authenticity.
- ✓ Validate experiences.
- ✓ Educate yourself about the youth by asking questions about their life experiences.
- ✓ Remain consistent with youth.
- ✓ Explain reasons for actions such as discipline or change in schedule.
- ✓ Praise youth when they handle triggering situations with effective strategies that do not make the situation worse.
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.6 Creating Positive Peer Interactions

How do you create opportunities for youth to spend time with positive peers and adults who make healthy and safe decisions? Brainstorm and share specific examples that you can use in your facility in the upcoming weeks.

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## 2.7 What You Can Do to Promote Empowerment

Below are the strategies described in Module 2 to help promote empowerment among youth.

- ✓ Help youth to understand their behaviors.
  - Verbally translate their behaviors by explaining how those behaviors may be emotions other than just anger.
  - Privately discuss with youth how their thoughts and emotions, particularly related to trauma reminders/triggers and early warning signs, influence their behaviors.
- ✓ Help youth to gain competence and complete positive activities that address the damage trauma caused.
- ✓ Give a choice when possible.
- ✓ Remain consistent with youth.
- ✓ Model and assist youth in developing and practicing new coping strategies.
- ✓ Engage restorative justice practices when appropriate.

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 2.8 Trauma’s Impact on Planning for the Future

Create a list of all the inner assets and external resources you had or used to overcome challenges growing up. Think about things that helped you reach where you are now. Particularly, share what you may have done or used to overcome some of the challenges on the screen.

| Inner Assets   | External Resources  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Self-Efficacy</b> <i>(Strategies for building your belief in your ability to succeed):</i></p>             | <p><b>Family Support</b> <i>(Strategies for using family support to deal with challenges):</i></p>                        |
| <p><b>Self-Esteem</b> <i>(Strategies for increasing feelings of self-worth):</i></p>                             | <p><b>Peer Support</b> <i>(Strategies for using friends to deal with challenges in a healthy way):</i></p>                |
| <p><b>Competence</b> <i>(Strategies for becoming more skilled at different tasks):</i></p>                       | <p><b>Community Connectedness</b> <i>(Strategies for using connections in the community to deal with challenges):</i></p> |
| <p><b>Spiritual Belief</b> <i>(Strategies for finding purpose, meaning and a greater purpose than self):</i></p> | <p><b>School Connectedness</b> <i>(Strategies for using school and school personnel to deal with challenges):</i></p>     |
| <p><b>Others:</b></p>  | <p><b>Others:</b></p>   |