



Beyond Individual Experience: Frameworks for Understanding Shared Group Traumatization and Healing

Alongside a broadening understanding of traumatic experience, frameworks conceptualizing the origins of and responses to shared group trauma—and pathways for collective healing—have been emerging. These frameworks commonly focus on group or communal, rather than individual, trauma experiences and they consider how social positionality, historical group experiences, societal structures and institutional conditions, and groups' access to power and resources are connected to traumatic events or experiences. Furthermore, these models frequently theorize a connection between group traumatic experiences and physical and behavioral health challenges experienced by members of these social groups.

This session begins with an overview of several communal or group trauma frameworks including the Colonial Trauma Framework (Terry Mitchell and colleagues), the Trauma of Resource and Cultural Loss Framework (based on Conservation of Resources theory), evolving understandings of Historical Group Trauma Theory, and models exposing the trauma of racism, oppression, and social inequity. This first segment of the presentation is intended to introduce participants to new ways of conceptualizing the origin and impacts of trauma and to prepare them to identify how concepts from one or more of the frameworks might be used to expand trauma informed approaches with groups, communities, and individuals.

Incorporating decolonizing and equity lenses, presenters will engage participants during the second segment of the presentation in thought work and reflection. Participants will have opportunities to process new learning in small groups, examine what collective healing might look like, and to identify practice approaches they can use to address the impacts of shared group trauma.

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