



**Centra Wellness**  
NETWORK

Centra Wellness Network  
310 N. Glocheski Dr Manistee, MI 49660  
1-877-398-2013

## Normal Reactions to Abnormal Situations

When an individual goes through a traumatic event, they might exhibit certain symptoms, or they might not. Remember something that is considered traumatic to one, may not be for another. Like most things in life this is a very individualistic experience—there is no one size fits all. That being said there is a wide range of symptoms and reactions that can fall under the umbrella of a trauma response. While this list is not extensive, I will include some of these below.

### Psychological

- feeling as if you are in a state of 'high alert' and are 'on watch' for anything else that might happen
- reduced concentration and memory
- intrusive thoughts about the event
- repeatedly playing parts of the event over in the mind
- confusion or disorientation.

### Emotional

- fear, anxiety and panic
- shock – difficulty believing in what has happened, feeling detached and confused
- feeling numb
- not wanting to connect with others or becoming withdrawn from those around you
- continuing alarm – feeling like the danger is still there or the event is continuing
- let-down – after the crisis is over, exhaustion sets in. Emotional reactions to the event are felt during the let-down phase, and include depression, avoidance, guilt, oversensitivity, and withdrawal.

### Physical

- fatigue or exhaustion
- disturbed sleep
- edginess, agitation
- muscle tension
- aches and pains
- nausea, vomiting and dizziness
- headaches
- excessive sweating
- increased heart rate.



FIGHT



FLIGHT



FREEZE



FLOP / FAWN



FRIEND

### Reminders:

If you missed the first volumes you can find it on the Centra Wellness Network website under “news” then “articles and information”. You can always reach out to me directly and I will happily provide you with a pdf.

As always, if you have any questions or would like more information on anything covered, please feel free to reach out!

My hopes and dreams are that we can work together to create a healthier community, recognizing and addressing the needs within the community and the reasons why those needs exist.

Thanks for reading,

*Sarah Madsen*


Trauma Informed Practices Specialist  
smadsen@centrawellness.org

## Looking ahead:

Next months volume of the trauma newsletter will focus on how trauma affects the brain. I will also cover another guiding principle of being trauma informed.


## Guiding Principles:

**Safety**




Ensuring physical and emotional safety.

**Trustworthiness/  
Transparency**




Decisions are made with transparency, with a goal of building and maintaining trust for all.

**Peer Support**




Utilizing their stories and lived experience to promote healing.

**Collaboration  
/ Mutuality**




Everyone has a role to play in the healing

**Empowerment,  
Voice & Choice**



Individuals' strengths are recognized, built on, and validated.

**Cultural, Historical,  
and Gender Issues**

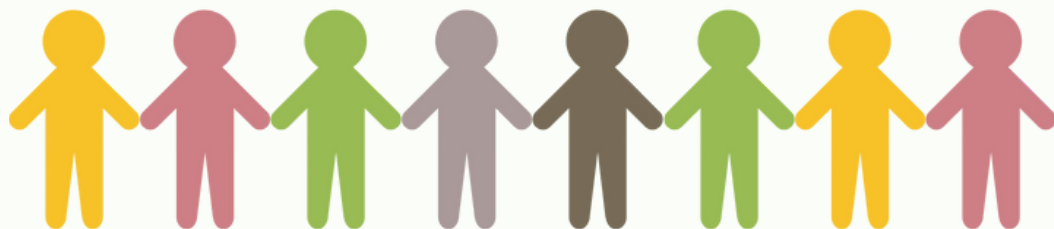


Actively moving past stereotypes and biases, offering inclusive services.

The focus this month will be on the trauma informed care principle of **peer support and mutual self-help**. Having peer support offers a flexible approach to building mutual, healing relationships amongst equals. These relationships are voluntary, non-judgmental, respectful, reciprocal, and empathetic.

This is an integral part of the organization and service delivery approach. It can help build trust, establish safety, and empower individuals. Our systems (including social service systems) are built on hierarchy and power—student/teacher, doctor/patient, case manager/client, etc.

Peer support and mutual self-help is profoundly empowering, healing, and enriching, not only on the individual level but also on the operational/systemic level. Creating opportunity and policy for peer support to exist in all environments dismantles systems of hierarchy/superiority which leads to healing.



**Utilizing stories and lived experience to promote healing.**

## How does peer support and mutual self-help look in an organization?

- *Everyone* has a role to play in healing and liberation.
- *Consent and shared power* are crucial to TIC.
- *Solidarity and fellowship* are key to dismantling power structures that contribute to and sustain oppression.
- *Voice of lived experience* matters, both for informing systems, healing, and reclaiming of ones' story.