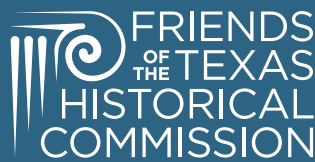


CRISIS AND TRAUMA
RESPONSE TOOLKIT
FOR CULTURAL WORKERS
2023



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INSTRUCTIONS

This toolkit is designed to be used as a whole or in-part. It contains stand-alone chapters, which can be used on an as-needed basis. The organization of the toolkit proceeds from larger topics to more specific topics.

TIPS FOR USAGE:

1. Watch the video(s) for the toolkit chapter(s)
2. Review the toolkit chapter in its entirety.
3. Use the discussion prompts to facilitate discussion with staff, community members, or others.
4. Engage in the recommended trainings or programming as desired.

Please note that this toolkit includes content that will continue to be updated.

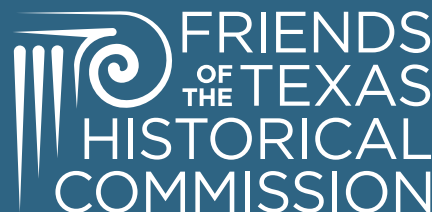
This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Grant #CAGML-247929-OMLS-20 (www.ims.gov).

The views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this "Crisis and Trauma Response Toolkit" do not necessarily represent those of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

As stated in the introduction, this toolkit is offered as "permanently incomplete" product and will be continually updated as new information and resources become available. The views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations shared in the video presentations are those of the presenting experts and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission.

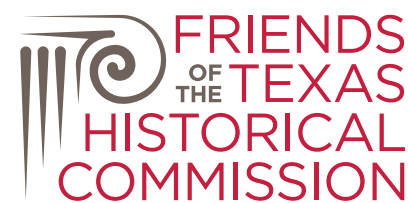
While some of the video presentations are provided by licensed therapists, the training and programming recommendations, which came out of the "lab" sessions, are presented as suggested practices to be used by cultural workers at their discretion and NOT as therapy.

FRONT COVER: Images of Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, Fulton Mansion State Historic Site, and Maggoffin Home State Historic Site.



GRIEVING AND REMEMBERING

Understanding common misconceptions about grief and loss



Grief and loss are inevitable parts of life. Grief is a normal reaction to loss, and grieving is an incredibly important process, yet misconceptions and a lack of understanding about grief pervade modern culture. Presenter Nancy Berns describes grief and loss as a long road, a journey that may take days, weeks, months or years as grief has no time schedule and no predictable progression. Along the way, persons may encounter the weight of social expectations, experience additional losses which can become layered, and struggle to learn to carry grief as they also continue to live life. The unique challenges posed by grief and loss deserve careful attention, especially as they pertain to cultural workers and cultural organizations. Since beliefs and values surrounding grief and loss vary widely across individuals and cultures, it is vital to evaluate the language we use and the messaging we convey when we talk with people impacted by these events.

Berns' presentation outlines the meanings of and misconceptions regarding grief and loss. She helps us investigate why people grieve and how the process may or may not look. She provides strategies for carrying grief, and explains how children may differ from adults in how they process grief. Particular to the needs of cultural

organizations and workers, she also provides examples of ways to create shared grieving experiences and/or public memorials, emphasizing storytelling as a way of building connection, making sense of what happened, and honoring the lived experiences of others. Further, she highlights how different groups may have different needs and visions that should be considered when conceiving of programs or memorials. Finally, she gives viewers a list of what to do and what not to do when supporting others who are grieving.

NANCY BERNS

Nancy Berns is the author of *Closure: The Rush to End Grief and What It Costs Us* and professor of sociology at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa where she teaches classes on grief, death, emotions, violence, and justice. She is also author of *Framing the Victim: Domestic Violence, Media and Social Problems* (Aldine de Gruyter 2004). Her current research explores how people live with grief and joy after loss. Nancy gives talks for various community groups, including schools, businesses, counselors, pastors, bereavement support groups, and hospice volunteers and staff. Her work attracts a national and international audience through her TEDx talk "Beyond Closure", blog, and interviews such as those with *The Boston Globe*, *The Guardian*, *The L.A. Times*, *Huffington Post Live*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *CBS News*, *Real Simple*, and *Prevention*. For more information, see www.nancyberns.com.



Damage from a tornado at the Caddo Mounds State Historic Site in Alto, Texas.



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Talk with others within your organization about grief and loss.

Using the facilitation tips below, set aside time to engage members of your organization in discussion about grief and loss.

FACILITATION TIPS

Create a safe space for productive group discussions.

- Create a set of agreed-upon guidelines for group discussions.
- Clearly articulate the discussion goal(s).
- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with understanding.
(Don't just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Avoid criticizing.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Allow everyone the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions or generalizations about groups.
Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) social group.
- A brief check-in and check-out is often helpful to include.
- Ensure accountability for words and their impact.
- Personal information should be kept confidential.

*Facilitation tips based upon information from MIT's Discussion Guidelines webpage.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

What social expectations are put on people who are grieving? What expectations are put on those trying to help others in times of crisis? What are best ways to help people unload the weight of social expectations? What types of losses are you facing?

Are there losses you experience which others do not recognize or acknowledge? Which ones? How does that affect you?

What are ways to help people talk about disenfranchised grief or ambiguous loss? How do you think that could improve conversations about community loss? What are the biggest misconceptions about grieving? How does that affect how people respond to loss? How do cultural differences affect how people grieve? What scares you about loss? Why is grieving important? Do you feel you have space and freedom to grieve? Why or why not?

What happens when we do not allow ourselves space and grace to grieve? What happens when we do not give others space and grace to grieve? Which of the strategies discussed for carrying grief resonates with you the most? Why? What do you think C.S. Lewis meant by this quote?

“No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear.” —A Grief Observed, C.S. Lewis

What have you learned from loss? In what ways have you grown through your time in listening to others?

Why is remembering important? How does storytelling give a community power? How do you make sure diverse voices have room to be heard? What is hardest about supporting others in times of crisis? What is hardest about supporting people?

FROM A SURVIVOR

CADDO

There's been ups and there's been downs
There's been times that I didn't think I could stick around
But wait my Jeep is broke
Couldn't even find it, I was losing hope
But one by one the pole was set
At first it looked like the wheels of a spoke
Little by little we were gaining hope
A thing of beauty whence it was up
Made of pine, willow, and rope
Made of more than that, it was made of us
Each and every Caddo that was here
We poured in our hearts and shed some tears
When we think of those times of yesteryears
Our ancestors walked these grounds and lived and loved and passed
But here we are back at last
Walking with them, hearing that drum
Because they already knew that we'd come
Come here full circle, like the hoop that binds
We will not leave one behind
They will come forth, with us they walk
We will give them voice when we talk
Let us talk graciously as we stand
Our hearts are here on this land
More than a house we've built this day
An eternity of keeping our way.
We will stand strong, we will stand proud
We will not put ourselves before another
It is not the Caddo way
We will walk with each other today
A tribe resilient built on our past
We are building a future that will last
Something for them to build on
A foundation that is strong
Just like to those whom we belong.



KAY O'NEAL

Kay O'Neal is a Native Texan, born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas. She is also an enrolled member of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma. Kay is the youngest of ten children. The ties that Kay's mother had to her own Caddo culture greatly influenced Kay. She grew up participating in cultural events whenever possible. With a love so great for her people; this led her back to Caddo County where she now lives. This is the Headquarters of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, as well as where most of the Caddo Nation now resides. This love for her people led Kay to being on the Tribal Council as a Representative. This has allowed Kay to do many things that have been in her heart. One of them is being the liaison between the Caddo Nation and Caddo Mounds Historical Site. Teaching and sharing her culture with her children and grandchildren have been an integral part of her life. She counts it as joy to be able to share this with many others along the way.

TIPS FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT

Training and programming to enable organizations to provide support.

TRAINING

Training for staff can ensure they are ready to respond to the community as well as care for their own well-being in the face of a traumatic event.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide staff, especially managers, training on becoming trauma informed.

RECOMMENDATION: Re-evaluate organizational policies on bereavement. Recommended allowance of time off for bereavement is five to ten days (i.e., one to two weeks) per year. Also, expand what it means to be family members.

RECOMMENDATION: Model work-life balance. Provide adequate vacation time and consider a policy that vacation time be taken.

RECOMMENDATION: Have regular check-ins with staff. Make sure your messages align with your actions. Focus on listening to what each person is managing. Acknowledge their feelings and experiences. Recalibrate expectations together. Discuss resources for support.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide accommodations. Create avenues for employees/coworkers to request accommodations or resources. They should not feel guilt or shame over their needs. Have resources available.

RECOMMENDATION: Build trust and transparency. Recognize and support skills/expertise that strengthen the ability to make daily decisions.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide employee assistance programs. Work with a trauma expert to create programs. Extend employee assistance program benefits to family and household members as well.

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct formal, confidential, and tailored workplace health assessments with a goal of learning about workplace factors that may be negatively influencing employees' overall health.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide a listing of mental health resources available to staff through their health insurance policies.

RECOMMENDATION: Prepare employees for trauma in the workplace by giving them adequate tools to respond in the moment and access to necessary coping strategies after the incident. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) real life testing and drills give employees the tools to make decisions and later provide after action exercises on how to provide more proficiently.

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss potential traumatic events relevant to the workplace and build policies and procedures to help prevent these situations.

PROGRAMMING

Creating opportunities for communities and staff to engage in programming can take many forms. Here are a few ideas for implementing programming within your organization.

RECOMMENDATION: Create opportunities for story telling. Consider guided writing exercises that encourage people to tell their stories and then share them with the group.

RECOMMENDATION: Create public memorials/ events on the anniversary of the loss.

RECOMMENDATION: Create a list of community resources to share with staff and the community.

RECOMMENDATION: Share ideas for how people can get involved with advocacy groups or charities.

Grand reopening, Fulton Mansion State Historic Site in Rockport, Texas.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Association for Death Education and Counseling
<https://www.adec.org>

Berns, Nancy. 2018.
“Why remembering matters for healing.”
The Conversation
<https://theconversation.com/why-remembering-matters-for-healing-94565>

Center for Loss and Life Transition Resources
<https://www.centerforloss.com/grief/>

The Compassionate Friends Resources and Support Groups
<https://www.compassionatefriends.org>

Dougy Center Resources
<https://www.dougy.org>

Equal Justice Initiative
(The National Memorial for Peace and Justice)
<https://eji.org/news/>

Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Traumatic Events.
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/helping-children-and-adolescentscope-with-disasters-and-other-traumatic-events>

Hirschberger, Gilad. 2018.
Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning.
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01441/full>

Nancy Berns Website/Blog
The Conversation.
<http://www.nancyberns.com>

Podcast: 2018 Your Health with Dr. Adam Goldstein
(Interview with Nancy Berns starts at 10:33)
<https://yourhealthradio.org/2018/06/23/the-healing-power-of-remembrance/>

Tedx Talk by Nancy Berns
“Beyond Closure” (17 minutes)
<http://www.nancyberns.com/nancy-berns-tedx-talk-des-moines-beyondclosure.html>

