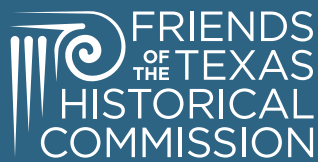


CRISIS AND TRAUMA
RESPONSE TOOLKIT
FOR CULTURAL WORKERS
2023



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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.

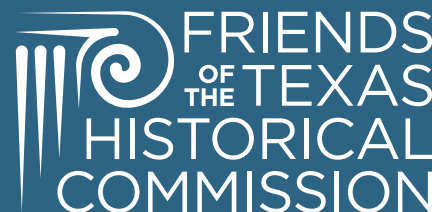
This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Grant #CAGML-247929-OMLS-20 (www.ims.gov).

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.

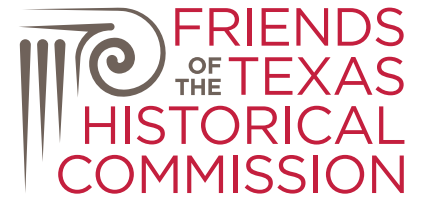
While some of the video presentations are provided by licensed therapists, the training and programming recommendations, which came out of the "lab" sessions, are presented as suggested practices to be used by cultural workers at their discretion and NOT as therapy.

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



STORYTELLING, MEMORIALIZATION, AND COMMEMORATION

*Honoring the need for communities
to grieve together*



Coming together to grieve tragic events is an innate human activity. In the wake of an event, informal public displays of grief materialize almost immediately as communities come together in search of ways to acknowledge, understand, process, and grieve what has occurred. Rows of candles, bouquets of flowers, photographs of lost loved ones, songs, and poems—displays of public grief can take many forms, but however they look, their presence speaks to the essential need and nature of memorialization. More formal memorials and commemoration events also serve an important purpose, and though the process of bringing these into being is not easy, the work is critical because it helps to tell the story of what has happened, to whom it happened, and why it matters.

In a presentation put together by key staff at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, speakers address different components, challenges, and strengths of memorialization. Clifford Chanin, Executive Vice President and Deputy Director for Museum Programs, explains why public grief and memorialization is so important. In discussing the process of creating memorials, he encourages audiences to view disagreements as part of the process and embrace disagreements as having value as they reveal just how deeply people care about the event that has occurred. Chanin helps audiences think about larger questions at the heart of memorialization, for example, what is the goal of memorialization? What are we trying to accomplish? Exploring the answers to these questions clarifies the intention and desired outcomes of efforts.

Noah Rauch, Senior Vice President, Education and Public Programs, focuses on the power of storytelling. Memorialization that includes storytelling humanizes the event and transforms it into something that audiences can relate to. By gathering stories of a diverse range of experiences, memorials can show that history happens to regular people. History happens to humanity.

And finally, Megan Jones, Vice President of Education Programs, emphasizes the impact that memorialization can have on cultural workers and audiences. “The work of memorializing traumatic events is important to the preservation of history, but the emotional toll this can take on visitors and staff must never be discounted,” she states. Underscoring the importance of acknowledging the effects that working with such difficult topics can have, Jones provides clear and practical suggestions for caring for staff and visitors.

COMMUNITIES GRIEVING TOGETHER

CLIFFORD CHANIN is the Director of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. He joined the initial planning team for the Museum in 2005 and has since served as vice-president for education and deputy director for museum programs.

NOAH RAUCH is Senior Vice President for Education & Public Programs at the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. Previously, he worked at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. He received an Ed.M from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a BA in American Studies from Wesleyan University.

MEGAN JONES is the Vice President of Education Programs at the 9/11 Memorial & Museum, where she oversees educational programs for school, teacher, youth, and family audiences. Previously, she managed the Visitor Programs at the Supreme Court of the United States and worked as an Education Specialist at the National Archives in Washington, DC.

KEY TERMS

COMMEMORATE: To remind people of an important person or event from the past with a special action or object; to exist to remind people of a person or an event from the past.

MEMORIAL: Something designed to preserve the memory of a person or event.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Talk with others within your organization about memorialization, commemoration, and storytelling.

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

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.

PROMPT

What memorials have you visited and what impact did they have on you?

What elements struck you most powerfully?

Why was it important that you go?

Did your reaction to the memorial match your expectations? Why or why not?

What is the impact of hearing these stories on your staff? How do those impact manifest themselves?

How can sharing their personal stories help/hurt those who experienced traumatic events firsthand?

Why are individual stories important to share in your institution?

Are their contested or conflicting narratives in the story/ies you are conveying? If so, how do you balance them?

What are the ways you can share individual stories without live speakers?

How can you foster buy-in into an institutional narrative amongst those who experienced the event firsthand?

FROM A SURVIVOR

SHAHÓ MEMORIAL TREE

As one of the survivors of the shahó (the Caddo word for the tornado experience) at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, I participated in the creation of this toolkit to help create a path forward for those that experience painful tragedies at institutions.

Originally, in the aftermath of the shahó, I was devastated. I wasn't devastated by the destruction of the museum, site, or grass house. I was devastated the shahó had pulled up this magnificent red oak up by the roots and threw it over like a weed pulled out of a garden. The original red oak was huge, substantial, and perfectly shaped. She had a diameter close to seven feet, making her age more than 300 years old. She was older than the United States.

If I'm being truthful, it was my favorite living tree. I have always had an affinity for trees. When I was a very young girl, we would camp inside the huge cedar trees at the dance grounds where the Caddos would hold dances. My grandparents had an enormous pin oak right next to the back patio with branches low enough that I could climb in and onto them. I would take a blanket and rest and read in that tree. Trees are such a magical gift. Clearly, lots of other people in Oklahoma City agree, because the Survivor Tree at the OKC Bombing Memorial is visible every time I go to the Post Office. The Survivor Tree is just an American elm. She has a whole team taking care of her, propagating daughters from her seeds, so she won't ever be lost.

Originally, I asked Caddo Mounds to gather the mother red oak's acorns and grow her daughters to take her place so my grandchildren would have a chance to sit in her cool, soft, mossy understory and soak in the peace you can only find in cemeteries. Her proportions were so perfect; she seemed like a cartoon tree. Sadly that wasn't to be. I was told in March 2022 none of the acorns were viable. Caddo Mounds SHS staff even took the acorns to the university for the professionals to germinate them in perfect conditions, but even this did not produce results. I was truly heartbroken. I was mad at the Caddo Mounds staff for months and blamed them because the acorns didn't germinate. I know this is ridiculous because it only takes a brief glance to see that the staff members were not Mother Nature. It is hard not to be emotional about losing such a beautiful tree.

In April 2022, I came up with another idea. Something more permanent. I asked Caddo Mound SHS to build a steel tree modeled after the mother red oak. I asked for it to be set in a large and deep cement base to keep it safe from weather. I asked for the tree to be large and substantial. I wanted it to be heavy and to visually look permanent. I also asked for all the survivors to have permanent leaves attached with their names on them. I wanted places for visitors to attach biodegradable leaves in solidarity for the sacredness of the site that would dissolve like prayers sinking into the wah-dut over time to honor my ancestors who walked at the mounds and fill the space there.

I'm still surprised to this day. I asked for what I needed to help put my trauma with Caddo Mounds on a healing path. Trees have a way of holding the best of us in their quiet peaceful lives. I am certain there has been an energetic squirrel at some point in the past 300 plus years who planted and germinated one of her daughters somewhere close by. That thought fills my heart with hope. The Shahó Survivor Tree will be a bit different. The gentle rustling of leaves in the wind will be replaced with the tinkling chimes of metal making sweet notes in the wind. The wind will replace one kind of music with another. My prayer is the survivor tree will make the music of survivors' spirits healing.

5 FRIENDS OF THE TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION/IMLS



TRACY NEWKUMET

Tracy Newkumet is a citizen of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma. She descends from the Hasinai, Hainai, and Ayish bands. Tracy also a descendant of the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma and Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma. She endeavors to become a culture keeper. Her preservation work primarily centers on creating material culture using historically faithful methods and material. In addition to creating material culture items such as regalia, she is also a steward for her family's Hasinai food ways.

Tracy has lived in Oklahoma her whole life and spent 18 years as an LPN before starting her new career as an artisan. She established NDN Regalia in 2007 with her family to share and preserve traditional Caddo and Delaware ways. Tracy is happily married to her best friend and has 3 children.

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 training, workshops, and resources for staff (from leadership all the way down) that encourage and support self care and wellness. This is critical since staff are exposed to difficult and traumatic content on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide training, workshops, and resources on trauma, grief, and memorialization.

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage dialogue among staff. Create and opportunities for dialogue, such as short group walks.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide resources for staff. This can be done in a variety of ways. Create a dedicated quiet space on site for staff to use.

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: Support the needs of audiences as they encounter potentially traumatic information or experiences. Examples:

- Prepare audiences. Provide pre-visit information online about what visitors can expect to see, hear, feel. Include information for parents who might be bringing children to the site.
- Provide areas to stop, reflect, rest, and decompress.
- Provide areas for children to take a break and engage in art or reading activities. Bright and colorful, this area should feel like a welcoming, safe space for children.
- Give visitors choices. Allow them to tailor their visit to their needs. Ensure thoughtful entry and exit points (both physically and emotionally) of exhibits so that visitors can leave if needed.
- Discreetly set out boxes of tissues. This is a simple way to acknowledge the difficulty and emotionality of the content.
- Create a way for visitors to contribute. This can be leaving messages or creating art pieces.

RECOMMENDATION: Collect stories (oral or written) of those who were impacted by the event. Make sure to gather a range of experiences. Create a way to display these stories for visitors so that they can connect to the story of the event.

RECOMMENDATION: Create other storytelling formats such as artifact displays, images, archival audio, and research. Create ways for individuals to tell their own stories. This can be in a formal setting, such as a talk or lecture formatted for specific audiences. Consider providing speaker training for these individuals. Another option may be short films or videos where individuals are encouraged to tell their stories. Again, make sure the audience is identified, so that the stories can be tailored to them.

RECOMMENDATION: A less formal way to incorporate storytelling at a site is to have a docent program where trained individuals are available to interact with visitors if they so desire. There are important things to consider with this option, so please refer to the video that accompanies this chapter.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS:

Blais, Allison and Lynn Rasic. (2015) *A Place of Remembrance: Official Book of the National September 11 Memorial*.

Greenwald, Alice E. (2013) *The Stories they Tell: Artifacts from the National September 11 Memorial Museum*.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

9/11 Memorial and Museum. "Additional Museum Resources."
<https://www.911memorial.org/learn/resources>

de Montebello, Philippe. "The Iconic Power of an Artifact."
The New York Times. (2001).
<https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/25/opinion/the-iconic-power-of-an-artifact.html>

