Tools for Being a Support Person

Support, Advocacy, and Violence Prevention Office
Roadmap

1. Holding Space
2. Ring Theory
3. Advocacy-Based Counseling
4. Reminders from Trauma Stewardship
Holding Space
Heather Plett
Tenets of Holding Space

1. Give people permission to trust their own intuition and wisdom.
2. Give people only as much information as they can handle.
3. Don’t take their power away – empower them instead.
4. Try to keep your own ego out of it.
5. Help them feel safe enough to talk about negative emotions and “mistakes.”
6. Give guidance and help with humility and thoughtfulness.
7. Create a container for complex emotions, fear, trauma, etc.
8. Allow them to make different decisions and to have different experiences than you would.
How do we know when to hold space, and when to ask someone to hold space for us?
Ring Theory

Susan Silk and Barry Goldman
Person who directly experienced the event (crisis, loss, trauma, etc.)

That person’s closest people (best friends, close family, significant others)

The next closest people - friends, colleagues, extended family

More distant people - friends of friends, acquaintances
Person who directly experienced the event (crisis, loss, trauma, etc.)

That person’s closest people (best friends, close family, significant others)

The next closest people - friends, colleagues, extended family

More distant people - friends of friends, acquaintances

Asks for Support
Person who directly experienced the event (crisis, loss, trauma, etc.)

That person’s closest people (best friends, close family, significant others)

The next closest people - friends, colleagues, extended family

More distant people - friends of friends, acquaintances
Advocacy-Based Counseling

As framed by the Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian, & Gay Survivors of Abuse
“Advocacy-based counseling means the involvement of a participant with an advocate... with the primary focus on safety planning and on the empowerment of the participant through reinforcing the participant’s autonomy and self-determination. Advocacy-based counseling uses problem-solving methods and includes identifying barriers to safety; developing safety checking and planning skills; clarifying issues; solving problems; increasing self-esteem and self-awareness; and improving and implementing skills in decision making and self-care.”

From the Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian, & Gay Survivors of Abuse
Case Management

The coordination of services for an individual by designating a professional to be responsible for the assessment of need and implementation of care plans regarding ongoing needs in areas such as housing, employment, social relationships, and community participation.

Therapy

A process of treating mental and emotional health; provided by a licensed mental health professional.
Safety and support planning
- Systems advocacy (making a formal report, housing changes, etc.)
- Navigating institutions
- Resources and referrals

Advocacy

Reflective listening
- Ongoing support in healing from trauma
- Support identifying boundaries, clarifying expectations, and negotiating conflict in relationships
- Self-care skill development

Counseling
Reminders from *Trauma Stewardship*

Laura van Dernoot Lipsky
Tendencies to check in ourselves

- Saviorism or grandiosity
- Hypervigilance
- Feeling like one can never do enough
- Inability to embrace complexity

See *Trauma Stewardship* by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky
Trauma Exposure Response

**Trauma exposure response** - “The transformation that takes place within us as a result of exposure to the suffering of other living beings or the planet ... when external trauma becomes internal reality” (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk)

→ Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma, Burn-out
Thank you!

Support, Advocacy, and Violence Prevention Office

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