

genuine conditions of our lives that we gain the strength to act and our motivation for change.”

In a recent article in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (2019), reporters shared results from two organizations, one a non-profit and one a school, that had implemented the Missouri Model. Examples of outcomes they realized through this work included a decrease in no-show clients for appointments, improved relationships amongst staff, and successful adoption of school-wide mindfulness interventions for both students and staff. The Missouri Model offers a clear, simple map for organizational change within our chaotic world, one that can not only transform institutions, but that can immediately begin improving the lives of those we serve.

I have worked with countless institutions over the past several years, and I have yet to encounter a Level 4 trauma informed campus. I imagine them constantly, however, and am reminded that our imaginations are the first step toward building the worlds we wish to live in, worlds of care where everyone has enough. From the perspective of someone who spent years working in enrollment management, I also believe that those institutions who adapt to the current era will be the ones that persist into the future. Though our collective traumas of the past few years are immense, they will be the institutions that not only survive this volatility, but that serve as leaders for all of higher education and the world about the types of institutions that are possible to create.

Consider the following

Here are some practical considerations to reflect upon and discuss should you accept the call to become a truly trauma informed campus:

- It is imperative that marginalized voices be centered in your

trauma informed institutional journey. How can you make sure that these folks not only have a seat at the table, but that they are elevated and supported as leaders of this work? This is not only a question of recognition, but of appropriately compensating folks for their labor and protecting their time to do this critical work.

- While collaboration across campus groups is imperative, it often helps to have one or two champions or point people leading a charge like this. Will these leaders come from inside or outside of campus, or both? If you have someone with trauma and leadership expertise on campus, utilize their talents. However, sometimes outsiders bring a fresh perspective and energy that can elicit change more effectively.
- On a very practical level, how will you track your goals and progress? A shared Google spreadsheet? A Notion database? I'm always a bit thrown by how many large-scale change initiatives don't have a central holding space for their work. This document or database would include your personalized outline of the Missouri Model along with specific institutional initiatives and action items attached to people and dates.

The Missouri Model is freely available online at: <https://dmh.mo.gov/media/pdf/missouri-model-developmental-framework-trauma-informed-approaches> ❖

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GLIMMERS: RESILIENCE-INFORMED REFRAMES

Rock, Paper, Glimmers

ej seibert

As a child playing the rock-paper-scissors game, I yearned to always choose *paper*, the gentler, more yielding option. Often I felt I had to succumb to the harder, sharper tools: *rock*, *scissors*. I was savvy enough to know that *paper*, chosen predictably every time, would not thwart my opponents. I wanted to choose the soft, loving way — and, it was not always available to me. As a storyteller who spends generous arcs of time reflecting on the interconnectedness of all things, I don't believe in beginnings as absolutes, though everything must start somewhere. In that vein, I begin this journey by choosing *paper* — sharing with you my catalyst for this work and who I am within it.

Story is an intentional didactic tool; Sarah Rose Cavanaugh,

author of “Mind over monsters” references Schank and Abelson, psychologists who assert that “stories are our ‘most natural form of thought’” (2019). For those who would like the tl;dr version, here is an outline of the topics I'll be covering in this series, but read on for the story:

- Trauma and the brain in the classroom, including the concept of neuroplasticity .
- Vicarious resilience and post-traumatic growth (especially in the pandemic context).
- Principles of Disability Justice and what they mean for us as educators and learners.

(continued on page 4)

- The burgeoning movement of peer support networks and “together-help.”
- A possible nexus between Universal Design principles and teaching race and racism.
- Process lessons from the stages-of-change model often used in recovery counseling that are useful in teaching social justice content.
- Discourse analysis, psychoanalysis, language, and more related to the power of story.
- Coloniality, Indigenous Methods, Embodied and Land-based practices.
- Mindfulness and Meditation for self-regulation and stress reduction in higher Ed settings.

During my first semester as Associate Director of Disability Services at Smith College, I found myself at the Anti-Racist Teaching Circle next to Loretta Ross. I had just returned to an academic setting after putting in long hours at community mental health clinics, supervising a 24/7 sexual assault hotline and a wraparound care team. Having held deep respect for Loretta’s work since learning of her decades-long activism during my time with the hotline, I was delighted to chat with her before the official discussion began. We talked about our students here on campus — what does it mean to support them? I mused aloud that I am always wondering how we can be more resilience-informed rather than fragility-informed. She asked if I’d written about this idea, which I hadn’t — yet.

More Than Trauma-Informed

I believe that where we place our focus matters. We hear a lot about “trauma-informed” education these days. In fact, after finishing my MSW (which centered around intergenerational and collective trauma/resilience), my LinkedIn profile proudly displayed “trauma-informed care” as one of my skills. As I moved through my first jobs post-Masters, I changed the language and began to shift to a lens I had not seen elsewhere — “resilience-informed.” What happens when we make this shift? Considering the nexus of my clinical background and my educational background (have taught as an adjunct as well as in a high school), I’m curious to explore these questions. What tools help us make this shift? What new possibilities does this change open in our imaginative space? What do we generate when we allow ourselves to do so?

In other words, how do we approach the people we are working with — whether we are staff, faculty, or service providers — not from the assumption that they are about to break into a million pieces, but from assumptions that they are strong, that they can survive the horrors they’ve lived through, that there are some elements of choice in how one reacts to even the worst of it? *Inside Higher Ed* recently ran a summary of their podcast episode (Lederman 2023) which talks about the importance of “compassionate challenge,” and the difference between “‘expectable’ and ‘unmanageable’ discomfort.” We — and our students — live in a world where we experience myriad individual as well as collective

traumas. There is much societal work ahead to heal the harms that are caused by oppression, targeting, discrimination. How do we respond to all of it in a way that encourages growth within the learning environment of our classrooms?

I have no intention of minimizing trauma. It can wound, scar, ravage. It can shatter basic assumptions — if we were protected enough to hold those assumptions in the first place. For many in our most marginalized populations, the world has never been safe. For others, there is a sudden realization that the world isn’t safe. To be alive is to be at risk. There are things outside our control. Some of those things are marvelous and some of those things cause great harm. Sometimes that great harm knocks us over. It doesn’t do that every time, it doesn’t do that to every single person, and it will do that in different ways to different people. How do we center our ability to thrive anyway?

My life has been a practice of integrating into a whole what seems, at first glance, opposed. My own identities are mixed, hybrid, occupy a number of in-betweens. My family handed down a love of learning. Only some of them are officially educators, though all of them are teachers. My grandfather, a farmer of few words, shared much wisdom with me, as did my grandmother who was a baker. As in so many families, trauma and resilience have both been passed down through generations — along with our muddy brown eyes, our deeply-lined palms, our recipes for bannock and rice pudding. It is important to name how this context has shaped my perspective on these topics.

Culture of Caring

I was raised by a parent who frequently told me to “buck up” (if you notice yourself judging that, I encourage you to be curious about why). In *Migritude*, Shailja Patel (2010) tells a stunning tale of the beauty and raw edges in her experiences of migration. She talks about how her performance project resonated with a working class community in Italy who hold the adage to “only kiss your kids while they are sleeping.” Meaning: do not soften them with kindness, these kids have to fight to survive and emotional endurance training must begin at home. I think of Ocean Vuong’s character in *On earth we’re briefly gorgeous* (2021) who wonders if maybe he was knocked about by his war-survivor mother because “to hit your children is to prepare them for war.” Indeed, much of our collective human history has been full of such harsh edges and many of us carry the ongoing impact.

In an ideal world, none of us would be subject to racial, gender, any form of violence. We are still far from that ideal world, where I can always choose *paper*. Yet I firmly believe there is a place for softness, and that it is very much entwined with healthy resilience. When I say soft, I am not suggesting we cater to anyone’s fragility — our own, our colleagues’, our students’. Quite the opposite. The heart can be fierce, and we need more of that, as well as more connection to our bodies (i.e. our nervous systems), to balance the critical thinking intellect with which so many of us are incredibly skillful.

The *Inside Higher Ed* piece I referenced above calls for increasing “a culture of caring and compassion, where there’s no wrong door for a student to walk through for support.” It encourages us to hold boundaries, and to “Find a way ... that is deeply empathic.” For the time being, we need to keep transforming who we are and what we believe ourselves capable of. I am speaking not of resilience that expects anyone to be superhuman, but resilience that allows for dynamic wholeness even in the world as it is. Think the Oak and Reed fable, the Tao Te Ching, Emergent Strategy. Think of rock, paper, scissors, or, rather: rock, paper, glimmers.

Glimmers are “the opposite of triggers,” as discussed in this recent *USA Today* article (Moniuszko 2022) which summarizes the concept put forth by Deb Dana in her book *The polyvagal theory in therapy* (2018). Glimmers are little things that remind us to feel good, that help us feel connected, grounded, purposeful, complete — even for a brief moment. My glimmers include: paying attention to tiny details in nature, playfulness, sharing food with chosen family, music, dancing, synchronicities, laughter.

Noticing glimmers increases the likelihood that we will notice

more glimmers. It resets neural pathways. Let’s begin our time together by opening (or increasing) the journey of finding “glimmers” — our own, our students’, our colleagues’. I’m reminded that we are literally, on a cellular carbon level, made of stars. Let’s lean into the joys, those large or tiny sparks which create the constellation of our collective healing. ❖

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CREATIVITY CAFÉ

Teaching Teamwork through Creativity

Russell Carpenter, Kevin Dvorak, and Starr Wentzel

Teamwork is an essential skill for the workforce, one students should start developing while pursuing their undergraduate education. In this edition of the Creativity Café, we focus on how educators can help students build foundations for this essential quality. The National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) recognizes teamwork as “building and maintaining collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities” (The National Association for Colleges and Employers, n.d.). NACE identifies the following behaviors as integral to teamwork:

- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.
- Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience.
- Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables.
- Employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others.
- Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.
- Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.
- Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers. (The National Association for Colleges and Employers, n.d.)

One creative strategy for teaching teamwork is by using the

transparency in learning and teaching (TILT) framework. According to the Indiana University — Bloomington Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, TILT is:

a set of teaching strategies that focuses on making transparent to students how and why they are learning and engaging with course content in particular ways. TILT’s goal is to provide more concrete support for student success, particularly among students who may come from lesser privileged academic backgrounds. The TILT framework encourages faculty to be transparent about their course and assignment design choices to provide answers to questions students might have about their coursework. (Indiana University — Bloomington Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, n.d.)

TILT is a creative strategy that embraces transparency to create a supportive and dynamic environment that nurtures creativity. By outlining clear guidelines, students can better understand the various roles and expectations among teams that ensures a creative process from the beginning leading to effective teamwork. Providing guidelines for a task can apply constraints, which in turn should produce learning results that are more creative (Blaschka, 2020). While they may seem limiting at first, constraints can spark

(continued on page 6)