

Trauma Stewardship:

“A daily **practice** through which individuals, organizations, and societies tend to the hardship, pain or trauma experience by human, other living beings, and the planet itself. By developing the deep sense of awareness needed to care for ourselves while caring for others and the world around us, we can greatly enhance our potential to work for change, ethically and with integrity, for generations to come”. Trauma Stewardship, 2009 by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky



Warning Signs from “Trauma Exposure Response”

*Feeling helpless & hopeless *a sense that no one can never do enough *hypervigilance *diminished creativity *inability to embrace complexity *minimizing *chronic exhaustion/physical ailments *inability to listen/deliberate avoidance *dissociative moments *sense of persecution *guilt *fear *anger & cynicism *inability to empathize/numbing *addictions *grandiosity: an inflated sense of importance related to one’s work

The *five* Directions

Trauma Exposure Response

A trauma exposure response may be defined as the transformation that takes place within us as a result of exposure to the suffering of other living beings or the planet.

© Copyright 2017 van Dernoot Li

The five Directions

***North/Water:**

Creating Space for Inquiry

***East/Fire:**

Choosing Our Focus

***South/Earth:**

Building Compassion and Community

***West/Air:**

Finding Balance

***Fifth Direction/Core:**

A Daily Practice of Centering Myself



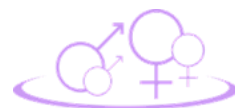
Source: Trauma Stewardship, 2009

Wise Women Gathering Place

Peace Respect Belonging

1641 Commanche, Suite H, Green Bay, Wis. 54313

920-490-0627 [] www.WiseWomenGP.org



Turn the page for tips and intervention activities !

"By moving among the directions and their elements, we are able to create, and most important, maintain, a daily practice through which we become centered. ...the Five Directions can guide us to regain calm—to once again remember who we are, where we're headed, and what we need."

— van Dernoot Lipsky

***North/Water:** Creating Space for Inquiry— Try this:

1. Before starting your workday, take a moment to literally stop in your tracks and ask yourself, "Why am I doing what I am doing?" After you hear your answer, remind yourself, gently, that you are making a choice to do this work. Take a deep breath; breathe in both the responsibility and the freedom in this acknowledgment.
2. Regularly consult with someone about why are you doing what you are doing. Choose a trustworthy, supportive, wise person. Ask this person to listen attentively and provide you with feedback. It is critical to not be isolated in our work.

***East/Fire:** Choosing Our Focus— Try this:

1. Think of a challenging work situation. Write down three things that make it challenging. Write down three things that you appreciate about it. Look at your lists and ask yourself, "Where am I more likely to focus and why?"
2. For one day, commit to paying attention to the running commentary in your mind. Is your mind in the habit of seeing the glass as half-empty or half-full? Are you able to reframe things as half-full, or do you feel an investment in seeing things as half-empty?
3. Ask yourself, "If I weren't doing this work, what would I love to do?" Generate a list of five things you can do over the next five weeks to help you get closer to realizing your Plan B.

***South/Earth:** Building Compassion and Community— Try this:

1. Ask yourself what your ancestors and those who raised you have done, throughout time, to heal themselves and others. When they experienced trauma, how did they go on?
2. Take some time to examine how your outside surrounds connect with your internal state. Are there shifts you can make in your external reality to achieve a more peaceful and productive internal reality? What is your neighborhood like, how is your home taken care of, what food do you eat, and what role do you choose in creating wellness both locally and globally?
3. Generate a list of six people or situations in your life where you think an increase in your compassion could significantly alter the dynamic. Make an intention to approach one of these people/situations with increased compassion each month for six months. Pay attention to the difference in your life.

***West/Air:** Finding Balance— Try this:

1. Identify one thing that you would love to incorporate into your workday but are certain you could not. Now try everything in your power to make that aspiration a reality.
2. Remember that the labor movement and countless other individuals worked hard to create weekends and breaks and more humane working conditions. Resolve to honor those who have gone before you by agreeing only to a sustainable work schedule and sticking to it.
3. At the beginning and end of your workday, take a distinct moment to think of one thing you are grateful for. Every single day think of one person you are grateful to and tell that person so.

***Fifth Direction/Core:** A Daily Practice of Centering Myself— Try this:

1. When your day begins, close your eyes, take several deep breaths, and ask yourself, "What is my intention today?" At the end of the day, ask yourself, "What can I put down? What am I ready to be done with?"