



# **Becoming a Trauma-Informed Leader:**

**Preparing for and  
Implementing Change at the  
Personal and Team Levels**



*Participant Guide*



# Your Leadership Story

## What is your personal leadership story?

Introduce yourself by sharing your name and agency.

Take about 5-8 minutes each to share your personal story in this work. Answer the following questions for each other:

- How did you first come into work supporting child- and family-serving systems? How did you become interested in this work?
- How did you progress to your current position?
- What do you love most about this work? What would you do all day if you could?
- What do you dislike/dread about this work?
- What would others identify as your strengths?
- What do you find most challenging about implementing a trauma-informed approach?

Identify similarities and differences between the stories and come prepared to share general themes back with the group.

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## Themes and Reflections

# Dread Journal Activity

To identify **WHY** you dread something, dive deeper.

What is something in your role that you **dread**?

Now ask why five times.

**WHY #1** Why do I dread this?

Answer:

**WHY #2**

Answer:

**WHY #3**

Answer:

**WHY #4**

Answer:

**WHY #5**

Answer:

# Personal Commitment Statement



This statement should be based on what you uncovered from your self-assessment process.



Include specific commitments that you make to address the part of leadership that you currently find most challenging.

# Psychological Safety Self-Reflection

**Journal your responses to the following questions:**

Do I feel accepted and respected in my role?

Do I feel like all elements of my identity are accepted in the workplace?  
If not, what is accepted, and what do I keep hidden?

How do I respond when my staff or colleagues make remarks about these aspects of my identity? Does it trigger a response in me? Do I shut down or find an excuse to leave the room? Or do I pretend it's not a problem?

In what ways do I create a culture that accepts the identities of my team members?

In what ways am I not as inclusive or accepting with my staff as I'd like to be?

# Psychological Safety Discussion

**As you reflect on the benefits of psychological safety previously identified, discuss the following questions in your breakout groups.**

Introduce yourselves:

- Name
- Agency
- Role
- Years in leadership

How do you know that a team member or your team feels psychologically safe?

What are some concrete examples you have seen of psychologically safe teams in your work?

How do you know when a team member or your team DOES NOT feel psychologically safe?

What are some concrete examples you have seen of teams who do NOT feel psychologically safe in your work?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Self-Reflection



What are at least three strategies that you can try with your team in the next two weeks?

**Strategy #1:**

**Strategy #2:**

**Strategy #3:**

**Additional Strategies:**

# Trust Self-Reflection

**Journal your responses to the following questions:**

## **Personal:**

- What is it you are willing to entrust to them that you consider valuable?
- Why do you trust them with this?
- What do the people you work with entrust to you?
- Why do you think they trust you?

## **As a Leader:**

- If a new person on your team asked your manager how trustworthy you are, what do you think they would say?
- If this person asked your peers, what would they say?
- When you do not yet have any experience with how someone behaves, what is your usual attitude toward trusting them?
- Are there certain types or categories of people you tend to trust more or less? If so, what are those types?
- What criteria do you use to decide how far to trust someone when you don't know anything about them?

# Trust Survey

**Use a scale of 1-10 where 10 = Can always be trusted in all situations and 1 = Can rarely or never be trusted. How do you:**

- ☐ 1. Rate YOUR trustworthiness?
- ☐ 2. Rate the average trustworthiness of the people you work with as a group?
- ☐ 3. Rate the average trustworthiness of your immediate supervisor?
- ☐ 4. Rate the trustworthiness of your company's top management in general?
- ☐ 5. Rate the trustworthiness of your peers in the company?
- ☐ 6. Rate the trustworthiness of your direct reports?
- ☐ 7. Rate the trustworthiness of others below your level of responsibility in the company, as a group?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Trust Discussion

**As you reflect on the benefits of trust previously identified, discuss the following questions in your breakout groups.**

How do you know if your staff members trust each other?

What are some concrete examples you have seen where team members trust one another?

How do you know if your staff members do NOT trust each other?

What are some concrete examples you have seen of team members do NOT trust one another?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Self-Reflection



What are at least three strategies that you can try with your team in the next two weeks?

**Strategy #1:**

**Strategy #2:**

**Strategy #3:**

**Additional Strategies:**

# Boundary Violations Discussion

**As you reflect on some of the common team and leader boundary violations that occur in the workplace, discuss the following questions in your breakout groups.**

Introduce yourselves:

- Name
- Agency
- Role
- Years in leadership

What are some common staff or team boundary violations that you see in your work?

What are some common leader boundary violations that you see in your work?

How do you think that these types of boundary violations have impacted your work environment?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Personal Boundaries Assessment

**Journal your responses to the following questions:**

Do I feel comfortable and safe in my interactions with others?

Am I saying "yes" to things out of fear of conflict or disappointing others, rather than because I truly want to?

Do I make time for my own needs, hobbies, and rest, or do I often prioritize others at the expense of my well-being?

When someone oversteps, do I assert myself and express my discomfort, or do I let it slide?

Do I have clear limits with others when it comes to my personal space, time, and energy, or do I let others dictate the terms?

Am I respecting the boundaries of others, or do I unintentionally violate them by being too intrusive or demanding?

How do I feel after social events, meetings, or interactions? Energized and fulfilled, or drained and overwhelmed?

# Personal Boundaries Assessment

**Journal your responses to the following questions:**

**Work hours:** Do you arrive at work on time and leave at a reasonable hour? Or do you regularly stay late, or come in early?

**Availability:** How often do you check and respond to emails after work hours or on weekends? Do you feel like you're expected to be available all the time, even if your job doesn't require it?

**Time off:** When was the last time you took a full vacation? Did you fully disconnect from work, or did you stay "on call"? How often do you take sick days, and when you do, do you still work?

**Job responsibilities:** Do you have a clear sense of your job scope? Do you often take on tasks that are outside your responsibilities to help your team, even when it's not necessary?

**Areas of tension:** Are there parts of your job that frustrate you, or leave you feeling drained? These areas often signal where boundaries need to be established.

# Personal Boundaries Discussion

**As you reflect on your personal boundaries assessment, discuss the following questions in your breakout groups.**

What are some things that you learned about yourself and the kinds of boundaries that you may or may not have?

What are some areas in which you feel you are strong at keeping boundaries?

What are some areas that provide opportunities for growth?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Self-Reflection



What are at least three strategies that you can try with your team in the next two weeks?

**Strategy #1:**

**Strategy #2:**

**Strategy #3:**

**Additional Strategies:**

# Team Boundaries Assessment

**Journal your responses to the following questions:**

Do team members communicate openly and respectfully when they feel overwhelmed or need support?

Do team members respect each other's time, both in and outside of work hours?

Are there clear expectations about roles and responsibilities, and do employees feel empowered to say “no” when necessary?

Are team members able to balance collaboration with independence, without being overly reliant on or dependent on each other?

Do team members speak up when someone crosses a professional line, such as overstepping their responsibilities or invading personal space?

Is there a culture of respect for personal space, privacy, and individual work styles?

How do team members handle disagreements or conflicts? Do they maintain professionalism or let personal emotions interfere with work?

# Team Boundaries Discussion

**As you reflect on your team boundaries assessment, discuss the following questions in your breakout groups.**

What are some things that you learned about your team and the kinds of boundaries that they may or may not have with each other?

What are some areas in which you feel your team is strong at keeping boundaries?

What are some areas that provide opportunities for growth?

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## Themes and Reflections

# Self-Reflection



What are at least three strategies that you can try with your team in the next two weeks?

**Strategy #1:**

**Strategy #2:**

**Strategy #3:**

**Additional Strategies:**

# Action Planning Activity



In reflecting on our last six weeks of work together, take a moment to journal your responses to the following questions.

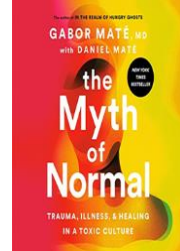
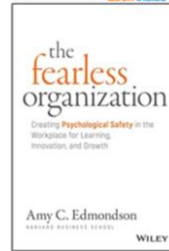
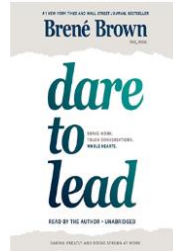
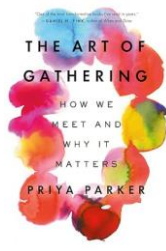
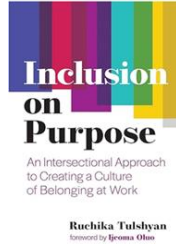
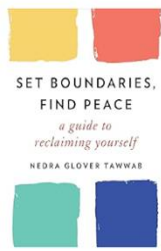
**In the next WEEK, I will:**

**In the next MONTH, I will**

**In the next YEAR, I will**

**Now take a moment to schedule some time in your calendar to work towards these commitments!**

# Resources



[Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself](#) by Nedra Glover Tawwab

[Inclusion on Purpose: An Intersectional Approach to Creating a Culture of Belonging at Work](#) by Ruchika T. Malhotra

[The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why It Matters](#) by Priya Parker

[Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.](#) by Brené Brown

[The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth](#) by Amy C. Edmondson

[The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness, and Healing in a Toxic Culture](#) by Gabor Maté MD and Daniel Maté

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**Connect with Dr. Conradi!**

