NATIONAL COUNCIL for Mental Wellbeing

Grounding in Compassion: Trauma, Tobacco Use & Recovery

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Hello!

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NATIONAL COUNCIL *for* Mental Wellbeing

A Note on Language & Terminology

- **Mental wellbeing:** Thriving regardless of a mental health or substance use challenge, which may also be referred to as a mental illness, substance use disorder, addiction or dependence.

- **Commercial tobacco use/tobacco use:** The use of commercial tobacco and nicotine products (including electronic nicotine devices, otherwise known as ENDs).*

- ***All reference to smoking and tobacco use is referring to commercial tobacco and not the sacred and traditional use of tobacco by some American Indian and Alaskan Native communities.**

National Behavioral Health Network for Tobacco & Cancer Control

Sponsored by the CDC

Provides resources and tools to help organizations reduce tobacco use and cancer disparities among individuals experiencing mental health and substance use challenges

1 of 9 CDC National Networks dedicated to addressing cancer and tobacco disparities to create healthier communities for all

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National Network's Driving Action:
A National Network Approach to Addressing Tobacco and Cancer-Related Disparities

APPEAL

Nuestras Voces (Our Voices)

THE CENTER FOR BLACK HEALTH & EQUITY

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

- A consortium of nine national networks sponsored by the CDC.
- Our partnership provides leadership on and promotion of evidence-based approaches for preventing commercial tobacco use and cancer on a national, state, tribal and territorial level.
- https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/tobacco-control/coop-agreement/index.html

Geographic Health Equity Alliance
A CADCA Initiative

national lgbt cancer network
ADVOCATING FOR HEALTH EQUALITY

SelfMade Health Network

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Walking the path of
compassionate curiosity

Inward to ourselves, and
Outward to others

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Learning Objectives

Attendees will…

1) Deepen their understanding of the relationship between trauma, commercial tobacco use, and recovery.
2) Review guiding principles and key components of trauma-informed approaches
3) Explore how to integrate trauma-informed approaches to support tobacco recovery

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Tobacco & Mental Health & Substance Use

What has caused the disparity?

BHTheChange.org

The overall rate of cigarette smoking among adults has been falling**, but individuals with mental health challenges have been neglected in prevention efforts, environmental and clinical interventions**.

This discrepancy can be attributed in part to predatorial practices by tobacco companies which included:

- Targeted advertisements
- Providing free or cheap cigarettes to psychiatric clinics
- Blocking of smoke-free policies in behavioral health facilities
- Funding research that perpetuates the myth that cessation would be too stressful and negatively impact overall behavioral health outcomes
- **Limited access to high quality care (delays in care, lower quality of care, and more)**
- **High rates of Trauma**

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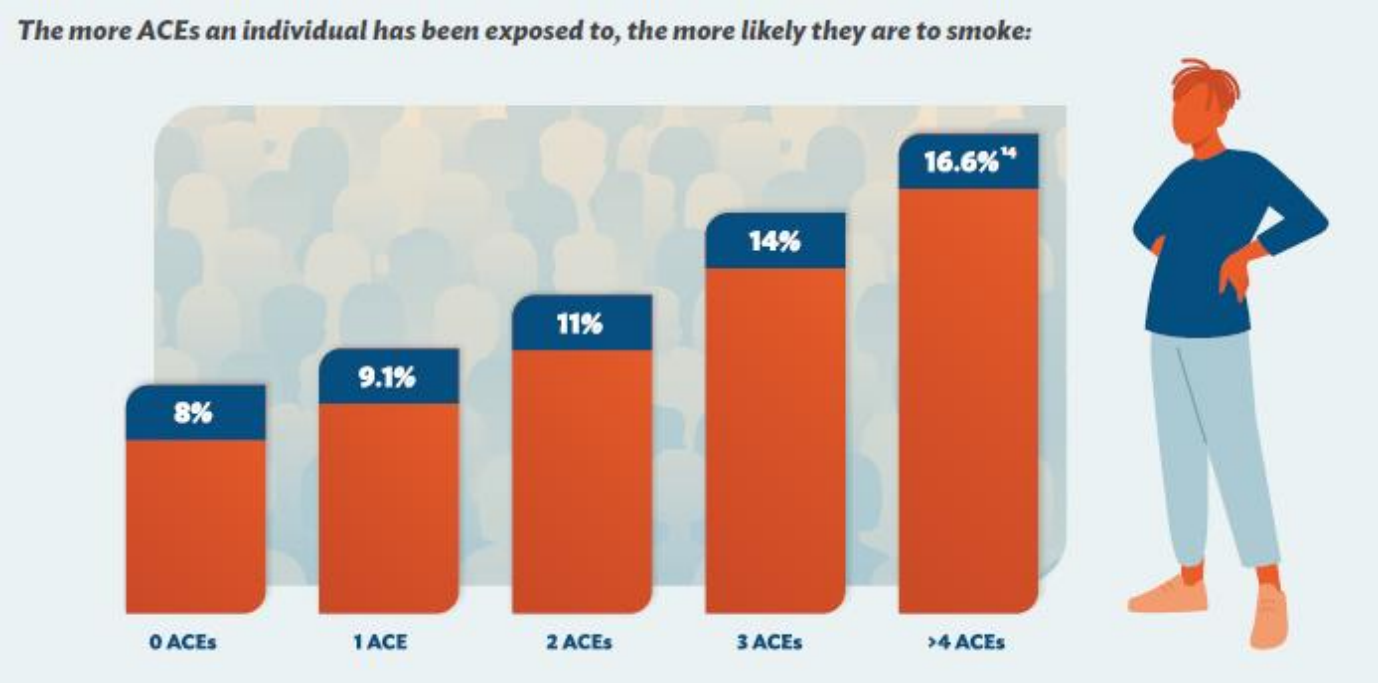
Rates of Tobacco Use in MH/SU populations

- Adults with Mental Health & Substance Use (MH/SU) challenges consume **almost 40% of all cigarettes smoked** (CDC).
- Adults with psychiatric diagnoses are **almost twice as likely** as those without such diagnoses to smoke (Lasser et al., 2000).
- Adults with MH diagnoses attempt to quit at the same rate as those without but **are less likely to be successful** (Smith et al, 2000).
- Most individuals with MH/SU challenges **want to quit smoking** (Acton et al., 2001; Prochaskha et al., 2006).
- Tobacco use treatment **improves** long-term co-occurring substance use recovery outcomes (McKelvey et al., 2017).

Trauma | Tobacco | MH/SU Challenges

- Exposure to trauma **elevates risk for mental health and substance use challenges** throughout adolescence and adulthood (McLaughlin et al., 2020).
- 51% to 90% of public mental health clients report a history of trauma (Mueser et al., 2004).
- More than 70% of individuals in substance use treatment have a history of trauma exposure (Deykin & Buka, 1997).
- Research shows strong linkages between history of trauma and variety of commercial tobacco use behaviors (Shevorykin et al., 2024).
- Use of substances such as tobacco products can often arise as a **coping mechanism**, a **type of solution** to the emotional, psychological and physical **impact of trauma**.

The dose-response relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences and tobacco use



- **Likelihood of using tobacco**
- **Earlier initiation**
- **Duration into adulthood**
- **More persistent smoking**
- **Nicotine dependence**
- **E-cigarette use**

(Anda et al., 1999; Edwards et al., 2007, Abufarsakh et al., 2024)

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The tobacco recovery journey for individuals with trauma

- Continued research finds that individuals that report trauma histories tend to use commercial tobacco **anticipating that it will help reduce their distress** and negative affect. (Shevorykin et al., 2024, Garey et al., 2016)
- In their pursuit of treatment, individuals with trauma can be affected by the impact of their trauma-related symptoms and higher perceived stress, connected **to greater perceived barriers to cessation**, and perceived severity of withdrawal (Garey et al., 2016)
- **Our understanding of the relationship between trauma and tobacco use helps shed light on the reframe necessary of tobacco use as a replaceable coping mechanism.**
- For individuals affected by trauma & MH challenges seeking tobacco recovery, every tool in the toolbox is important

“Addiction is not a choice anybody makes.
It is not a moral failure; it is not an ethical lapse; it is not a weakness of character; it is not a failure of will…

What it actually is:
it’s a response to human suffering.”

“**The question is not why the addiction, but why the pain**.”

- Gabor Maté, MD

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What is Trauma?

Definition (SAMHSA,2023) includes

three key elements

"Trauma results from an **event**, series of events, or a set of circumstances an individual **experiences** as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening, which may have lasting adverse **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. **Traumatic events may be experienced by an individual, a generation, or an entire community or culture."**

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Somatic Definition of Trauma

"Trauma is an experience, a series of experiences, and/or impacts from social conditions, that break or betray our inherent need for **safety**, **belonging**, and **dignity**."

- Staci Haines

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Resiliency

"Resiliency is the capability of individuals to **cope successfully in the face of significant change, adversity, or risk**. The capacity changes over time and is enhanced by protective factors in the individual and environment."

Stewart et al., 1997

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Trauma changes the brain,
But so does recovery and healing.

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Two Important Tenets of a Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Oriented Approach

We change the question from
"What is wrong with you?"

to

"What happened to you?"
&
We assume everyone is doing the best they can

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What is Trauma-Informed Care?

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's trauma-informed approach is grounded in **four assumptions** and **six key principles**

4 Rs (**Assumptions**)

Six Key Principles

Dezelic & Ghanoum (2016)

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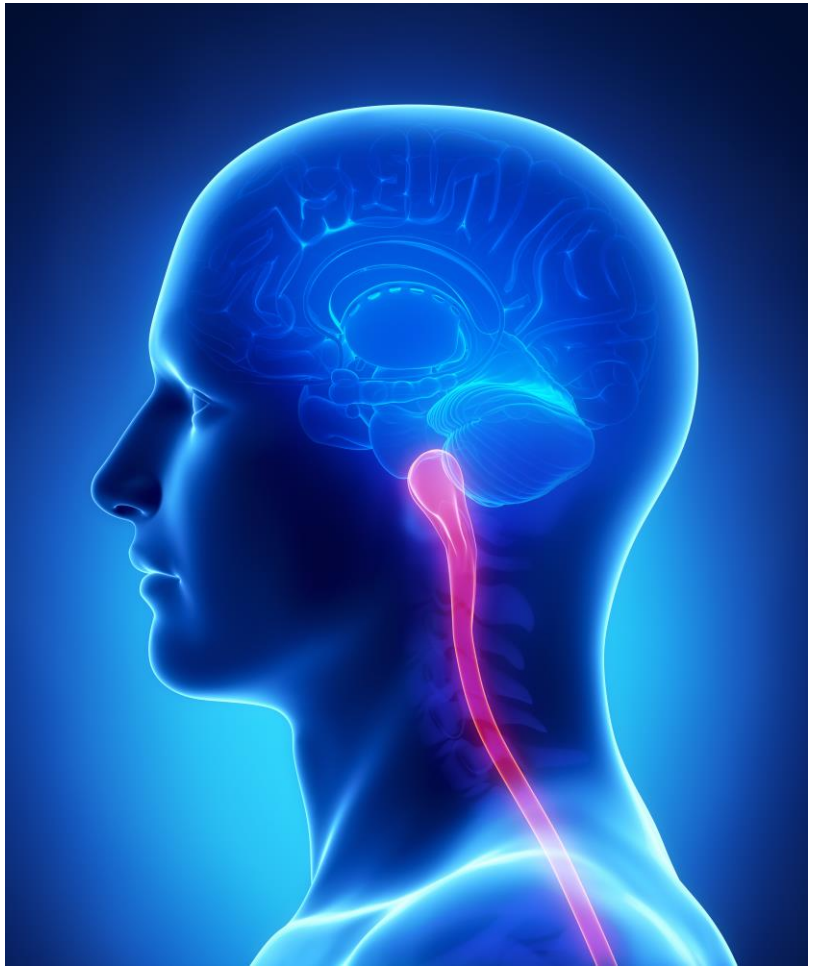
Impact the Lower Brain

Rhythmic

Respectful

Rewarding



Repetitive

Relational

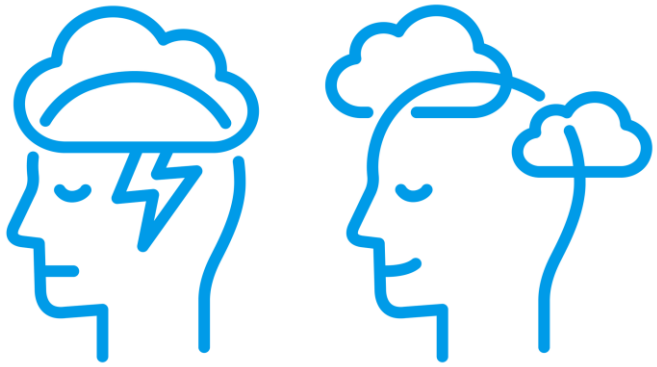
Relevant

Dr. Bruce Perry's 6Rs

Key Recommendations

Creating a safe relational space that empowers regulation, connection and autonomy

- Ongoingly reflect on your own regulation needs
- Emphasize client choice and agency
- Communicate sensitivity to trauma history
- Provide psychoeducation on the relationship between trauma and tobacco use
- Assist clients to identify their own strengths, develop alternative coping skills and community that supports their recovery
- Integrate Trauma-Informed Motivational Interviewing



Embracing the slow and iterative process of change in the journey of recovery

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Questions?

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Thank you for joining us!

For any questions, please contact
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