

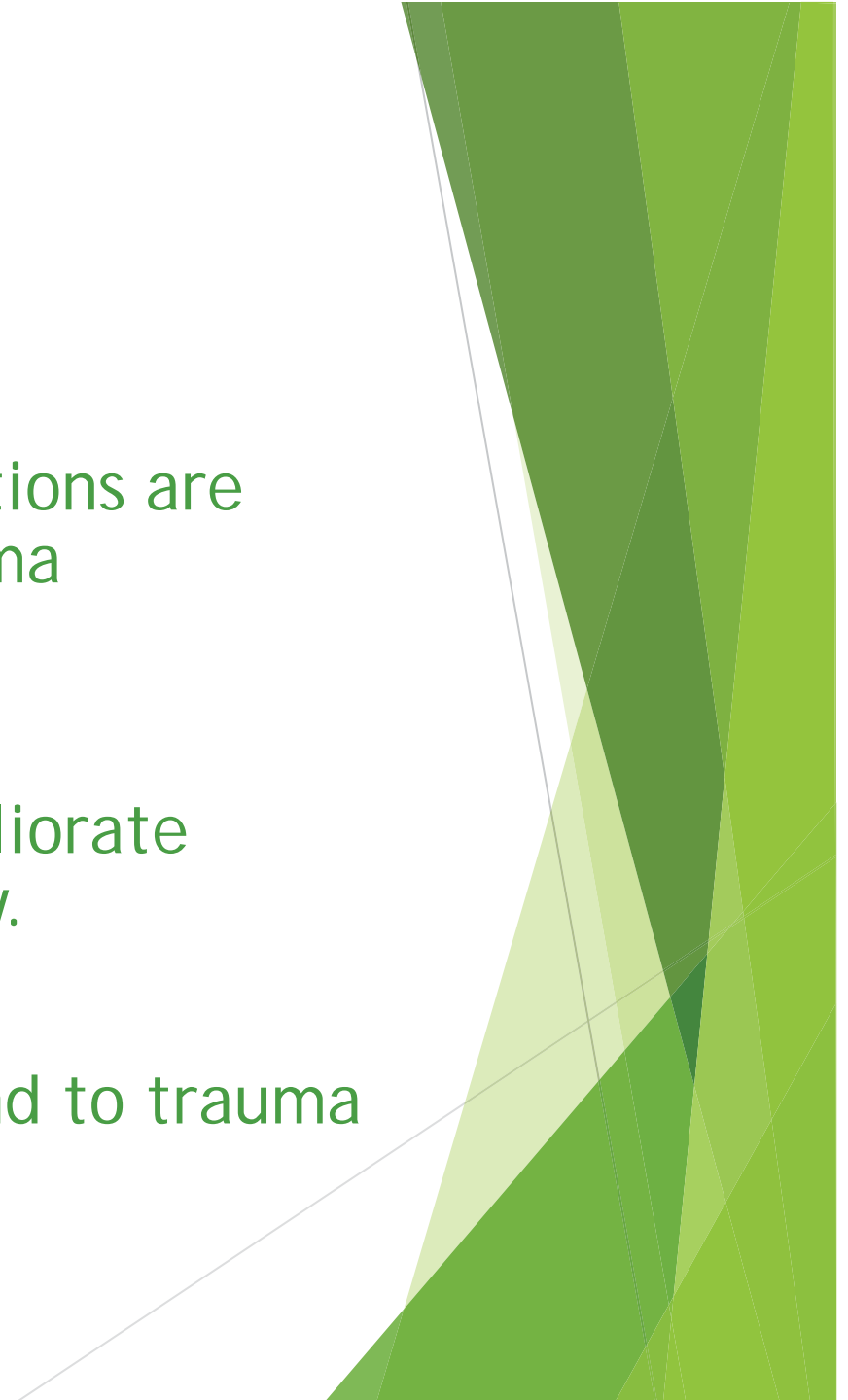
Organizational Trauma and Resilience

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Resource Sharing Project

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Objectives

- ▶ Identify the ways organizations are traumatized and how trauma manifests itself.
- ▶ Describe strategies to ameliorate trauma and build resiliency.
- ▶ Create strategies to respond to trauma within their own agencies.



Organizational Perspective

- ✧ Organizational view complements individual focus
- ✧ Organizational self-care enhances individual self-care
- ✧ Organizational self-knowledge helps with survival in tough times

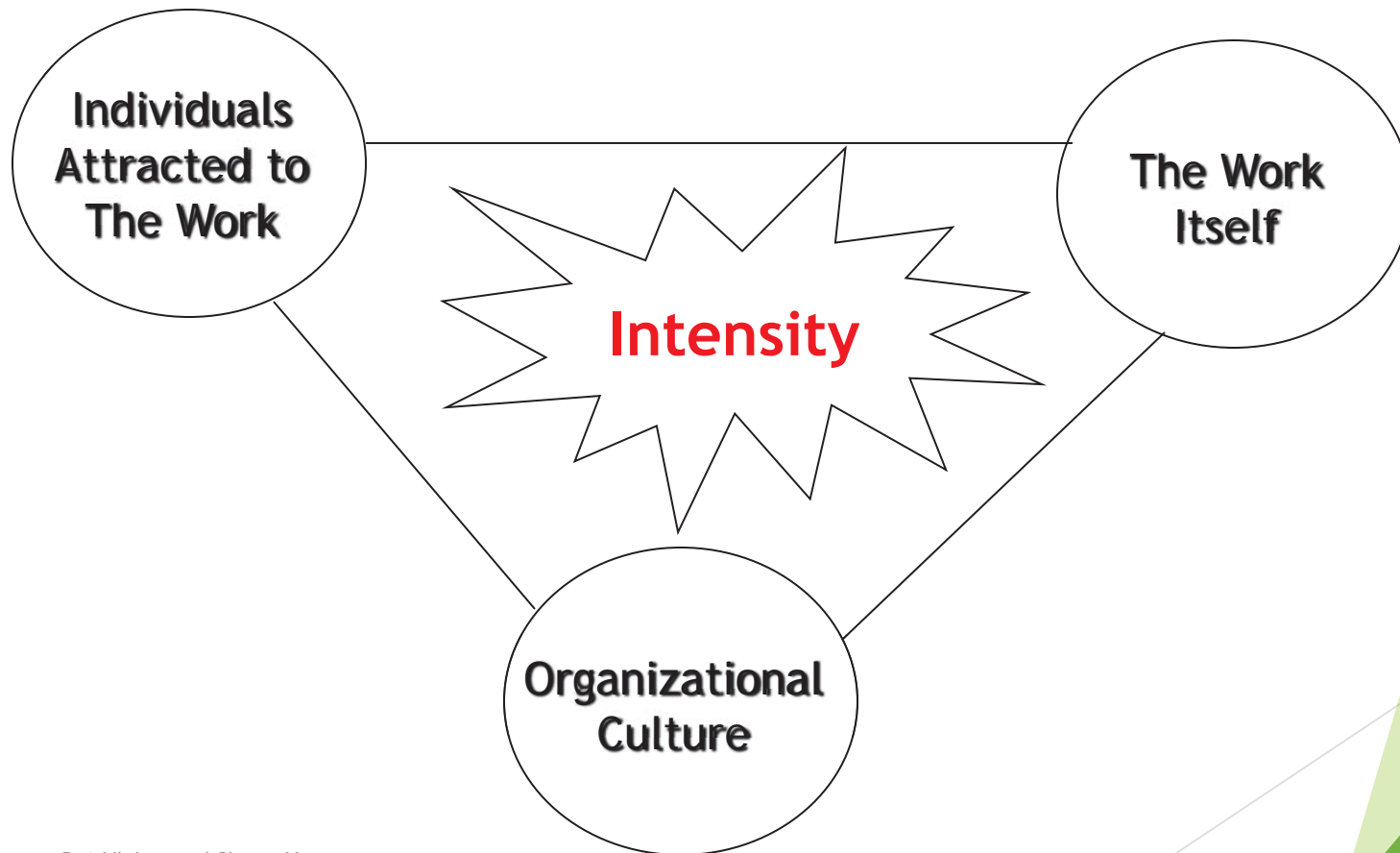
Organizational Culture

- ✧ Core character and uniqueness
- ✧ Collective identity and home for members
- ✧ Shared knowledge and language
- ✧ Norms, values and standards
- ✧ Personality and spirit

Work Influences Culture

- ✧ Creation story and rationale for organization's existence
- ✧ The struggle and formation of individual and collective identities
- ✧ Relationship of the organization to society
- ✧ The way the work is done

Individual-Work-Culture Connection



What do we know about how trauma (such as sexual violence) affects individuals ?

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Organizational Trauma

- ✧ Emotionally and cognitively overwhelming
- ✧ Self-protective structures penetrated
- ✧ Vulnerable and temporarily helpless
- ✧ Lasting psychic and cultural impact

Lifecycles, Crises, Trauma

- ✧ Lifecycles are normal developmental stages of organizational growth and change.
- ✧ Crises are disruptive occurrences that create anxiety, uncertainty, and opportunity.
- ✧ Traumas debilitate an organization, temporarily or long term.

Sources of Organizational Trauma

- ✧ Single catastrophic event
- ✧ Ongoing wounding
- ✧ Redemptive nature of the work
- ✧ Empathic nature of the work

Traumatized System

- ✧ Closed boundaries
- ✧ Centrality of insider relationships
- ✧ Stress and anxiety contagion
- ✧ Worldview and identity erosion
- ✧ Depression
- ✧ Despair and loss of hope

Persistent Traumatization

- ✧ Regularity of re-traumatizing triggers
- ✧ Trauma-inured or accepting culture
- ✧ Ongoing instability
- ✧ Anxiety-based conversations and decisions
- ✧ Inadequate emotional containment
- ✧ Cumulative discouragement
- ✧ Cyclical burnout of staff and leaders
- ✧ Continuing lack of trust

Complexity of Traumatization

- ✧ Healed and unhealed traumas
- ✧ Historical and current dynamics
- ✧ Widespread and confined impact
- ✧ Deeply hidden and just below the surface
- ✧ Cumulative from long-standing patterns and the nature of the work

Mitigating Factors

- ✧ Strong core identity
- ✧ Organizational esteem
- ✧ Facilitating structures and processes
- ✧ Hopeful and energetic leadership
- ✧ Positive connection to peer agencies



Exacerbating Factors

- ✧ Limiting attitudes and worldview set at organization's creation
- ✧ Organizational amnesia
- ✧ Unproductive relationships between organization and environment
- ✧ Unrecognized wounding from trauma

Responding to Organizational Trauma

- ✧ Recognize and acknowledge trauma
- ✧ Remember history and interrupt amnesia
- ✧ Strengthen organizational identity and esteem
- ✧ Institute facilitating structures and processes
- ✧ Open system to new energy and information

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Responding to Organizational Trauma

- ❖ Ensure safety, contain anxiety, and normalize experience
- ❖ Create process for organization-wide dialogue
- ❖ Integrate trauma in affirming and meaningful ways
- ❖ Set priorities to move forward

Building and Supporting Resilience

- ❖ Act as a role model
- ❖ Identify suffering and trauma
- ❖ Contain impacts of traumatization
- ❖ Offer optimism, confidence, and energy
- ❖ Provide frameworks for meaning making
- ❖ Champion organizational strengths
- ❖ Model kindness and compassion
- ❖ Ask for outside help when necessary

Thank you!

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▶ Organizational Trauma and Healing by Pat Vivian & Shana Hormann, 2013