

**Trauma Informed
Community Action**

Rediscovering Rewarding Working Lives:

How creative writing for work related harms map our routes of hope

Dr Angela Kennedy

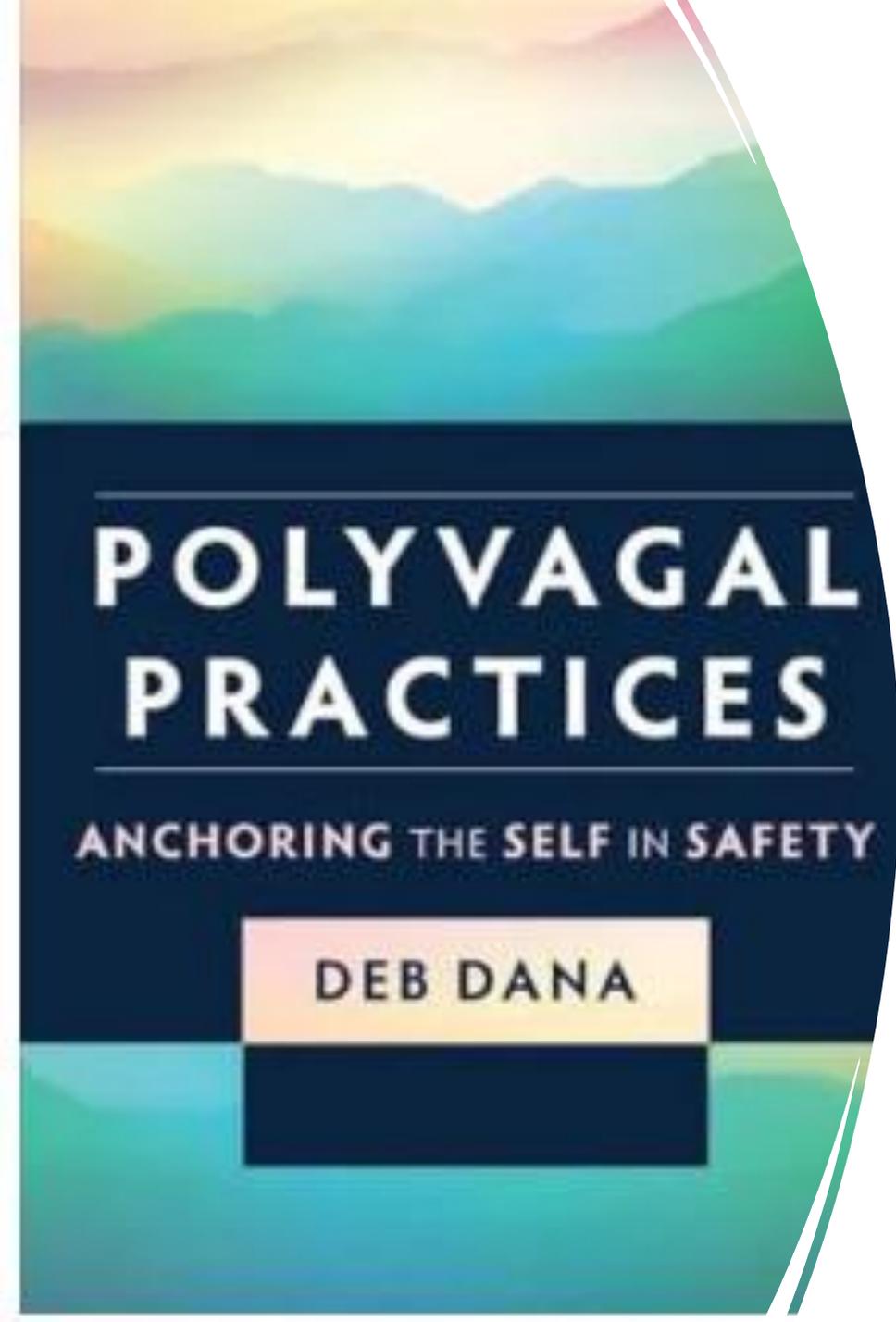
Why Are Our Stories So Important?

“If people are transformed through the process of sharing stories, workers are transformed, systems are transformed.” Kylie Burgess from [Burnie Works](#)

“Lived experience’s unique and in-depth perspectives are the catalysts for change and transformation of all societal systems...”

Global Mental Health Peer Network (2021, p1)

*Credit: Centre for Public
Impact



POLYVAGAL PRACTICES

ANCHORING THE SELF IN SAFETY

DEB DANA

“The mind narrates what the nervous system knows. Story follows state.”

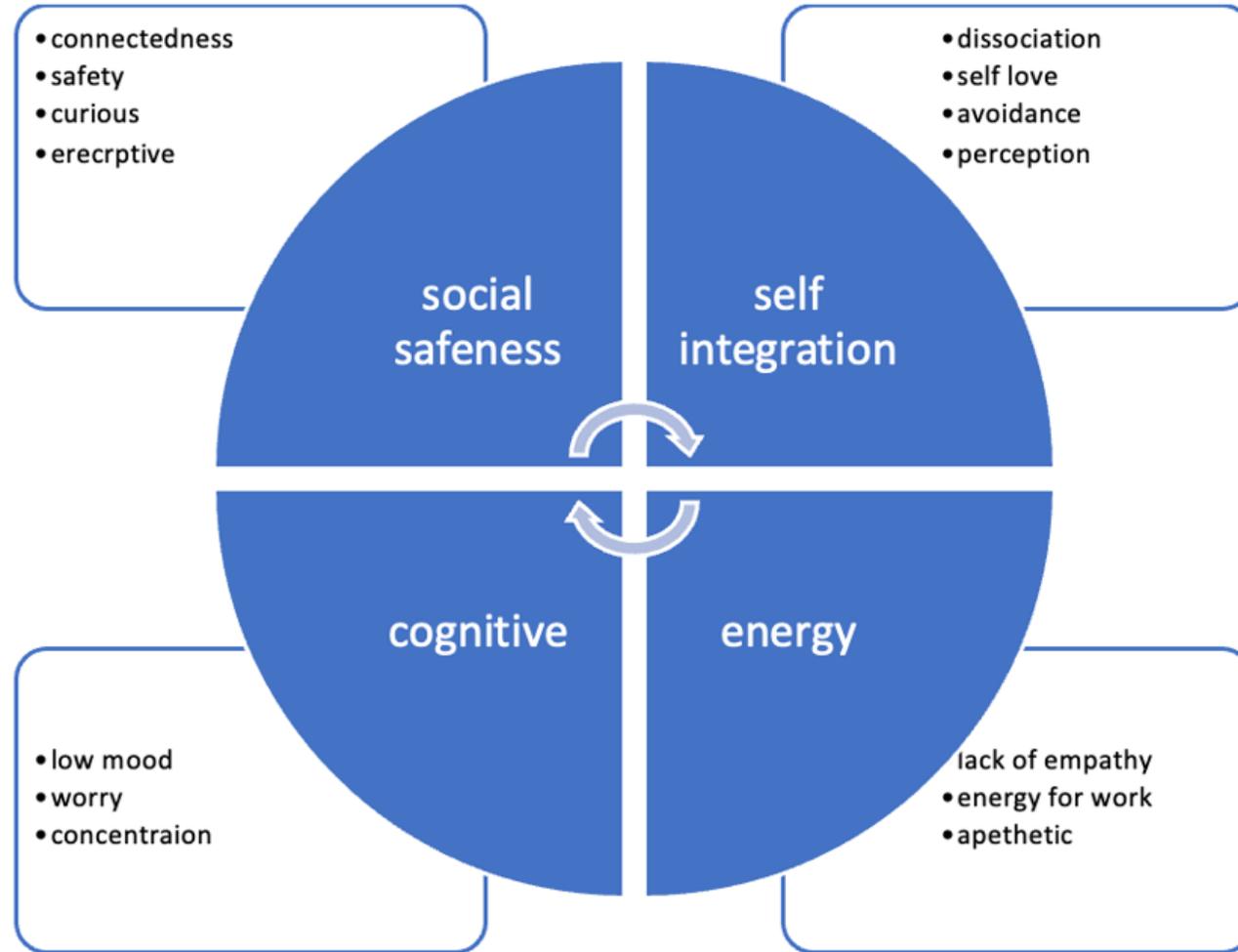
Frost et al 2005

3 lenses on organisational compassion

Interpersonal work	organising	narrative
effortful	interdependent	Reflect hidden pain and our response to it
skilled	Collective accomplishment	Align identity and value
Small acts	expectations	Multiple perspectives

Relationship between social safeness and professional quality of life

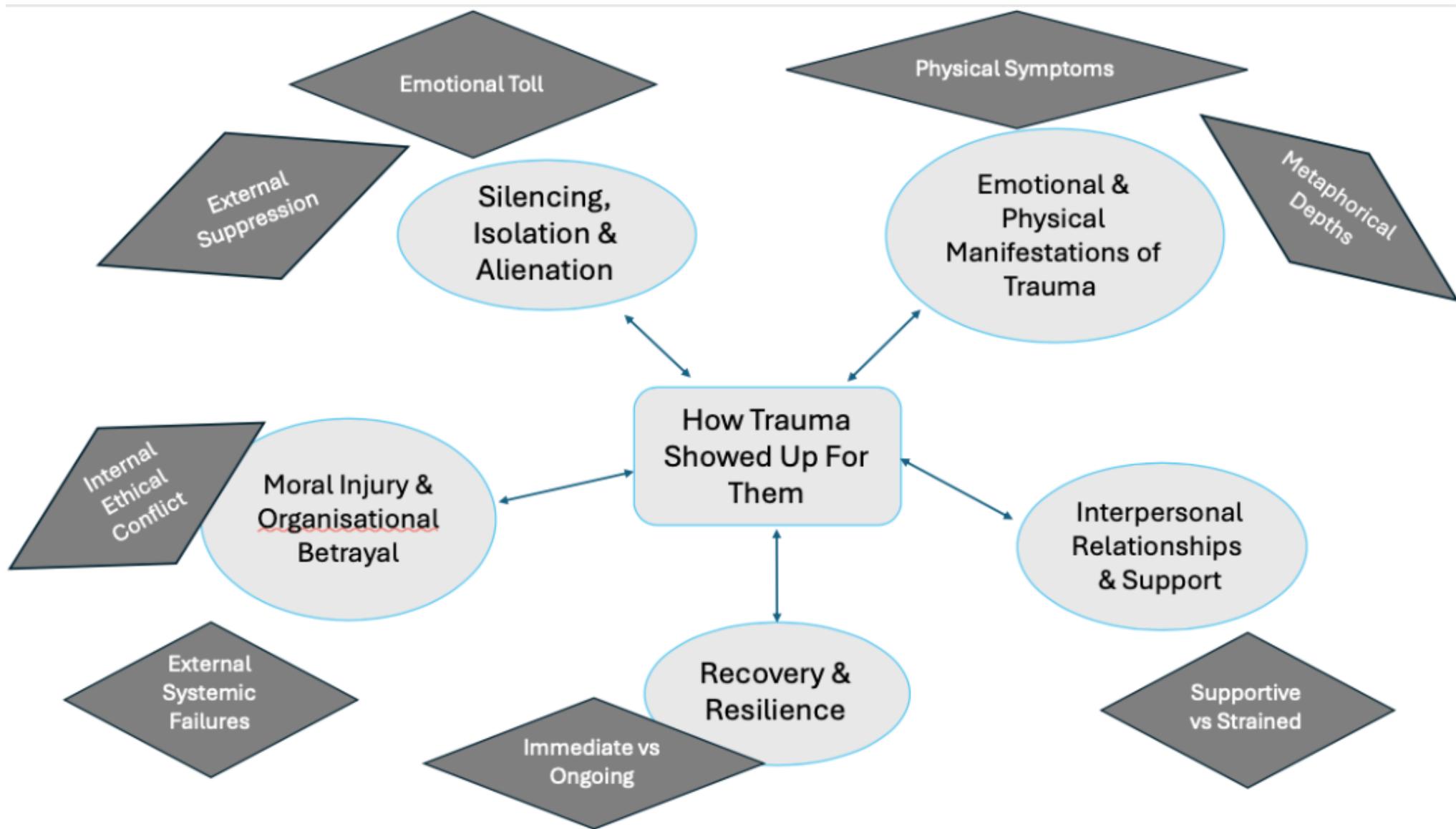
ProQoL	Social safeness p<0.000
Compassion satisfaction	.549
Burnout	.533
Secondary traumatic stress	.262



S2 Fig. The four overarching areas characterizing ‘wellbeing’.

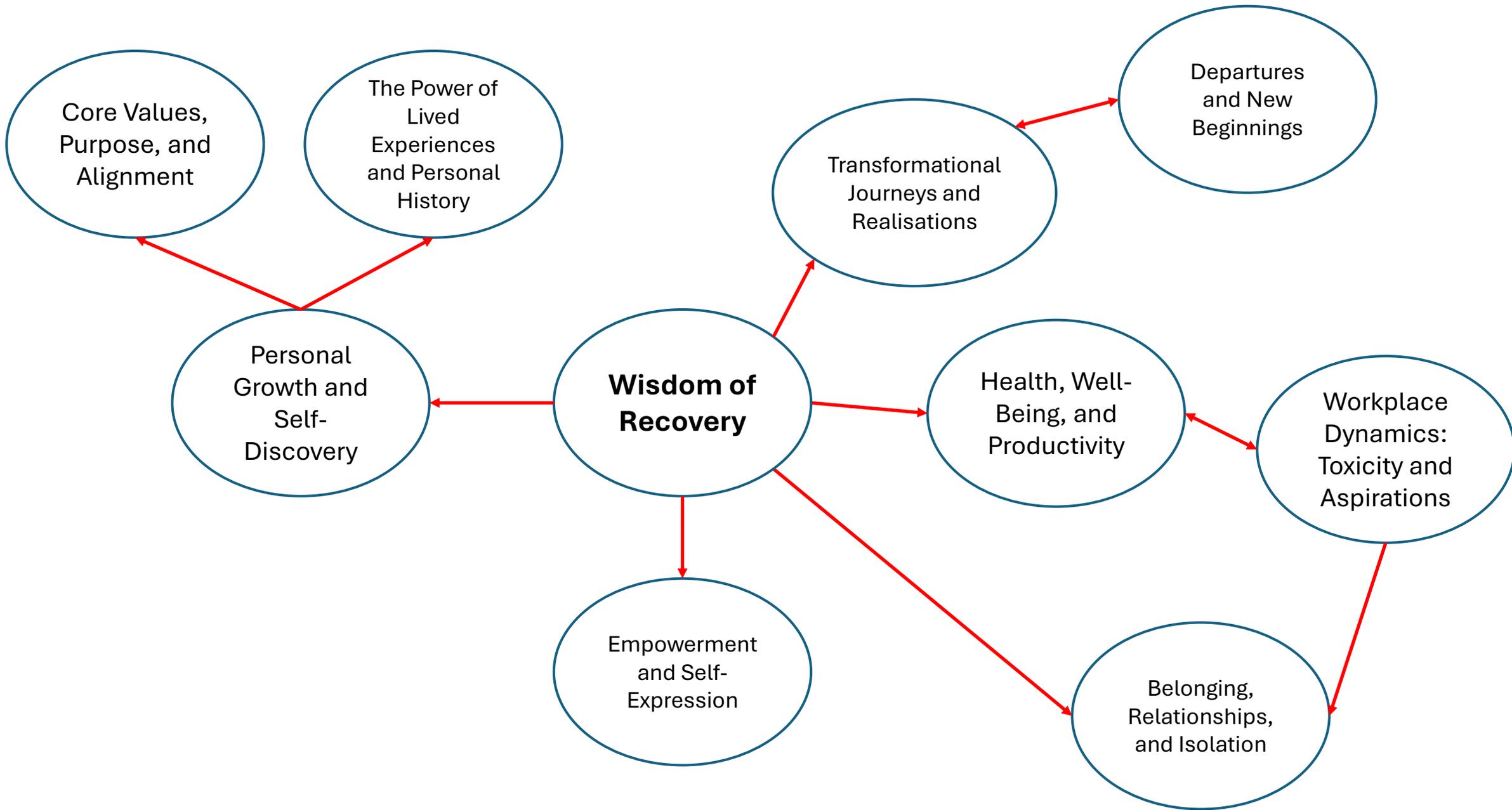
How Trauma Showed Up For Them





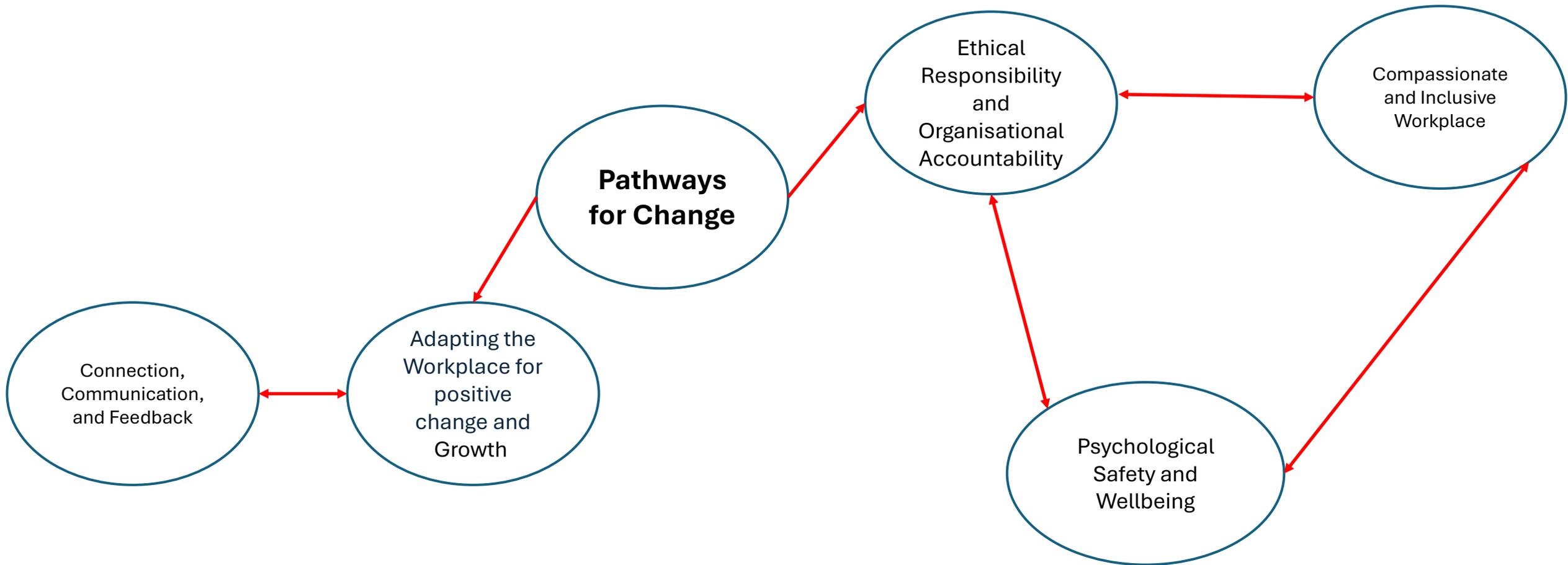
Wisdom Of Recovery

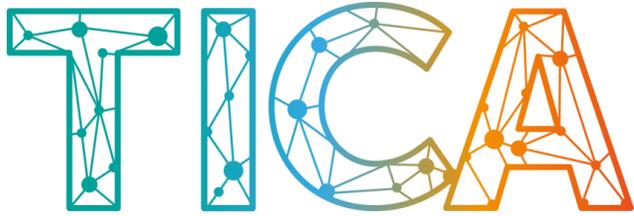




Pathways for Change



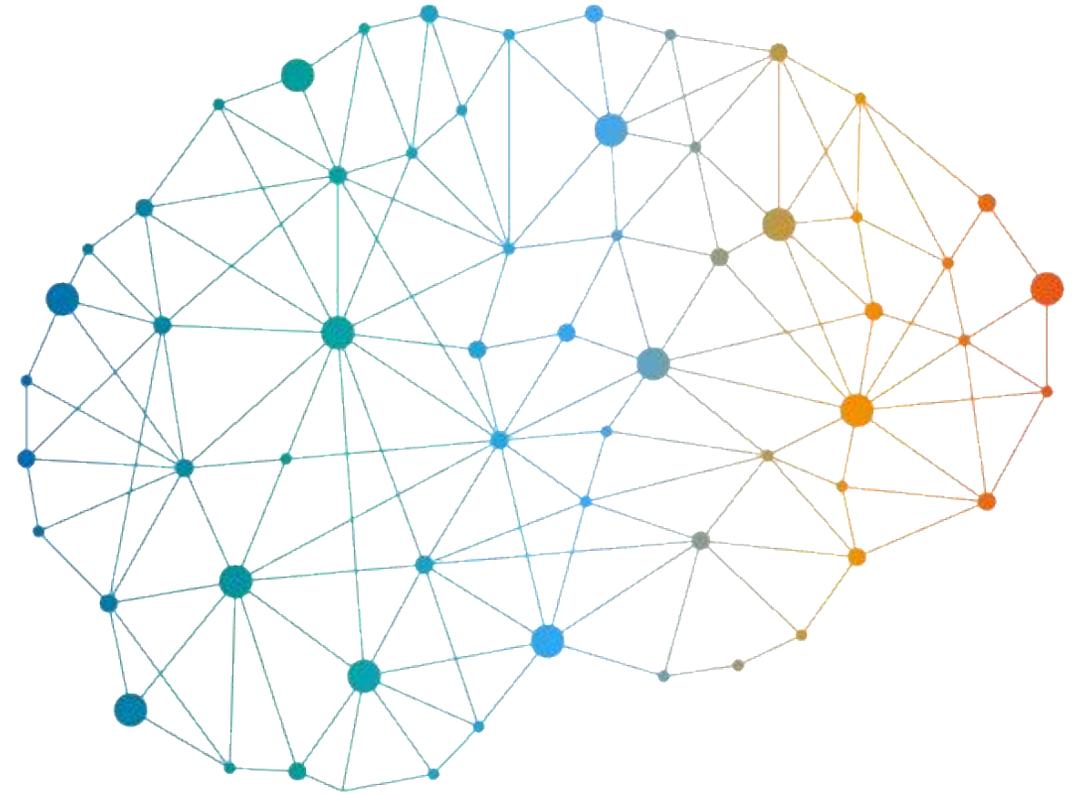




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Narrative wisdom for trauma informed and healthy working lives: let's look at our evaluation

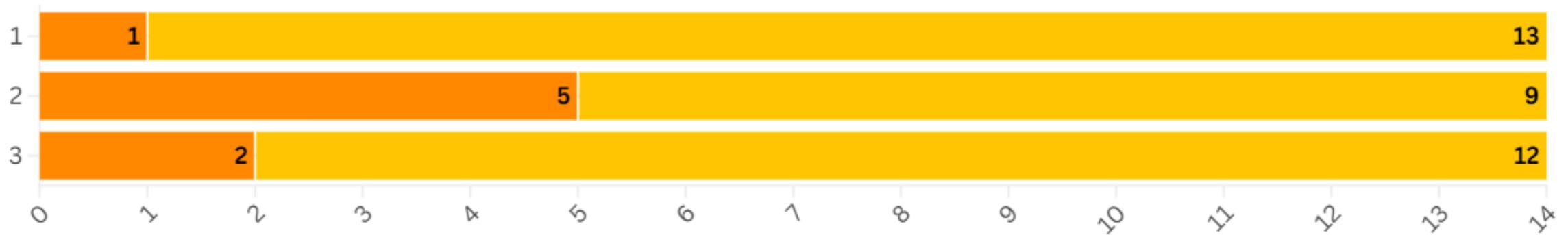
Developing real world system capability in
trauma informed approaches.



Has the workshop met its objectives?



Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree or disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree



- 1. 92.9%** felt the workshop explored safe ways of creating valid accounts about the impact of attendee's work.
- 2. 64.3%** thought the workshop identified routes to discovering a rewarding working life.
- 3. 85.7%** believed the workshop contributed to expanding the narrative about or working lives and mental health.

Helped me develop confidence in my writing voice

"I've learnt a little more about my writing voice, I've gained more confidence to share more of my work with others"

"Perhaps helping me find and form my writing voice"

"revisiting the event by writing again in a good way to process"

The discussions supported personal growth

"it felt like a good safe space to speak"

"helped clarify and talk about something in a constructive way"

"sharing my story was liberating and I feel now I could talk about it again"

In what way has this workshop contributed to any personal growth or healing for your experience of work related harm?

Helped alleviate pain through better understanding

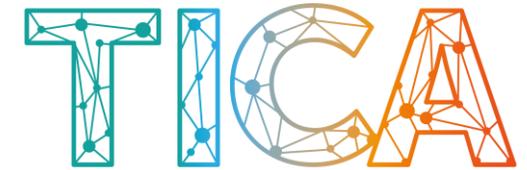
"I feel like I've put a little more of my story to bed"

"putting emotions on paper helped release pain"

"let go of shame that does not belong to me"

"understand more the origins of my struggle"

"I didn't even know there was a wound until I started writing"



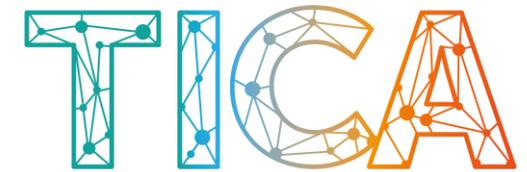
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Experiences can share commonalities

"can be told in ways that resonate with others who have undergone similar difficulties"
"personal experiences are collective experiences"
"whilst the details may be different the thoughts, feelings and experiences do share commonalities"

Reflection is important for understanding

"gives perspective and helps understanding of various scenarios"
"a well-led and creative safe space can bring forth powerful reflection"



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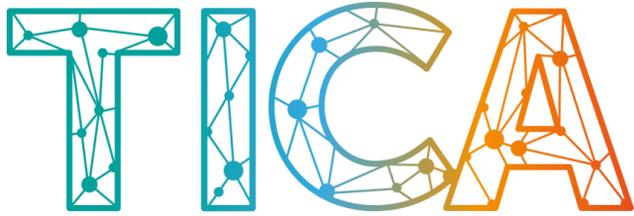
What have you learnt about how your personal experiences can be used to change our understanding of work-related harm?

The impact and empowerment that sharing can have

"sharing and vulnerability can empower others"
"having an awareness of how I can impact others, my voice can be a valuable tool"
"I've learnt that what was a profoundly negative and damaging experience in the workplace can be valuable to others"
"there is power in telling your story"

I am not alone

"I've learnt that it can make you realise that you are not alone"
"I realised that I am not alone in fighting with the system"

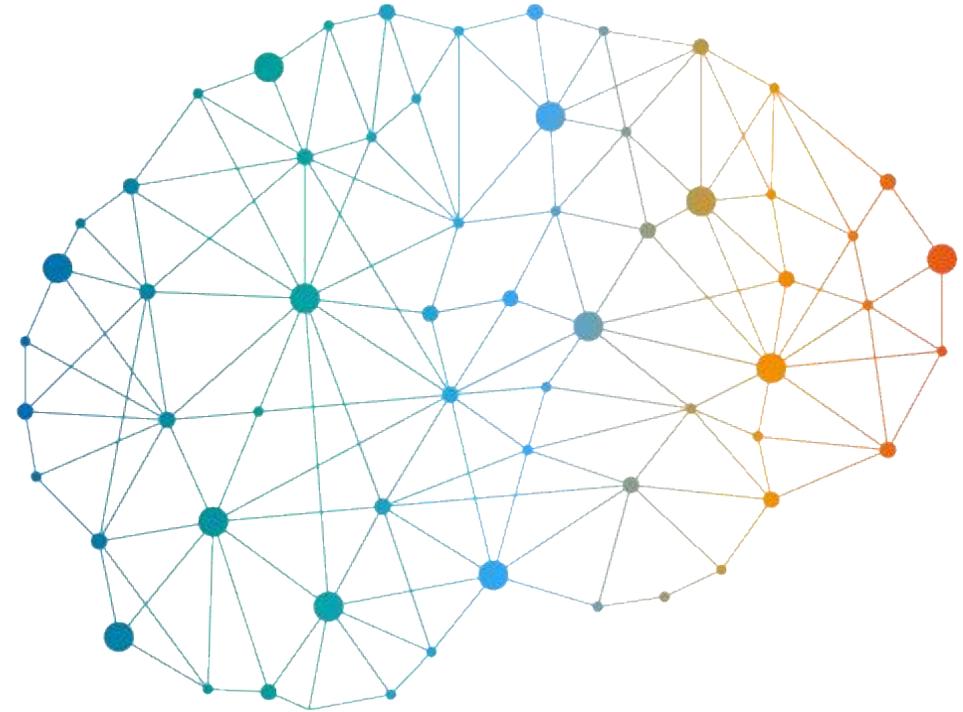


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Contact us

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If you would like to take part in a workshop around this or commission us for your organisation, then do get in touch.