

## WEEKLY DIGEST N°6

ATL Trainer curriculum  
Homelessness and Trauma

### FACTS ABOUT TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE

- About 70% of people have been exposed to a traumatic experience.
- Interpersonal violence is the major source of trauma, particularly for women. While men are most likely to experience violence from strangers, women are most likely to be hurt by people they know.
- Up to 20% of women who have experienced violence experience homelessness, compared with just 1 % of women who haven't experienced violence.
- Approximately 85% of those in touch with the criminal justice system, substance misuse and homelessness services have experienced trauma as children.
- While 1-3% of the general youth population reports sexual assault, 21-42% of homeless youth declare to have suffered a sexual assault.

Through this Unit we will learn how trauma can affect a person's functional ability and its relation with homelessness.

We will talk about the importance of optimizing the professionals' and the client's arousal level.

We will learn how violence in particular is related to trauma among homelessness people.





## WHAT MIGHT HELP WHEN WORKING WITH TRAUMATISED PEOPLE?

*“Trauma informed care is a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.”*

## WHAT IS THE WINDOW OF TOLERANCE?

One model for understanding and explaining disorders that arise from the effects of severe trauma is the ‘Window of Tolerance’ by Dan Siegel. This model proposes that, between the extremes of hyperarousal and hypoarousal, there's a ‘window’ or range of optimal arousal states in which emotions can be experienced as tolerable and human functioning capacity is at its optimum. Helping a person experiencing homelessness is easier if their state of alertness is as optimal as possible. This is why it is important to understand how hyperarousal and hypoarousal states affect a person.

### **Trauma Informed peer support**

“Peer support counters the effects of trauma and helps trauma survivors make sense of what they are coping with and surviving. Peer support sees a person's coping strategies, not just “symptoms” of the trauma, and creates safer spaces to practice new coping strategies. The peer supporter's exemplifies how it is possible to recover from traumatic experiences.”