Core Values Within Survivor-Serving Organizations

Worksheet

Core values are central beliefs and guiding principles that ground and guide the organization. They define the organization's culture and priorities.
Core values guide the way the organization operates, makes decisions, and treats its employees, volunteers, and clients.

Over the past decade, terms like "trauma-informed" and "survivor-centered" have become widely used. But with increased visibility, these concepts are sometimes applied interchangeably or superficially. As a result, core values can feel vague or imposed rather than meaningful.

It's essential that your organization's mission and values align across programs, policies, and practices—and that decision-making reflects, rather than conflicts with, those values.

This worksheet is designed to help you move beyond buzzwords, clarify your core values, and define what they mean in the day-to-day operations and relationships of your organization.

Core Values Review

1. **Your Values:** What are your personal values that guide your work with survivors and colleagues?

2. **Organizational Values:** What are your organization's core (or shared) values?

3. **Values in Action:** How do you see these values showing up in daily practices and decision-making?

   - What is your role in carrying them out?

See reverse

4. **Organizational Practices**
   For each practice below, reflect on where you see your organization's values in action (or not). Note how staff and leadership are involved, and which values are reflected.

Structure or Practice	Staff/Leadership Involvement	Which Values Shown
Hiring		
Performance Evaluation		
Leadership		
Accountability		
Organizational Strategy		
Decision-Making		
Communication		
Burnout Prevention and Support		
Partnerships		

- ❖ Consider how others in your organization might answer.
- ❖ Everyone has a role: Living out organizational values isn't only a leadership responsibility; each staff member contributes through daily decisions and relationships.
- ❖ Alignment strengthens mission: When values show up across the whole organization, they reinforce credibility, sustainability, and impact.

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