

Organizational Trauma and Healing

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<h3>Individual Focus</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Problem orientation ■ Individuals blamed ■ Heavy burden on individuals ■ Limited impact on sustainability of individuals or organization ■ Acceptance of dysfunction within the organization ■ Understanding the individual leads to expectations that individuals need to change. 	<h3>Organizational Focus</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Normalization of patterns ■ Collective responsibility ■ Less burden on individuals ■ Widespread impact on organizational structure, systems, values ■ Aspiration to reframe and recapture the central spirit of the and work ■ Understanding the whole leads to expectations that dynamics and patterns need to change.
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What is Organizational Culture?

- Creation and history of the organization
- Values- both explicit and implicit
- Personality and spirit
- Core identity
- The way we do things around here
- Explicit aspects that we are proud of
- Implicit aspects (positive and negative) that develop outside our awareness
- Organizational culture is the sum total of all of the above.

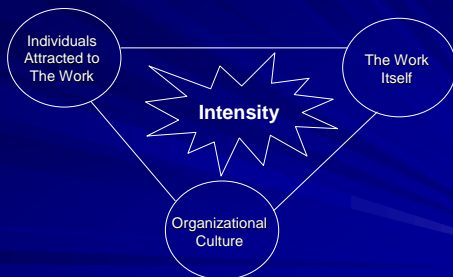
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The Work Influences Culture

- 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
- Internal dynamics

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Individual-Work-Culture Connection



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Organizational Patterns

- There are healthy and unhealthy patterns in every system.
- Patterns are not easy to discern.
- Unhealthy patterns may emerge from organizational trauma.
- Unaddressed patterns compromise organizational sustainability
- To change patterns we have to become aware of them.
- To become aware of them we have to think more broadly than individuals.

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Organizational Trauma

Organizational trauma is a single disastrous injury to or the cumulative impact of injurious events on an organization.

Organizational trauma has an extraordinary and lasting impact on the organization's culture.

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Sources of Organizational Trauma

- Catastrophic event
- Origins of organization
- Redemptive nature of the work
- Empathic nature of the work
- Emerging internal dynamics
- Organization-Environment relationship

Note: Ongoing trauma may result from interaction of all of the above

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Characteristics of a Traumatized System

- Closed boundaries between organization and external environment
- Centrality of insider relationships
- Stress and anxiety contagion
- Loss of hope

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Intervening in Organizations with Unresolved Trauma

- Name the trauma and normalize individual and collective responses
- Contain the anxiety and allow emotional expression

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- Understand the experience at the organizational level
- Make meaning collectively
- Ask for outside help if necessary
- Identify priority actions

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Intervening in Organizations At Risk for Cumulative Trauma

- Understand the organization's identity and culture
- Open system to outside information and energy

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- Build and strengthen relationships with the external environment
- Develop a learning organization
- Surface organizational strengths
- Create norms for organizational resilience
- Nurture the organization's spirit and engage in renewal

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Thank you!

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