

The Four Pillars of Sanctuary

Pillar 1: Shared Knowledge - Trauma Theory: scientifically-grounded knowledge about trauma, adversity, and attachment.

The Sanctuary Model is a blueprint for individual and organisational change. At its core, it promotes safety and recovery from adversity by creating a trauma-informed community.

The model recognises the impact trauma has, not only on those who seek services, but equally on the people and systems who provide those services. It identifies that trauma may result from both lived experiences and ongoing, cumulative or intangible experiences, like racism and poverty.

Trauma theory suggests many behavioural symptoms we see, are a direct result of trying to cope with negative experiences.

To effectively support our clients in their change and growth, Sanctuary helps us to move from a position of blame to one of questioning. Instead of asking "what's wrong with you?", we ask "what's happened to you?". This is the first step in recognising how the past influences people's current behaviours.

Sanctuary also recognises that just as people are susceptible to adversity, so too are organisations.

We can often draw a parallel between the way a person and an organisation reacts to trauma. Traumatized individuals will withdraw and disconnect from their community. Organisations facing financial or political pressures will also respond with detachment, rigidity and autocratic decision-making.

Intervening in this parallel requires shifting organisational behaviours and thinking to align with trauma-informed practices.

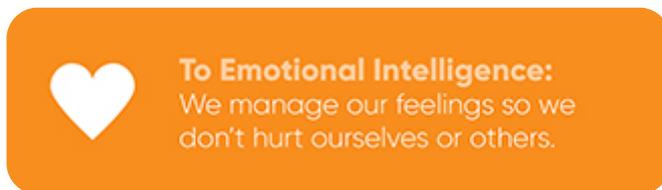
Sanctuary provides the blueprint to accomplish this alignment.

Pillar 2: Shared Values - Sanctuary Commitments – a trauma-informed way of making decisions, problem-solving and planning.

Sanctuary's seven commitments are a set of values to guide individuals and organisations away from trauma-reactive behaviours.



Traumatised people/groups often experience violence as part of their trauma: physical, psychological, social, moral or cultural. This commitment attempts to give the opposite experience within the community.



Traumatised people/groups often experience insensitivity and disrespect regarding their behaviours or feelings. This commitment creates an environment in which community members understand the relationship between past experiences, emotions and behaviours and can respond and react to clients and each other with those relationships in mind.



Traumatised people/groups are often isolated as a way to self-protect and can become engaged in repetitive patterns of thinking and behaviour.

This commitment promotes collaborative thinking and problem solving. It works to break dysfunctional and repetitive patterns by seeing other perspectives and ideas. It also lessens the isolating effects of shame by viewing mistakes as positive learning opportunities.

**To Democracy:**

All voices and views are heard and respected.

Many definitions of trauma include an overwhelming sense of helplessness during the event which can lead to learned helplessness in the future. Democracy requires active participation and empowerment in the service of replacing helplessness.

**To Open Communication:**

We are honest and say what we mean with kindness.

Secrecy is often a component of prolonged exposure to traumatic experiences (i.e. sexual abuse, parental alcoholism). This commitment creates a community that tolerates expression of emotions and openly explores interpersonal and organisational issues.

**To Social Responsibility:**

We help each other and take responsibility for our actions.

Traumatised people/groups have often experienced injustice either during or in response to reporting a traumatic event. This commitment focuses on building a community in which people feel a sense of responsibility, and care for each other and the group as a whole and in which people are held accountable for their actions.

**To Growth and Change:**

We acknowledge loss, are open to new ideas and are hopeful for the future.

Traumatised people/groups can become paralysed by their experiences so that they continue to relive or repeat the past in ways that prevent healing or growth. This commitment presents a framework to evaluate current behaviours while focusing on the future by setting achievable goals and breaking dysfunctional patterns.

Pillar 3: Shared Language – S.E.L.F. (Safety, Emotions, Loss, Future) Framework: a set of values that lead individuals and organisations away from trauma-reactive behaviours

S.E.L.F. is a problem-solving framework that represents the four dynamic areas of focus for trauma recovery. It offers a trauma-informed way of organising conversations and documentation for clients, families, staff, and administrators by moving away from jargon and towards more simple and accessible language.

The framework is also used to solve system and organisational problems in a nonlinear fashion. This means sometimes using the framework out of order when looking at an issue. Often, it makes sense to start with future (where we hope to be) and work backwards from there, considering concerns and possible interventions related to safety, emotions and loss.

<p>SAFETY</p> <p>Physical safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not tolerating violence of any kind • Absence of self-destructive behaviour • Avoidance of risk-taking behaviour <p>Psychological safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-protection • Self-efficacy • Self-discipline <p>Social safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe attachments • Safety in the group • Exercise of responsible authority <p>Moral safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair play • Clean up your own mess • Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody <p>Cultural safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditions acknowledged and celebrated • Responsive to cultural needs • Cultural blindness on the agenda for all 		
<p>EMOTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trading in actions for words • Neither expressing nor suppressing, but managing • Recognising the feelings of others • Recognising impact of your actions on others 	<p>LOSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrupting dysfunctional patterns • Balancing the losses involved in change against the possible gains • Grieving and saying goodbye 	<p>FUTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing trajectories • New attractors • Different choices • Imagination, creativity, and innovation

Pillar 4: Shared Practice – Sanctuary Toolkit: a set of practical and simple interventions that reinforce the model’s language and philosophy.

Sanctuary tools are daily practices for staff and the people they serve, to support a decrease in the negative effects of chronic stress and adversity. The tools are adapted and individualised for organisations based on the services they provide and the populations they serve. Below is a sample of some of the Sanctuary Tools.

Community Meetings

A set of three questions that are posed to each member of a group to start all meetings. The questions are designed to enhance organisational functioning by:

- promoting feelings of identification
- focusing on the future rather than the past
- creating a sense of connection with other staff members.

Red Flag Reviews

A response to critical incidents that observes certain protocols and that promotes involvement from a wide range of community members. The focus is on solutions rather than problems and creates a system for accountability and action.

Safety Plans

Visual reminders of emotion management practices represented as a list of activities, techniques or skills. The card is carried and used in situations that may trigger unproductive reactions.

Sanctuary Psychoeducation

Educational materials and activities that instruct community members about the effects of adversity on the brain, techniques for managing these effects and strategies for creating healthy dynamics in groups.

S.E.L.F. Care Planning

A framework for creating individualised plans for clients and staff that balances demands of care with the need for mental, spiritual, physical and emotional replenishment and renewal.

Sanctuary Core Team

A selected group of people within the organisation who manage Sanctuary's roll-out and implementation. They model its values and practices, monitor completion of implementation tasks, and address organisational problems.