

# Welcome to Session III of Spring 2025 Community of Practice

## ITRC Race to Resilience Initiative to Organize “Transformational Resilience Coordinating Networks” in North America and Worldwide for the C-E-B Crisis

April 15, 2025

Many Thanks to Our Partners and Co-Sponsors!



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## Key Message

# ***“Community is Medicine”***

Throughout human history our ability to band together and cooperate has always been key to surviving, adapting, and remaining healthy and resilient during crisis, and solving complex problems!



By organizing TRCNs in communities we can do this again now for the C-E-B crisis—and many other adversities!

## Summary of Last Weeks CoP Education Session II

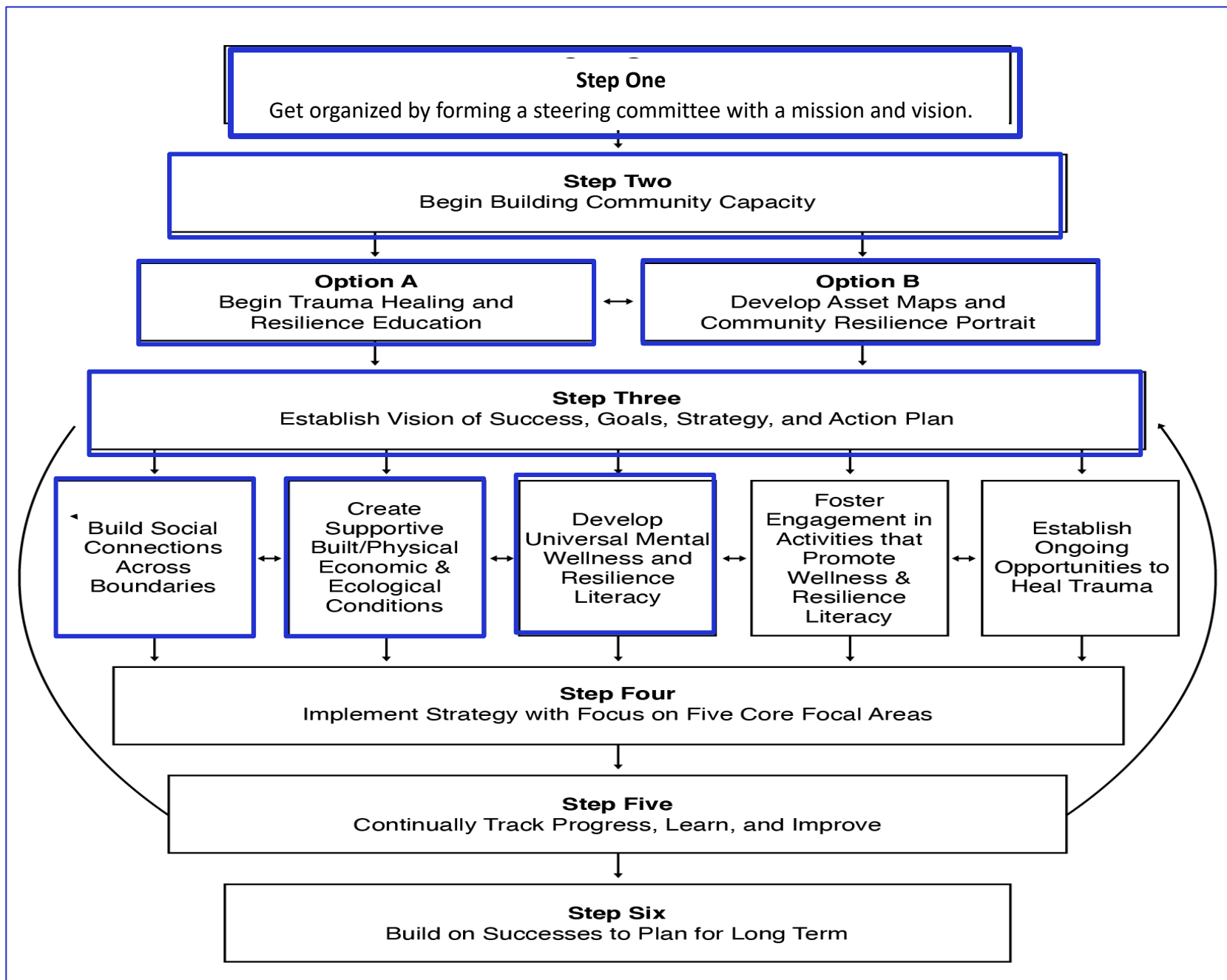
- After a TRCN steering committee is formed, it should begin to **build community capacity** to transform the community from “trauma organized” to “**wellness and resilience enhancing**”--and there are **different ways** to do this.
- Building **social connections** is **by far** the most important protective factor TRCN strategies should focus on because they are **essential** to deal with relentless stresses, disasters, and other adversities, and build the bonds needed for change.
- A variety of methods can be used to build social connections and forming **Mutual Aid Networks** is a powerful way to do this.



## Today's Focus

- The 2nd foundational “Protective Factor:” Make a Just Transition by engaging residents in enhancing local physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions.
- and
- The 3rd foundational “Protection Factor: Build Universal Literacy about Mental Wellness and Transformational Resilience by helping everyone become “Trauma and Resilience-Informed.”

# A Process For Forming and Operating a TRCN for the C-E-B Crisis



# Take a Short Resilience Pause

## The “Control Test”: A Helpful Method of Self Care

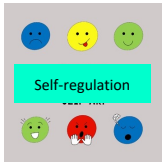
(Buddhism and Stoicism)

Before worrying about or taking action, always run things through a basic test to determine what you can and cannot control and then focus on what you *can* control.

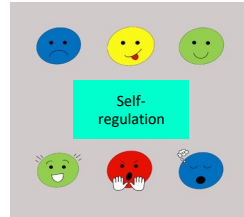
The only things you can actually control are your:

- Character (how you see the world and lead your life)
- Your actions and reactions
- How you treat others

- Things we can control: our opinions, pursuits, desires, aversions, words, reactions, behaviors.
- Things not in our control: what others say about us, what others do, property values, value of our money etc.



# Practice the Control Test



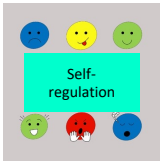
- Identify something you are **worrying** about or are **anxious** about.
- Ask yourself if this is something **within your control** related to:
  - Your character?
  - Your actions and reactions?
  - How you treat others?
- Or is it **not** related to one of those factors and thus **not** within your control?
- If the answer is **YES**—it is **within your control** -- you can **Take Action!**

If it is **NO** it is **not within your control**: do not harm yourself with a **“second arrow.”**

- After making the choice use the **“skylight method”** to observe what you experience

## How Does This Relate to the C-E-B Crisis?

The “control test” can **empower you** to be a **person of action**: Get educated, train hard, build alliances, continually press for social, economic, and political change.



Because by focusing on what you **can** control –***yourself***--you can put your energy where you can **create meaningful change**, avoid a “**second arrow**,” and maintain **personal wellness** and **resilience**.

- In short, the “control test” makes **decision making** and **emotional investment easier to manage**.
- It allows us to **not stress out** about things we cannot control.
- Which can be **very liberating!**



Building Social Connections Should Be a Major Focus When Engaging Residents in

## The Second Foundational Protective Factor

**Make a “Just Transition” by engaging residents in enhancing local physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions**

# A Just Transition is Needed for the C-E-B Crisis

## It is Based on Three Realities

1. Both the impacts of *and* actions to slash emissions, regenerate nature, *and* adapt to climate impacts can generate social, economic, and ecological harm.
2. Without explicit sustained preventative actions those changes can unjustly impact BIPOC, low-income, and other marginalized residents—and unduly benefit wealthier populations who contribute the most to the C-E-B crisis.
3. We *all* thus have an ethical and moral responsibility to ensure an equitable distribution of both the downsides *and* benefits of actions and policies.

# A Just Transition Means “Leave No One Behind”

## Should Include Three Key Elements:

1. Active participation of affected communities in planning, implementing, and evaluating mitigation, adaptation, and transformational solutions to the C-E-B crisis.
2. Anticipating the negative impacts through assessments that foresee and proactively prevent harmful outcomes of the C-E-B crisis and mitigation & adaptation
3. Significant ongoing support through targeted financial aid and capacity building that enhance the capabilities of vulnerable and marginalized populations to actively participate in ensuring a just transition.

# Three Areas Where a Just Transition is Especially Needed for the C-E-B Crisis: Physical/Built, Economic, and Ecological Conditions

## Physical/Built Conditions

- Transportation
- Housing
- Public spaces
- Energy and climate adaptation

## Economic Conditions

- Local business operations
- Living wage jobs
- Transition to “Cradle to Cradle”
- Energy and climate adaptation

## Ecological Conditions

- Air, water, and soil toxins and pollution
- Waterways, lakes, ponds, wetlands
- Forests, grasslands, soils, and other ecosystems
- All forms of biodiversity

## Why Focus on Local Physical/Built Conditions?

- Transportation infrastructure affects mental health by creating separation, high costs, limiting physical movement, and producing high stress during commutes.
- Transit pollution is often concentrated in BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods, causing mental health problems.
- Housing and mental health are closely connected. Dilapidated/toxic housing is directly linked to psychological distress and poor child and adult development.
- Parks and other public spaces that fail to provide safe healthy places to meet, recreate, and connect with nature create mental health problems.
- Efforts to slash local GHG and adapt physical/built conditions to climate impacts can also increase inequality and mental health and psychosocial problems.

## Why Focus on Local Economic Conditions?

- Automation, off-shoring, corporate/Wall St. market power, and other factors have **eliminated millions of living-wage jobs** and **reduced wages for millions of others**, especially for BIPOC residents, blue-collar workers, & those w/out college degrees
- People who **lack living-wage jobs** and the **long-term unemployed** have **3 times** greater chance of low self-esteem and hopelessness that can lead to severe anxiety, depression and **other mental health** or **issues**.
- Poor mental health can activate a **viscous cycle** of reduced **employability** and inability to **retain a job**, which produces more psychological & emotional problems.
- These factors are major contributors to rising alcohol abuse, drug addiction, and suicides among those with **low-wage jobs** or **no jobs**—especially those **without a college degree**: called “Deaths of Despair.”

## Why Focus on Local Ecological Conditions?

- Polluted and degraded local forests, waterways and other ecosystems, lack of greenspaces, and the loss of biodiversity create mental health problems. e.g. certain air pollutants have been linked to depression, anxiety, and suicide.
- Research found people living more than 2/3 of a mile (1 Km) from green spaces have 50% greater chance of experiencing severe stress; and people living without greenspaces had 44% higher rates of anxiety compared to those living near it.
- BIPOC and low-income communities often suffer the most from these issues. e.g. research on 2020 California wildfires found that exposure to wildfire--specific PM<sub>2.5</sub> smoke was associated with a significant increase in mental health--related ER visits, especially for young children, minority groups, and single women.
- And without great care, efforts to shift to clean renewable energy and prepare for and adapt to climate impacts can increase unjust and inequitable practices

# Why Should TRCNs Actively Engage Residents in Making a Just Transition?

## Because Doing So Can:

- Build healthy social connections
- Help residents understand the effects of traumatic stresses
- Involve residents in pro-social activities
- Protect residents from C-E-B crisis-related impacts
- Increase their sense of safety and security
- Enhance their physical health
- Reduce local emissions and regenerate local ecosystems and biodiversity and thus do their part to minimize the C-E-B Crisis

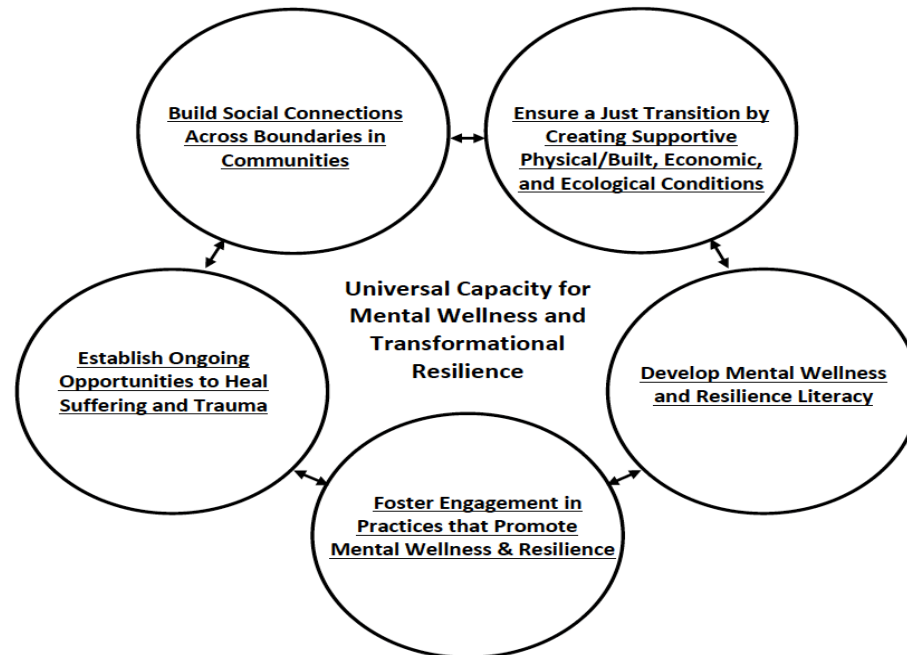
**Seeing small signs of progress can generate healthy hope for future!**

## A Few Examples

- **Inclusive community selection for engagement in clean transportation initiatives: A multifaceted approach and case study**: Journal of Cleaner Production, Sept 2024:  
(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652624028889>)
- **Engaging the Community in a Local Housing Strategy**: Local Housing Solutions:  
(<https://localhousingsolutions.org/policy-insights/engaging-the-community-in-a-local-housing-strategy/>)
- **What is a Community Business?** Power to Change: Backing Community Business, UK:  
(<https://www.powertochange.org.uk/evidence-and-ideas/what-is-community-business/>)
- **Community Engagement for the Restoration of Local Ecosystems**: Rewilding Academy:  
(<https://rewilding.academy/ecosystem-restoration/community-engagement-for-the-restoration-of-local-ecosystems/>)

# EVERY TRCN Activity Should Ensure a Just Transition

- Building just, equitable, safe and healthy climate-resilient physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions should be a stand alone TRCN focus.
- It should also be a central focus of each of the other 4 foundational areas.





## Imagine the Benefits of Engaging Residents in Making a *Just Transition*

- **All** residents become **aware** of how unsafe, unhealthy, and unjust physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions can **undermine** their mental and physical health...
- And how **safe** and **healthy low/zero emission, climate-resilient** conditions will be **essential** to **sustain** their health and resilience during the long C-E-B crisis.
- **All residents** become actively engaged in designing systems that enhance **everyone's** health and wellbeing--and work with public agencies, NGOs, and the private sector to **establish** these conditions.



Building Social Connections and Making a Just Transition should be accomplished by helping everyone engage in the

## **Third Foundational Protective Factor**

### **Develop Universal Literacy About Mental Wellness and Transformational Resilience**

This Means Helping Everyone Become “Trauma and Resilience Informed”



# Universal Literacy about Mental Wellness & Transformational Resilience

Should Be Built Around The Knowledge That Humans Are



Pushed by drives

and



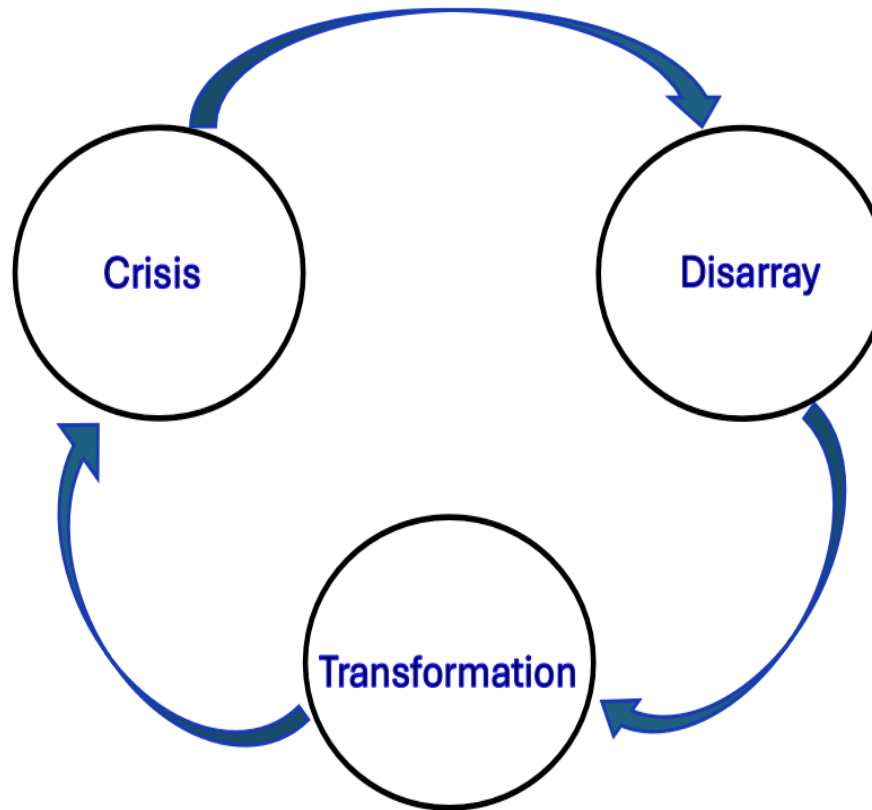
Pulled by meaning and purpose!

(Quote by Viktor Frankl)

# Universal Literacy Involves Understanding the “Transformational Resilience Cycle”

An event or series of events damages or destroys what we value. The trauma shatters deeply-held and often unrecognized assumptions and beliefs about the way the world works, other people, and how we should think and act.

We enter a period of disarray...



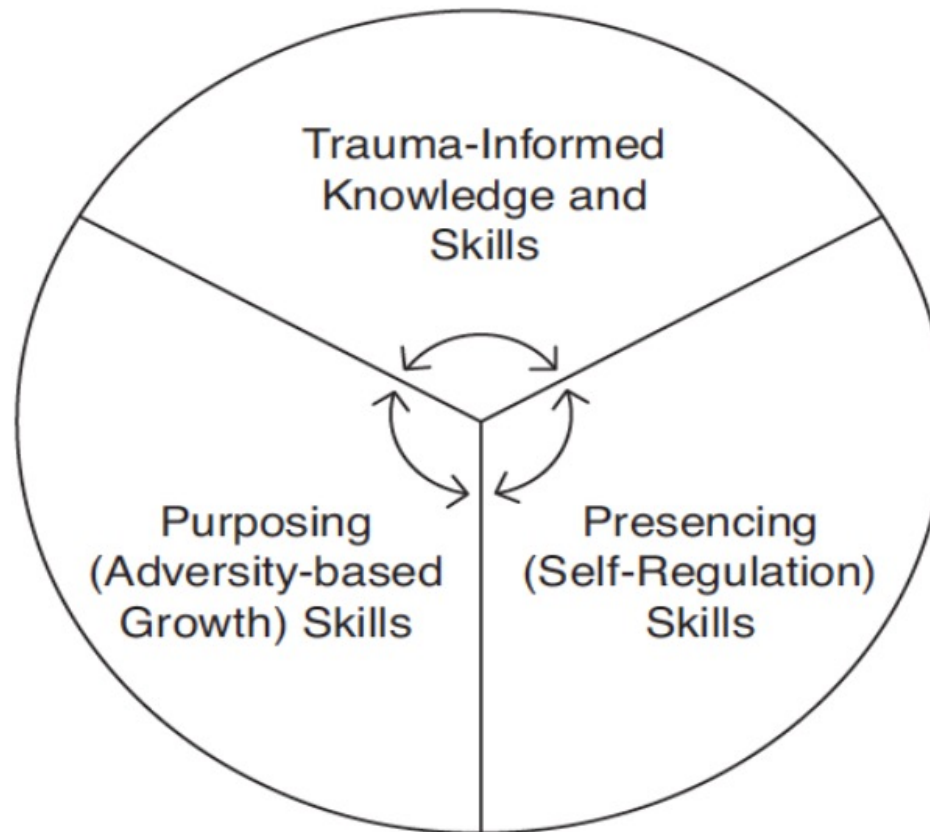
Disarray occurs when efforts to return to pre-crisis thinking and practices fail. We enter a period of disorientation and distress because the way we define our identity, and purpose and meaning of life, are in chaos. Only when we realize we cannot return to the past do we make the choice open ourselves to new ways of seeing and acting in the world.

This opens the door to transformation...

When we begin to see reality more clearly, new pathways appear. We make the choice to explore, innovate, and adopt thinking and practices that produce substantially healthier and more beneficial outcomes. The outcomes can include awareness of previously unknown strengths and skills, greater emotional stability, deeper appreciation of life, better relationships, and more, all of which give our lives new meaning, purpose, and hope. Over time, as reality changes and crisis occurs again, the transformation resilience cycle begins again...

From *Transformational Resilience* (2016).  
B. Doppelt, Taylor and Francis Publishing

# The Three Basic Focuses of Building Universal Literacy About Mental Wellness and Transformational Resilience



# Build Universal Literacy About Mental Wellness and Resilience

## Help Everyone Become “Trauma-Informed”

Use age and culturally-appropriate methods to help everyone understand the “push” of their built-in fight-flight-freeze-fawn biopsychological drives

This means how traumatic stresses can affect their body, mind, emotions & behaviors.

And affect the thinking and actions of groups

# One Example: My Graphic to Help Residents Become Trauma-Informed

## External Stressors

### Activate Fight, Flight, Freeze or Fawn Reactions From the Release of Cortisol and Adrenaline

#### Physical Reaction:

Increased blood pressure, pulse rate, difficult breathing, cold sweats, muscle tension, aches & pains, sleep disorders

#### Mental Reaction:

Excessive fear, worry, guilt, loss of trust, shattered beliefs and loss of meaning

If not discharged, what began as helpful adaptive reactions can become harmful



### Individual Distress and Trauma and Maladaptive Coping

- Self-numbing/escape via legal or illegal substance, food, or tobacco abuse and more
- Seeking relief via diversions like hyper-vigilance, social media, electronic video games
- Seeking relief by turning distress on our spouse, children (ACEs), or others w/aggression or violence
- Dissociation, denial, neglect, and reenactment
- Less ability to think clearly, adapt, remain healthy & resilient, and meaningfully address the C-E-B crisis

If It Continues



### Community and Societal Trauma and Collective Breakdown

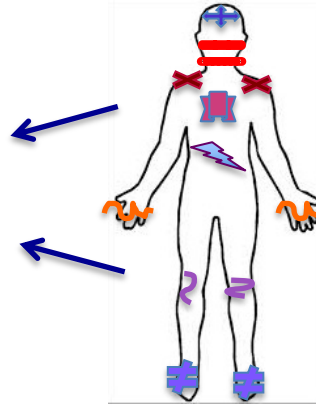
- High distrust, despair, hopelessness
- Low empathy and compassion
- Authoritarianism and extremism
- 'We vs. Them' polarization
- Vast aggression, violence, crime
- No concern for environmental degradation
- Less ability to think clearly, adapt, remain healthy & resilient, & address the C-E-B crisis

If many people  
experience these reactions



### All Encompassing Personal Breakdown

- Physical health problems (e.g. cancer, heart)
- Psycho-emotion problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, PTSD, increased suicidality)
- Spiritual problems (e.g. hopelessness)
- Cognitive problems (e.g. memory loss)
- Behavioral problems (e.g. aggression or withdrawal)
- Less ability to think clearly, adapt, remain healthy & resilient, and address the C-E-B crisis



# Then Help Everyone Learn “Presencing” Resilience Skills (Self-Regulation and Co-regulation)

## Some Examples

### Breath-Based Skills

- Controlled breathing
- Six-Second breathing
- Belly breathing

### Awareness-Based Skills

- Mindfulness of breath, thoughts, and emotions
- Mindful eating, walking, movement

### Culturally-Based Skills

- Music
- Dance
- Shared meals
- Many other

### Cognitive-based Skills

- The Control Test
- ABC model of observing thoughts
- Expressive writing

### Spirituality-Based Skills

- Prayer and meditation
- Conversations with others
- Reading sacred texts

### Physically-Based Skills

- Exercise
- Being outdoors/connecting with nature
- Yoga, Qigong, others

# Another Helpful Presencing Skill is “Circles of Support”™

To help people identify the skills, resources, and social supports they have to remain healthy and resilient during adversities

## Personal Skills

Ability to use healthy methods to stay calm, get exercise, eat well, be assertive, reach out to others

## Internal Supports

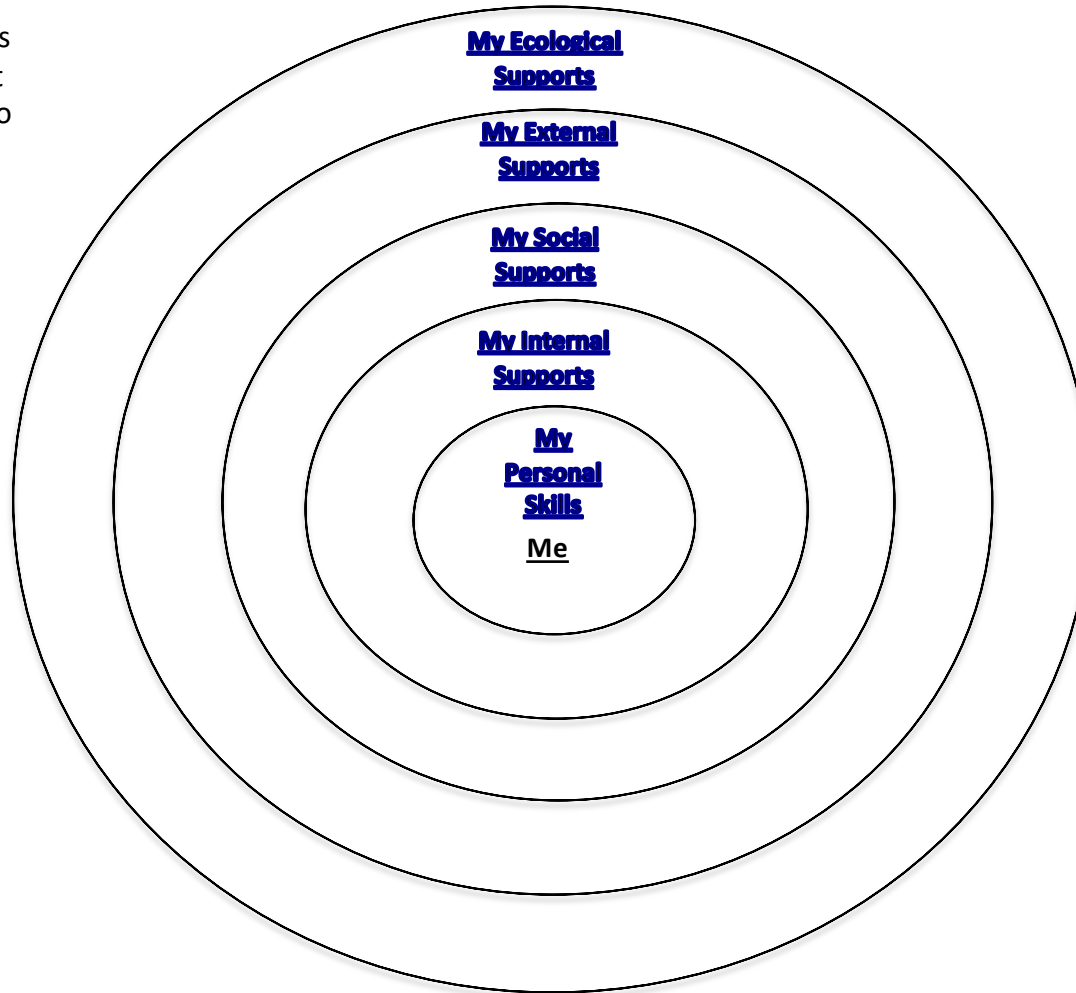
Images of experiences, places, role models that bring peace and calm

## Social Supports

Friends and family who provide unconditional emotional support or practical assistance

## External Supports

Physical places like a room in the house, garden, place in town, emergency kit, that bring peace and calm



## Ecological Supports

The sun's rays, air you breathe, water you drink

Does your residence have a:

- Yard
- Trees
- Garden
- House plants
- Pets

Does your community have:

- Green space
- Trees
- Walkways/trails
- Plants
- Wildlife
- Streams
- Watershed

How aware are you of these & other ecological systems and species?

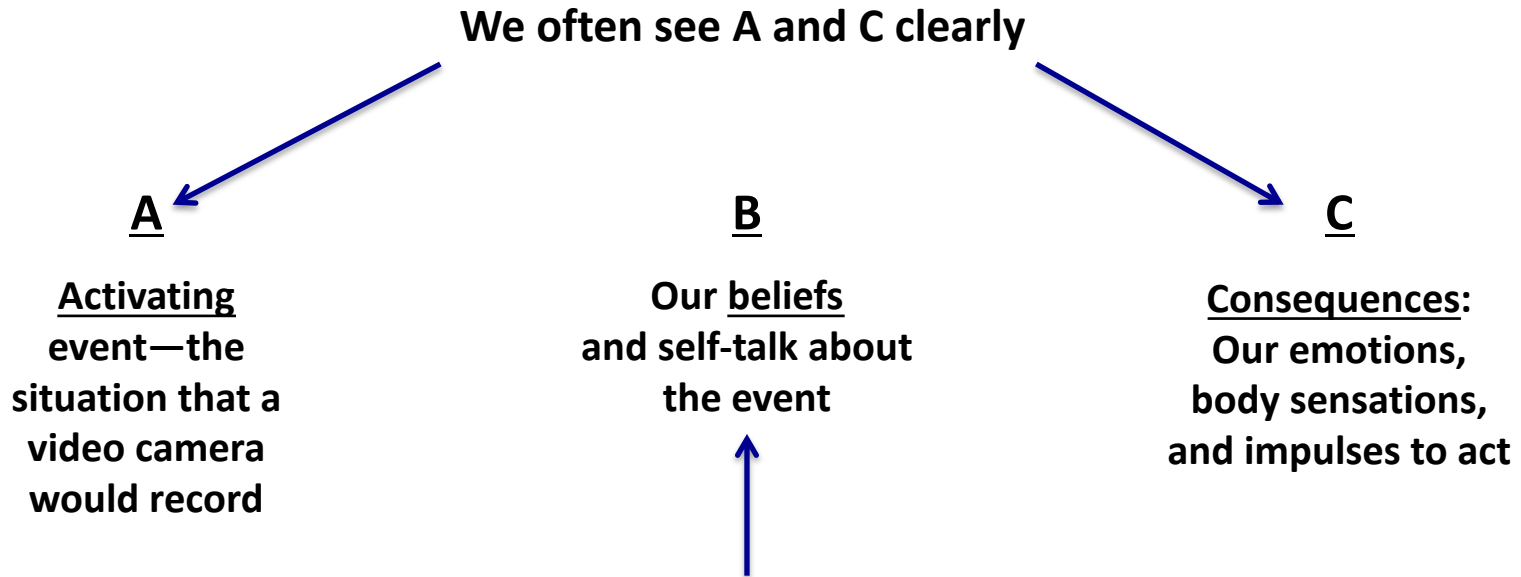
Can you find a way to connect with them?

# Still Another Helpful Cognitive Presencing Skill

Observe your reactions to & thoughts about the situation non-judgmentally

## The ABC Model of Observing Your Thoughts and Emotions

(G. Schiraldi)



### But We Are Often Not Aware of B: Our Beliefs and Automatic Self-Talk

We think the event caused our reaction, when it was our *interpretation of it* that did, which usually includes some true and many erroneous beliefs and stories.

# TEN COMMON COMMON "THINKING DISTORTIONS"

- 1. Fixated on Flaws**
- 2. Dismissing the Positive**
- 3. Assuming**
- 4. Labeling**
- 5. Over-generalizing**
- 6. All-Or-Nothing Thinking**
- 7. Catastrophizing**
- 8. "Should" and "ought" statements**
- 9. Personalizing**
- 10. Blaming**

**When Observing our Thoughts, Emotions, and Reactions**  
**Self-Compassion Is Essential!**

Use age and culturally appropriate  
methods to **Normalize** harmful reactions to thinking distortions

Help them realize “there is nothing wrong with them.”

## Help Everyone Develop Their Own “Presencing” Safety Plan

### I Will Watch Watch for These Signs That I am Stressed or Dysregulated

#### Examples

***Physical Signs:*** rapid breathing, heart beat, or pulse; head or stomach ache; muscle tension.

***Mental Signs:*** racing mind, anxiety, fear, excessive worry, sleep troubles.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

### When I See These Signs I Will Take These Actions

#### Examples

Practice tracking, grounding, controlled breathing, mindfulness of breath, thoughts & emotions, Circles of Support, ABC Model of Thinking Distortions, Self-Compassion

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



Presencing is  
*Necessary--But Insufficient*  
for the C-E-B Crisis---and Many Other Adversities

because it does not mean we will live a  
principled, vital, and meaningful life during adversities!

Remember that humans are not only

Pushed by psychobiological drives

**We Are Also**

**Pulled by a need for meaning and purpose!**



# **Purposing Goals**

*To Intensify The "Pull" of Purpose*

***Purposing* is about finding constructive meaning, direction and hope in life by learning from adversities and making values-based choices that enhance personal, social, economic and ecological wellbeing.**

**“Meaning makes a great many things endurable  
—perhaps everything.”**

**Psychiatrist Carl Jung**



# Help People Learn How to Honestly Appraise Their Circumstances

1. Describe a **distressing experience you recently had** and how you **reacted to it**.

- How did it affect your **body**?
- How did it affect your **mind**?
- How did it affect your **behavior**?

2. Describe how your reaction likely **effected** the people **involved** & those who **observed**

3. Describe how your reaction might have **affected the natural environment**.

4. If others were **involved** or **observed**, how would **they** have described the situation?

5. Can you describe the distressing situation **any differently now** depicting **all aspects**?

## Then Ask “What Can I Learn From the Situation”?

Thinking about adversity in different ways — reframing it — can help you find meaning in it rather than simply reacting to it.

Learning is an ornament in prosperity, a refuge in adversity, and a provision in old age.

Aristotle

Asking “What I can learn from the situation?”

is a very powerful way to reframe our thinking about distressing events!

Are any lessons you can learn from the experience you just described?

# Then clarify the *Values* you want to live by during adversities

## One Method:

Create a Vision of your Best Possible Self helps Clarify Your Values!

### Ask People to Answer the “Miracle Question”

Imagine that you go to sleep tonight and something magical happens: You are suddenly able to think and respond to distressing events in the ideal way you would like--the way that helps you to avoid harming yourself, others, or the natural environment, and allows you to live with dignity and pride.

When you wake up in the morning you find yourself in the same difficult situation as before:

- 1. How could you respond to the difficult situation now in the ideal?**
- 2. How could you bring that ideal response to fruition?**

# Another Method

## List the Values You Hold Dear during adversities

1. Go through the list and **identify the top 3 values** that would allow you to **be the person you want to be** and **live with dignity and purpose** in the **midst of adversity**.

Personal responsibility

Honesty

Fairness

Patience

Compassion

Simplicity

Protection of nature/climate

Generosity

Gratitude

Independence

Family

Community

Professional achievement

God

Reverence for human life

Honor

Loyalty

Social justice

Respect for authority

Humility

Self-sufficiency

Kindness

Personal safety

Rank and power

Self-awareness

Diligence

Public recognition

Love

Social equity

Integrity

Charity

Mercy

Respect for others

Status

Brotherhood

Selflessness

Wealth

Forgiveness

Open mindedness

Success

Insert other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Look back at the distressing event you described and consider **what might have changed** if you focused on **living out your core values** during that experience?

## Spirituality is a Very Important Guiding Value for Many People

Many people find meaning, strength, and purpose in adversity by tapping into their spiritual beliefs and values.



If appropriate, ask people how they might have responded to the distressing situation if they had lived in accordance with their spiritual values.

## The TR Cycle and Purposing Requires Helping People Overcome Hopelessness



Hopelessness is a powerful emotion that can adversely affect the way one perceives the self, others, current conditions, and the world.

Hopelessness can lead people to harm themselves, others, and the natural environment.

# Harvesting Hope

for new possibilities allows you to

Overcome despair and helplessness

by

realizing that how you respond is up to you!



**Research has found that Hope emerges most readily  
when three closely related factors are present:**

1. People have a vision of a place they want to arrive at or condition they want to achieve
2. A sense of the initial steps they can take and an overall approach to move toward their vision.
3. A commitment to move toward that vision even when obstacles arise.

# Harvesting Hope for new possibilities

Identify a recent time when you did something helpful for another person— or nature without a sense of obligation or expected payoff.

How did you feel afterwards?

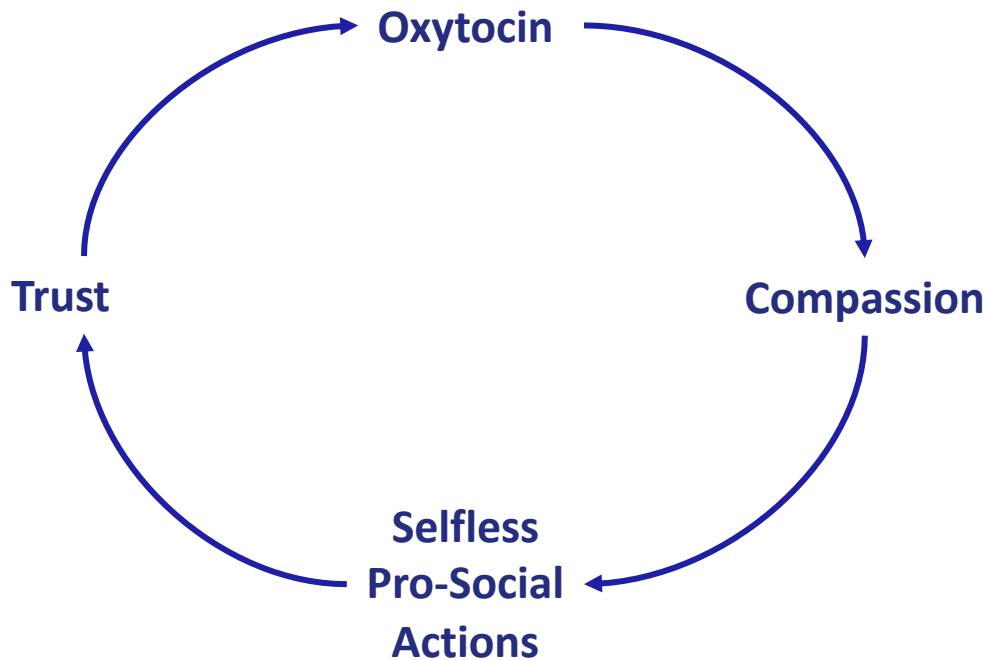


When we do good things for others—or help the world be a better place—  
(engage in pro-social behaviors)

We enhance our Self-Esteem

# The Oxytocin Virtuous Cycle

Selfless pro-social actions feel good ... which triggers the release of oxytocin... which generates more compassion ... which drives more selfless behaviors ... which inspires more trust... which causes the release of more oxytocin ... producing a virtuous cycle!



## Engaging in Pro-Social Activities

- Is not just about being nice or moralism.
- It is an expanded notion of self-interest...
- Helping others and the environment will also benefit each of us.
- This can give us hope for the future!

# Help Everyone Develop Their Own “Purposing” Action Plan

<p><b>My strengths, interests, and passions:</b></p> <p><b>The core values I want to live by:</b></p> <p><b>Actions to enhance my personal wellbeing:</b></p> <p><b>Actions I will take to enhance the wellbeing of others (and thus help myself):</b></p>				
<b>Immediate Actions (within 30 days) to Achieve My Goals</b>	<b>* Barriers I Will Experience</b>	<b>Strategies For Barriers</b>	<b># Benefits of Action</b>	<b>Date(s) Done</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				
<b>Mid-Term Actions (within 3 Months) To Achieve My Goals</b>	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Strategies for Barriers</b>	<b>Benefits of Action</b>	<b>Date(s) Done</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				

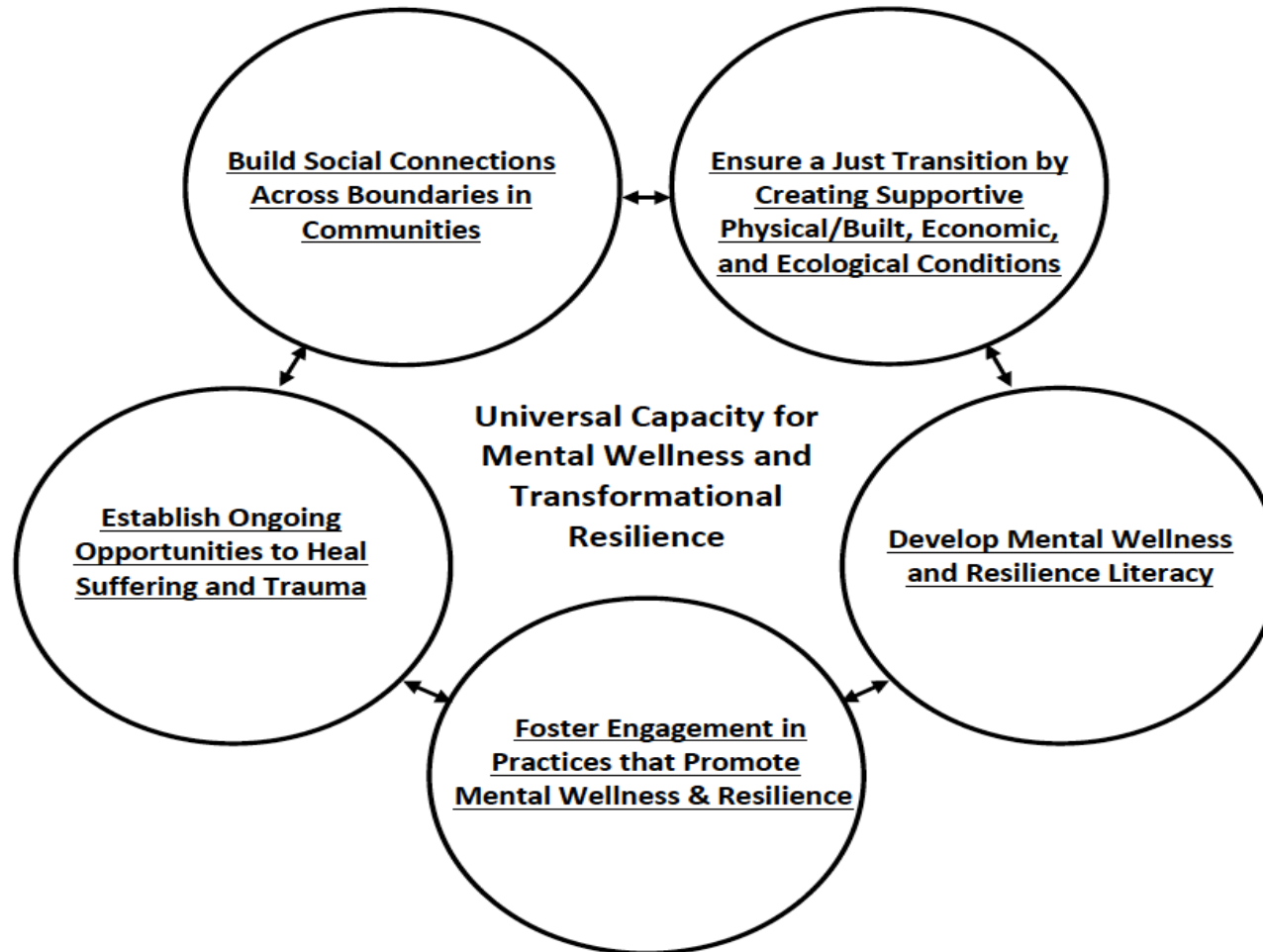
**\* Barriers include internal challenges as well as external barriers.  
# Includes personal benefits and benefits for future generations.**



## Imagine the Benefits of Your TRCN Assisting Everyone:

- In age and culturally appropriate ways, understand the basics of the Transformational Resilience Cycle.
- Become Trauma-Informed and use their own Presencing skills to calm their body, mind, emotions, and behaviors—and help others do so as well—during adversities.
- Learn how to use Purposing skills to use adversities as transformational catalysts to find new meaning, direction, and hope that increases individual and collective wellbeing as a way to increase their own sense of wellbeing.

# All Five Foundational Protective Factors of Building Transformational Resilience Should Incorporate the TR Cycle and Presencing and Purposing!





## Breakout Rooms

- Share what you have gained from today's session
- Discuss how you might be able implement similar approaches in your neighborhood or community

Post key issues and questions in chat

Discussion

## Summary

- Building social connections and mutual aid networks in communities is the most important Protective Factor TRCNs should focus their public health strategies on to build population-level wellness and transformational resilience.
- Building connections should be a major focus of the 2<sup>nd</sup> foundational Protective Factor: make a Just Transition by engaging residents in enhancing safe, health, and just zero-emission, climate-resilient physical/built, economic & ecological conditions
- Building Universal Literacy about mental wellness and transformational resilience should also be a core focus when making a Just Transition and building social connections.



## Remember next Tuesday's April 22 Final CoP "Educational Session"

It will focus on how TRCNs can address the last two foundational protective factors

## And the 2nd CoP "Skills Training Open Session" on Thursday April 24

It will focus on skills chosen by you!

Please complete this short survey so we know what to focus on:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdnn\\_yCDBqV-rIJAw-AZ9509l6chtMqJfLZkrOq9oqXTrQh2g/viewform?usp=dialog](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdnn_yCDBqV-rIJAw-AZ9509l6chtMqJfLZkrOq9oqXTrQh2g/viewform?usp=dialog)

If you want to apply to form a TRCN go to: <https://www.ctipp.org/presson/trcn>

**Always Remember the Key Message**

**“Community is Medicine”**

Throughout human history our ability to band together and cooperate has always been key to surviving, adapting, and remaining healthy and resilient during crisis, and solving complex problems!



**By organizing TRCNs in communities we can do this again now for the C-E-B crisis—and many other adversities!**