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Principles & Practices of Trauma-Informed Evaluation: Summary Chart

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Principles & Practices of Trauma-Informed Evaluation

**SAFETY**
- Respect preferred modes of contact (e.g., phone only, no phone, etc.)
- Consider location of data collection: privacy, visibility, distractions; but also places that will feel safe, comfortable, culturally appropriate
- Consider staffing (e.g., avoid male interviewer for female DV survivors)
- Avoid any value-based language in instruments, questions (e.g., implying that there is a good or "right" response)
- Help participants understand that you’re not judging them for what they say: neutral-positive default
- Have resources for further help/support available. Share with participants: as needed, or for all, depending on project
- Have written emergency protocol. Encourage professional help, if in distress

**EMPOWERMENT, VOICE, AND CHOICE**
- Check in with participants during data collection to make sure they still agree to participate
- Allow clients to skip a question/pause/stop, or choose to continue. Remind them that they can be in control of pacing
- Practice active listening
- Allow participants to choose location/timing, as possible
- Respect that participants are "the experts of their own experiences." Thank them for sharing
- Normalize experiences and choices (e.g., "Yes, that response makes sense," "I hear that a lot," etc.)
- Acknowledge strengths, resiliencies as possible

**TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSPARENCY**
- Practice informed consent
- Confirm confidentiality or anonymity, note any potential risks to participants
- Explain process, next steps
- Acknowledge research goals, agenda (e.g., why you’re asking for participation, what you’ll do with info shared: support service organization? inform policymakers? publication?)
- Don’t ask for information you don’t really need
- Acknowledge a lack of lived experience: show humility
- When introducing yourself: be a real, relatable person, not just a professional robot
- Follow through on sharing final reports/results, if requested, so people can see what their input went toward

**COLLABORATION AND MUTUALITY**
- Where possible, include staff with lived experiences, from community on projects
- Create advisory board (AB), including subsample of client population
- Involve AB in study/protocol design, as actually feasible (where not prescribed); incorporate feedback
- Potentially identify themes within focus group data collection session itself, then ask group if your interpretation is correct: do these key ideas match up to what you’ve said today?
- Present interim findings to AB; involve in interpretation

**EQUITY & CULTURAL HUMILITY**
- Compensate people for their time, input. Consider kind of compensation that would be most accessible (digital vs physical gift cards; particular stores)
- Actively work to encourage participation from underserved, underrepresented groups (non-English speakers, lower reading level, individuals with disabilities, lower SES, lower technology access, not White), EVEN if it requires different strategies, more time, resources
- Translate materials, hire translators for focus groups
- Offer to administer surveys over phone (instead of only written)
- Respect cultural norms (e.g., turn-taking in focus groups)
- Allow non-video/audio-only Zoom participation, if appropriate
- Respect different levels of participation (e.g., English Language Learners might be limited in what they can contribute, but input is still valuable)