



THE FRAMEWORK

This resource utilises a framework that includes the principles of safety, calming, self and collective efficacy, connectedness, and hope. These principles are empirically supported to guide and inform effective intervention for survivors of mass trauma (e.g., natural disasters such as bushfire) and were used by the Victorian Government, Department of Health and Human Services to inform community recovery in the wake of the Black Saturday fires.

THE PRINCIPLES

The principles below were used to inform the development this resource and to ensure that any suggestions or recommendations herein have been considered from a trauma-sensitive perspective. In addition to these principles, this guide integrates safety, transparency, support, collaboration, empowerment and cultural considerations to support facilitators in cultivating a trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to screening the film, *Forged from Fire*.

Sense of Safety – When people experience mass trauma, their beliefs about the world around them often change (e.g., ‘the world is a dangerous place’), and they may begin to experience intense psychological and physical responses to otherwise harmless stimuli. This principle suggests that interrupting post-traumatic links between harmless stimuli and the traumatic event is key to recovery.

Promotion of Calming – Experiencing increased emotions following exposure to mass trauma is a normal and adaptive response. However, for some, the experience of heightened arousal can lead to agitation and anxiety and, ultimately, interfere with daily functioning. This principle suggests that teaching calming techniques (e.g., grounding, deep breathing, meditation) and problem-solving, combined with ‘normalisation’ of stress reactions, can be very helpful.

Promotion of a Sense of Self-Efficacy and Collective Efficacy – Self and collective efficacy is related to the belief a person has in the competency, ability to cope, and control over positive outcomes of one’s self and one’s community. Involving people in decision making, providing resources, teaching goal setting and behavioural skills, and reminding people of their efficacy can be useful strategies to increase self and collective efficacy among survivors of mass trauma.

Promotion of Connectedness – Social connectedness is linked to positive outcomes for survivors of mass trauma. Supporting individuals and communities to access resources that increase or maintain social support is critical for recovery.

Instilling Hope – Retaining a reasonable degree of optimism for the future is associated with more favourable outcomes for survivors of mass trauma. Teaching people to identify and amplify their strengths, as well as normalising their response to trauma and addressing their thoughts related to catastrophising, are associated with instilling hope in survivors of mass trauma.