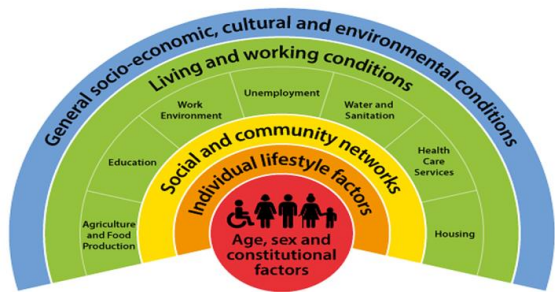# "Vicarious Trauma? Burnout? Nah, it's just every day in here…"

Trauma and vicarious trauma round table discussion
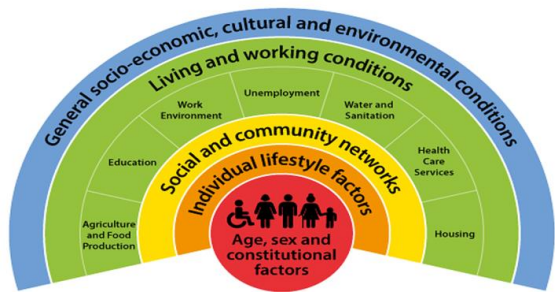Community Link Workers Conference
May 2025
Fiona Douglas
NHS Lanarkshire

Trauma is common

We won't talk about traumatic experiences in detail today and you **will not** be asked to share any personal experiences.

We want you to feel safe and we will consider sources self care and support in this session.
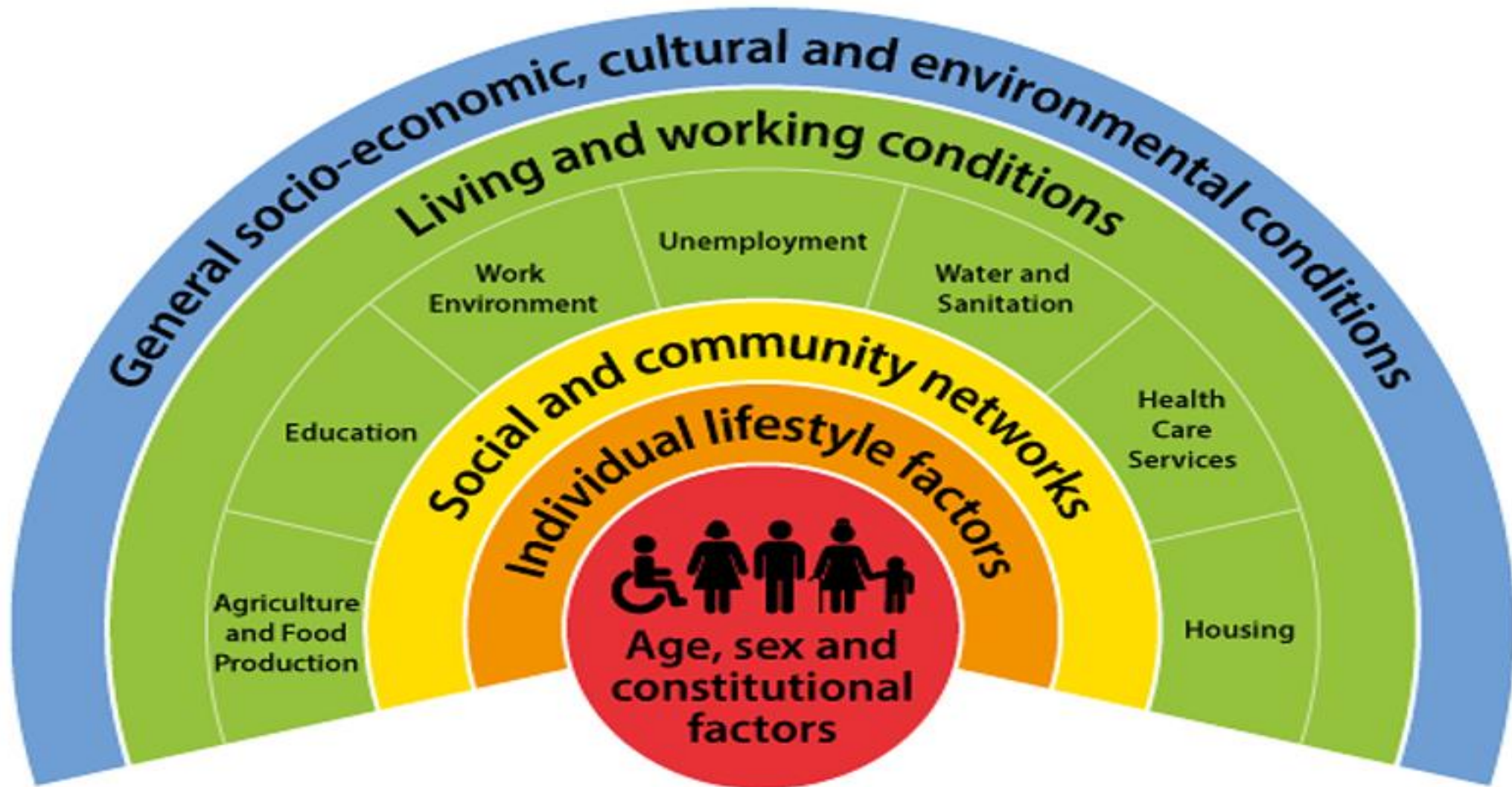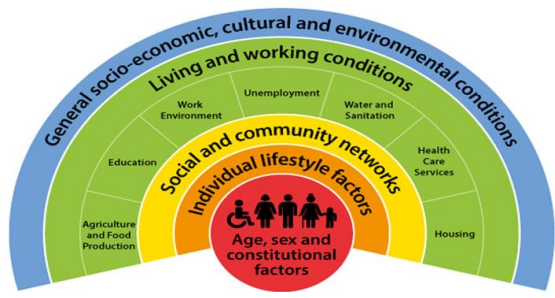
Safety. Safety. Safety.
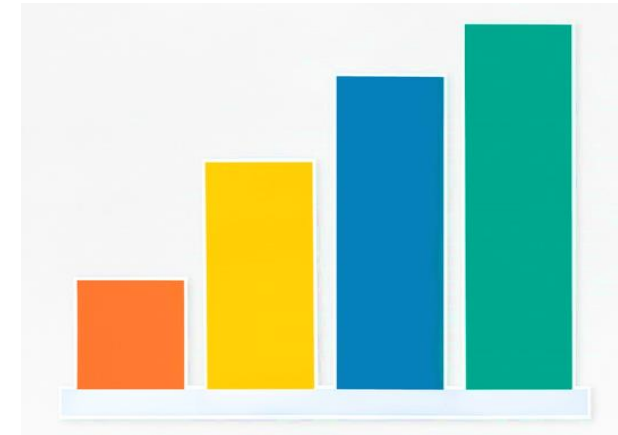
What do we mean by trauma?

'An event or a series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening'
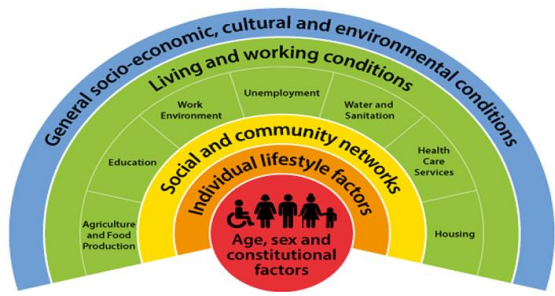
Dahlgren and Whitehead 1991
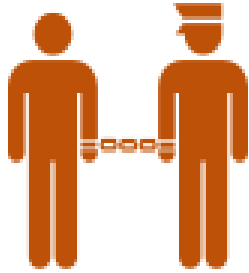## Rainbow Model of the Social Determinants of Health

How prevalent is experience of trauma with the people you support?

Higher prevalence

People with a history of trauma are over represented in physical health, mental health and substance misuse services and criminal justice settings.
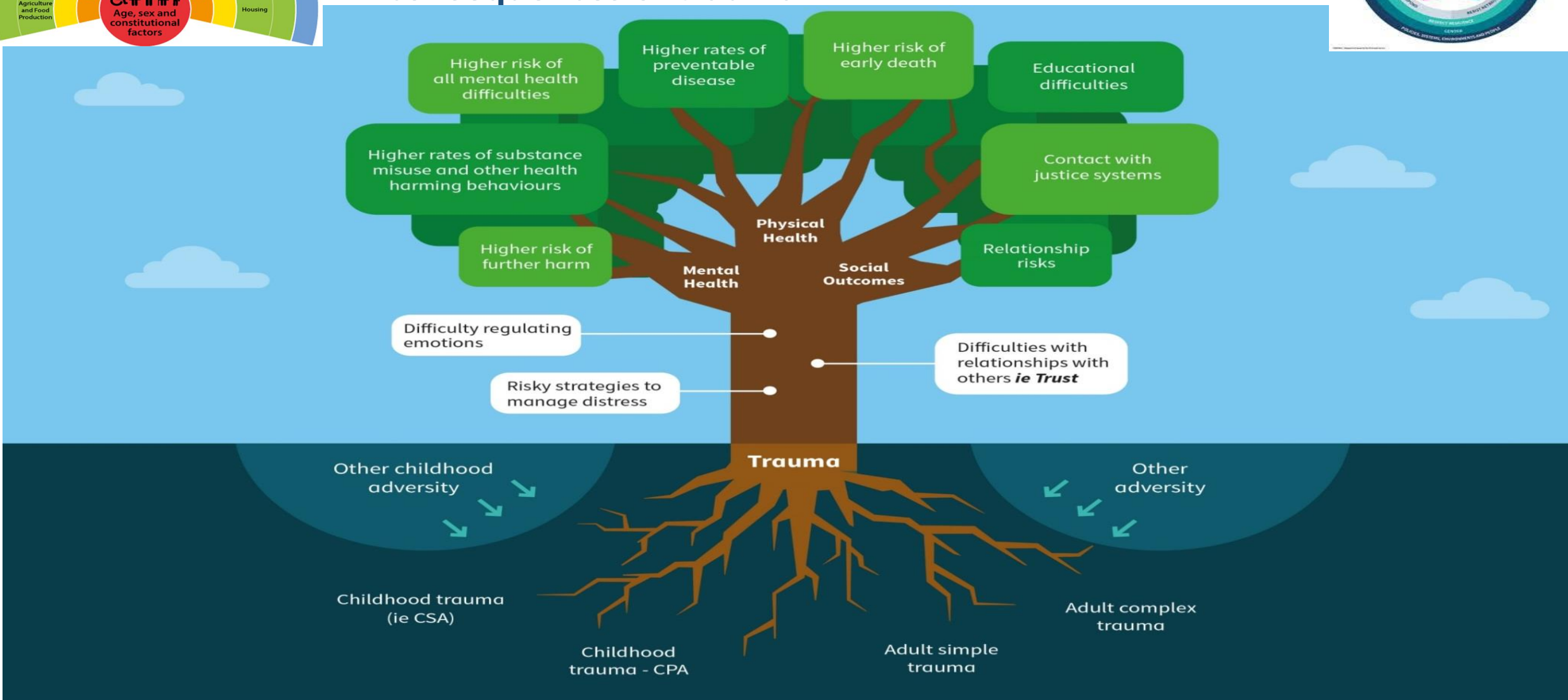
Dr. Nadine Burke Harris Ted Talk -
https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_chi
ldhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime#t-
11373

Some of the potential consequences consequences of trauma
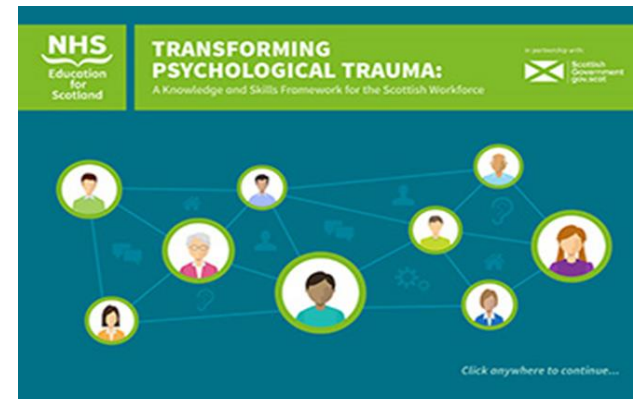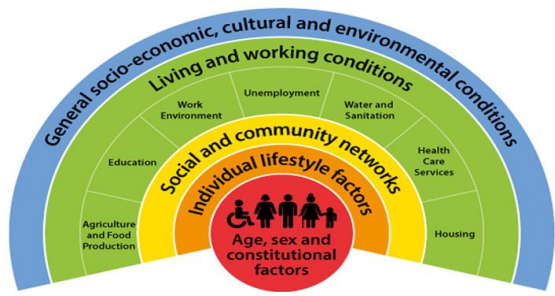
> " Our vision is *to achieve a trauma-informed and responsive nation and workforce, one that is capable of recognising where people are affected by trauma and adversity, that is able to respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery, and that can address inequalities and improve life chances"*
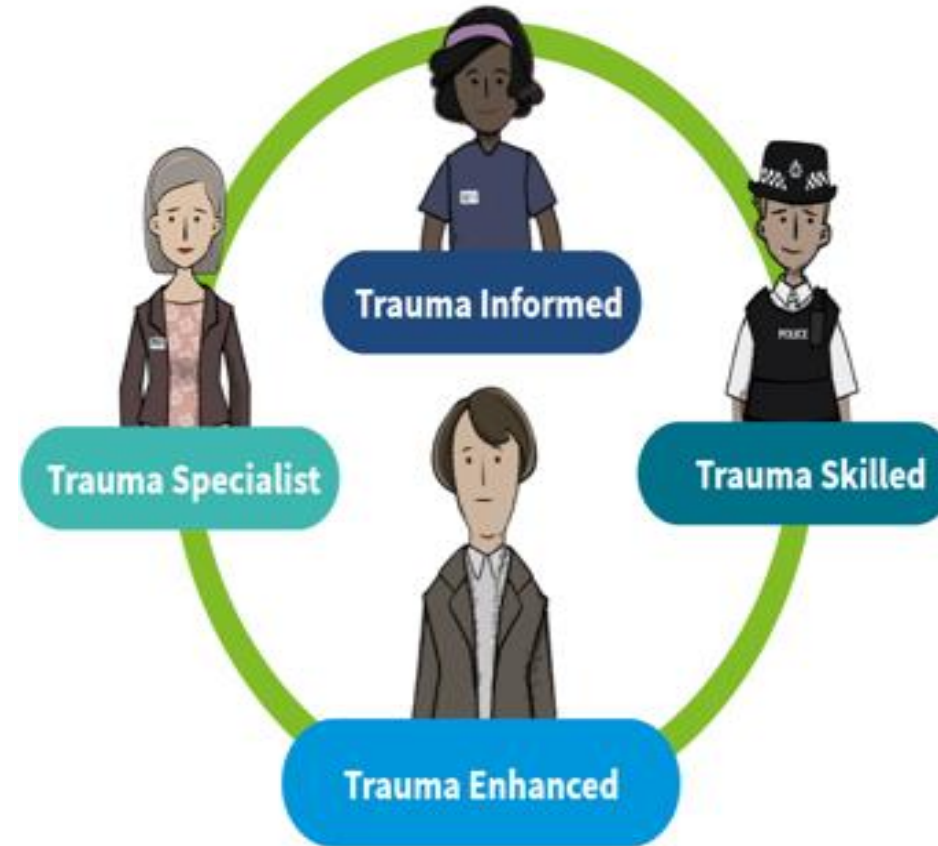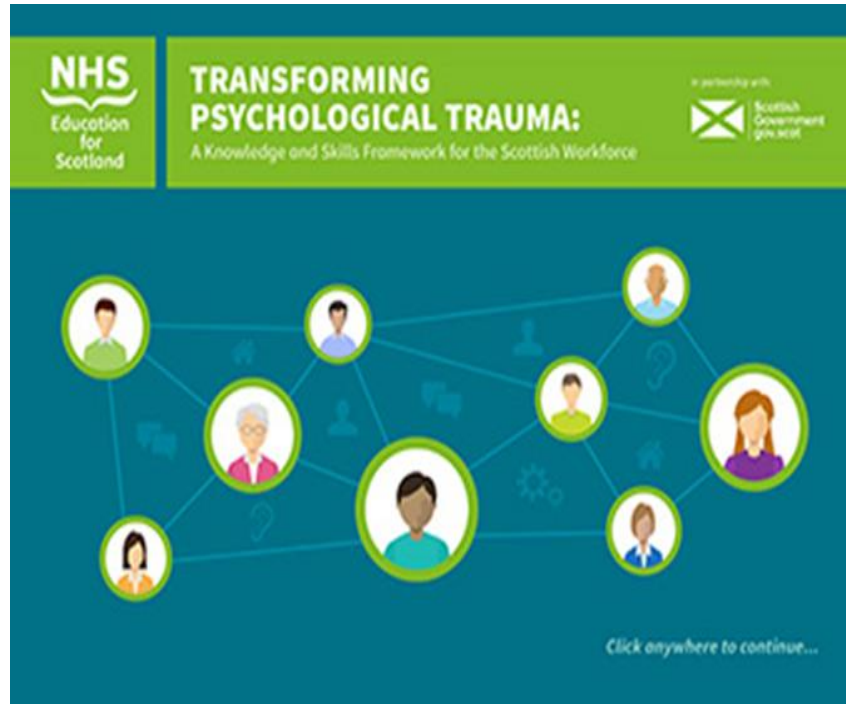
Transforming Psychological Trauma: A Knowledge and Skills Framework for the Scottish Workforce
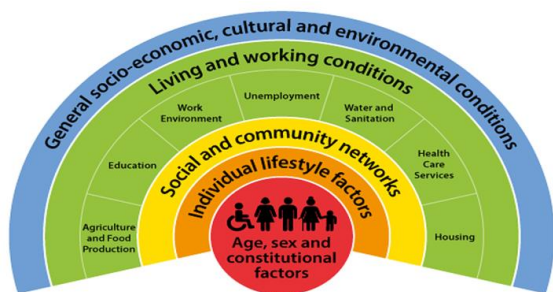https://www.traumatransformation.scot/implementation/

In practice...

https://www.traumatransformation.scot/

TRAUMA-INFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Autonomy
The need to have control over one's work life, and to be able to act consistently with one's values

- Authority, empowerment and influence
  Influence over decisions about how care is structured and delivered, ways of working and organisational culture

- Justice and fairness
  Equity, psychological safety, positive diversity and universal inclusion

- Work conditions and working schedules
  Resources, time and a sense of the right and necessity to properly rest, and to work safely, flexibly and effectively

Belonging
The need to be connected to, cared for by, and caring of colleagues, and to feel valued, respected and supported

- Teamworking
  Effectively functioning teams with role clarity and shared objectives, one of which is team member wellbeing

- Culture and leadership
  Nurturing cultures and compassionate leadership enabling high-quality, continually improving and compassionate care and staff support

Contribution
The need to experience effectiveness in work and deliver valued outcomes

- Workload
  Work demand levels that enable the sustainable leadership and delivery of safe, compassionate care

- Management and supervision
  The support, professional reflection, mentorship and supervision to enable staff to thrive in their work

- Education, learning and development
  Flexible, high-quality development opportunities that promote continuing growth and development for all
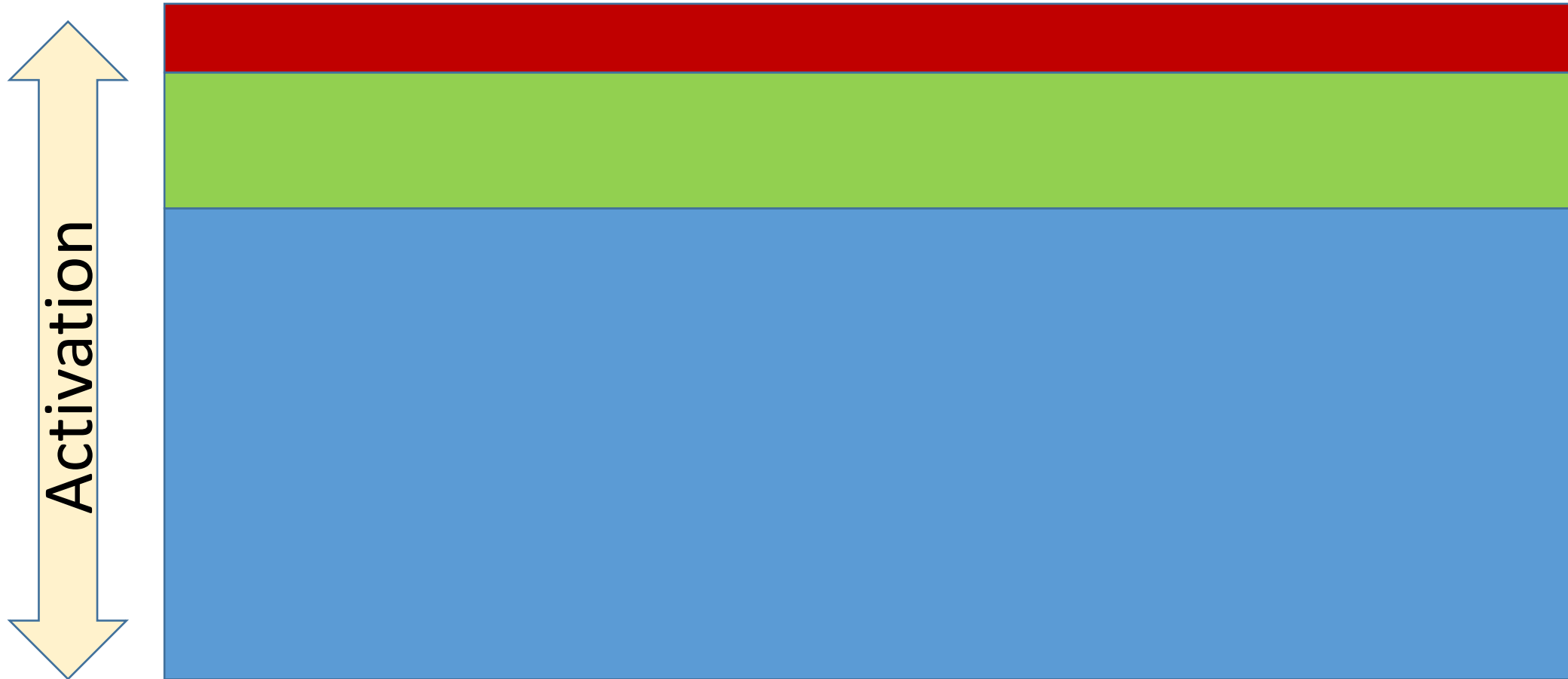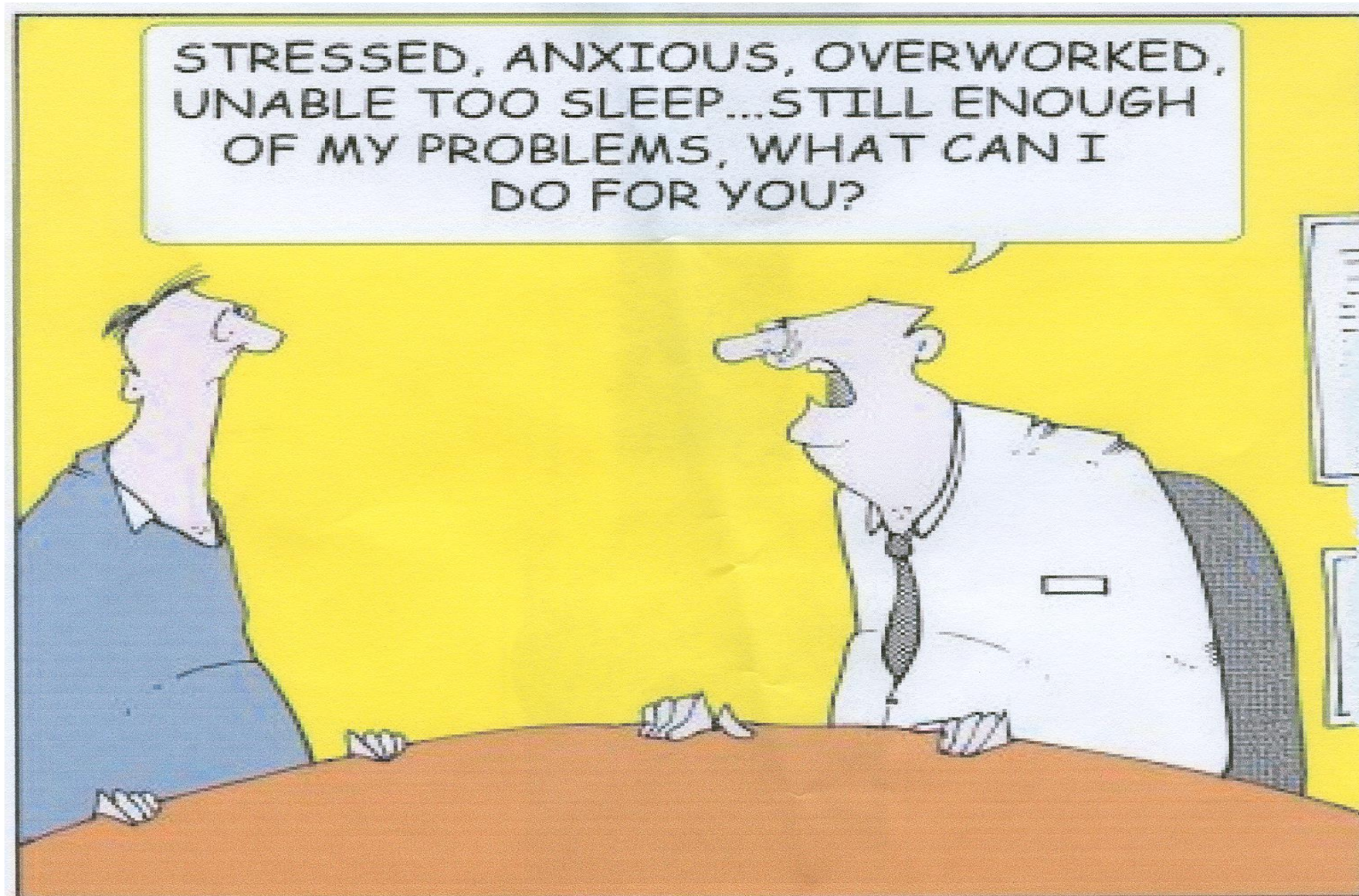
Window of Tolerance
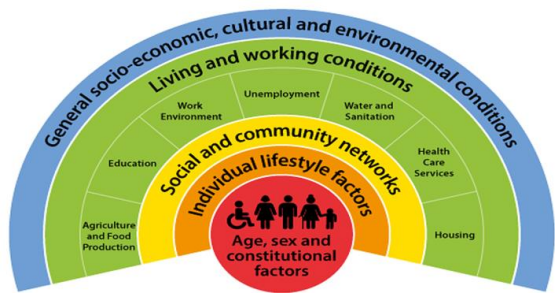
Narrowing Window of Tolerance

Narrowing Window of Tolerance

'*Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma*' Carvill and Edelson, Victim Services, YG Justice
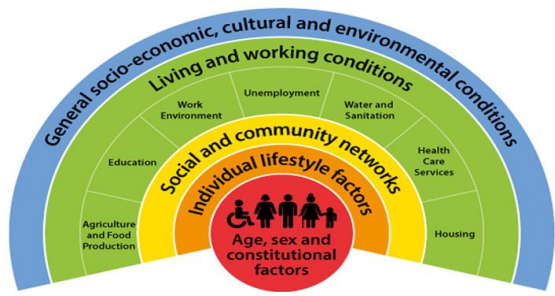
Water off a duck's back?

Vicarious Trauma
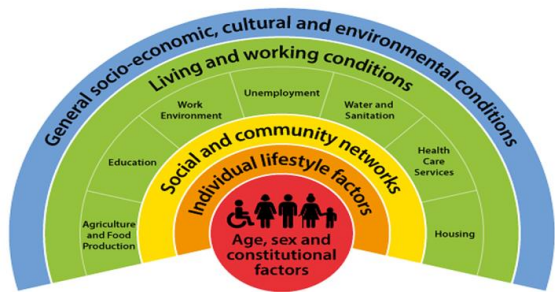
Compassion Fatigue

Burnout

Moral Distress/Injury

Impact of trauma on…us

What aspects of your role could contribute to burnout/vicarious trauma?

In what ways do you and your colleagues cope with the role that you have?

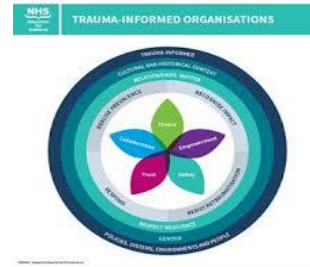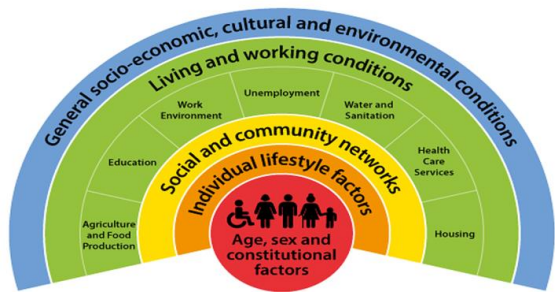Anything you could do more of? Less of? Try something new?

ABC of Self-Care

Pearlman talks about the ABC of Self-Care

- A   Awareness

- B   Balance

- C   Connection

…What does that mean to you personally/professionally?

'Transforming Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma'
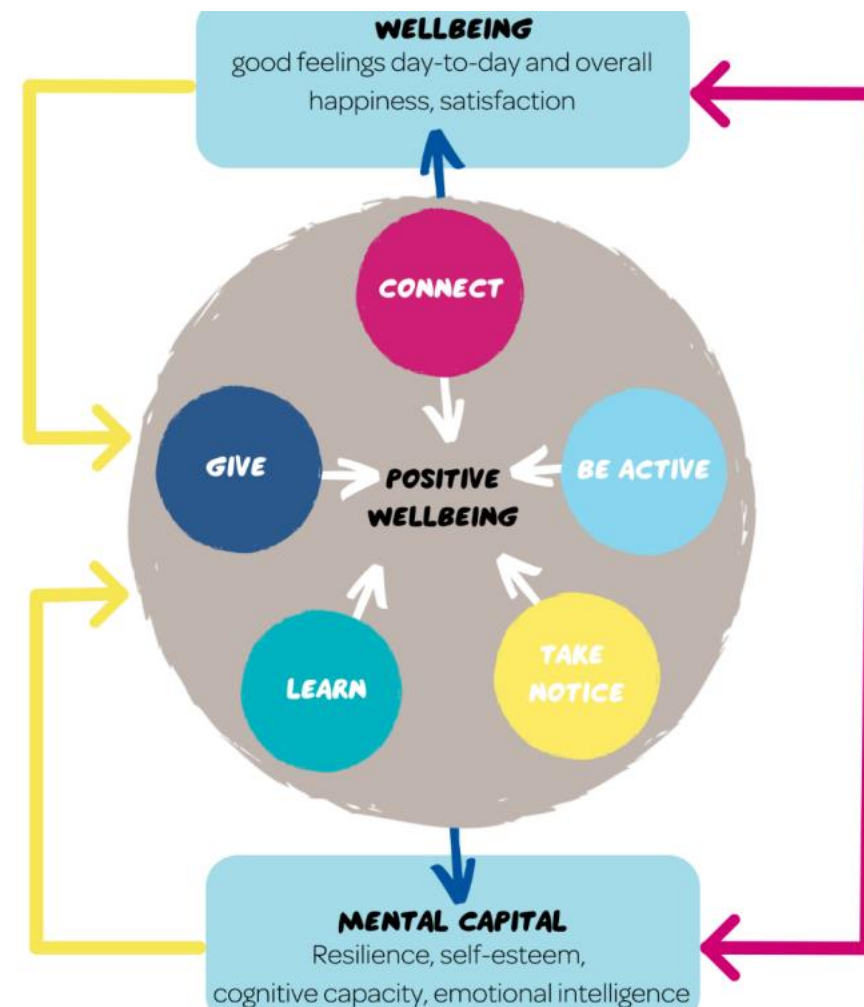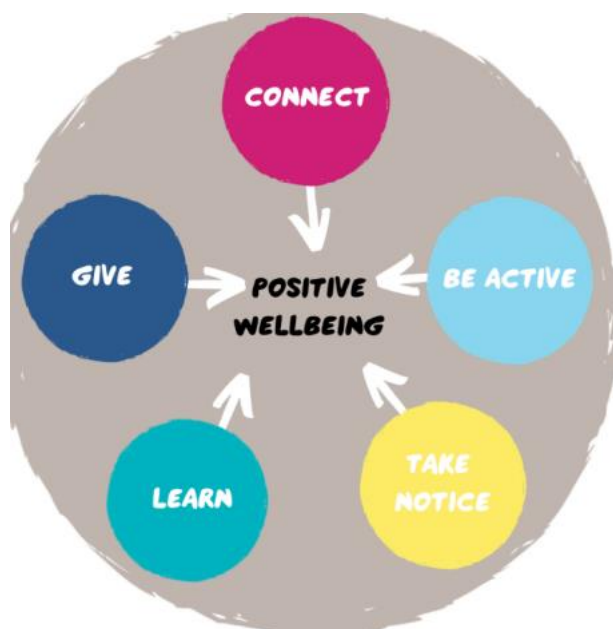Carvill and Edelson, Victim Services, YG Justice

Wake-up Call

If you don't take time to make changes now...
be prepared to take time for illness later.

If we have been prevented from saying no, our bodies may end up saying no for us.
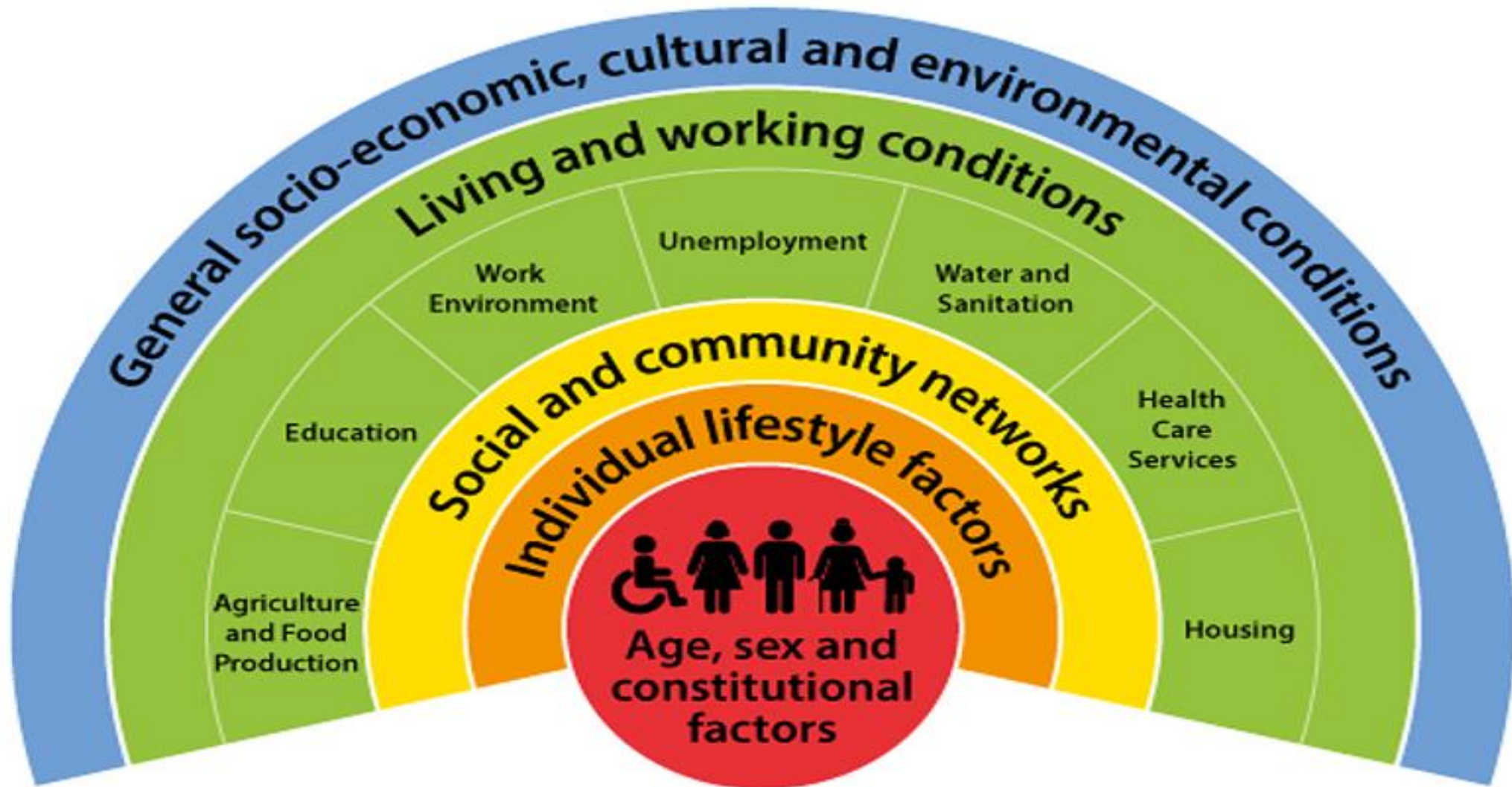
Dr Gabor Mate, When the Body Says No, 2003

5 Ways to Wellbeing

Dahlgren and Whitehead 1991
Rainbow Model of the Social Determinants of Health

Going Home Checklist

- ✅ Take a moment to think about your day.

- ✅ Acknowledge one thing that was difficult during your work day – Let it go!

- ✅ Consider three things that went well.

- ✅ Check on your colleagues before you leave – Are they ok?

- ✅ Are you ok? We are here to support you.

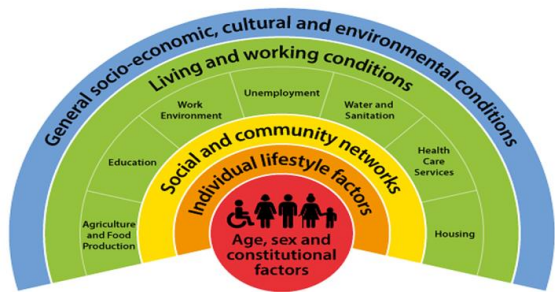- ✅ Now switch your attention to home – Rest and recharge.

National Resources

https://www.traumatransformation.scot/

https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/

A Roadmap for Creating Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change
Guidance for Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland

https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/nes-current/roadmap-for-creating-trauma-informed-and-responsive-change/

National Wellbeing Hub

https://wellbeinghub.scot/

Sources of Support

- Mental Health and Money Advice https://www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org/en/

- Breathing Space https://breathingspace.scot/

- Scottish Women's Aid https://womensaid.scot/
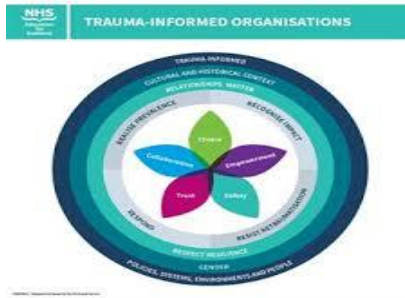
- Men's Advice Line https://www.respect.uk.net/pages/men-s-advice-line

- Rape Crisis Scotland https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/

- National wellbeing hub https://wellbeinghub.scot/

- Samaritans https://www.samaritans.org/?nation=scotland

Further wellbeing resources...

- **Understanding your own Trauma - Solihull Approach (Please note the 'access code' for this package is 'TARTAN'). This link will open in a new window.**

- **Taking care of myself resources - NES. This link will open in a new window.**

- **Protecting the psychological wellbeing of staff for Managers and Team Leaders. This link will open in a new window.**

- **Psychological First Aid emodule. This link will open in a new window**

- **.Supporting a mentally healthy workplace**

https://www.traumatransformation.scot/
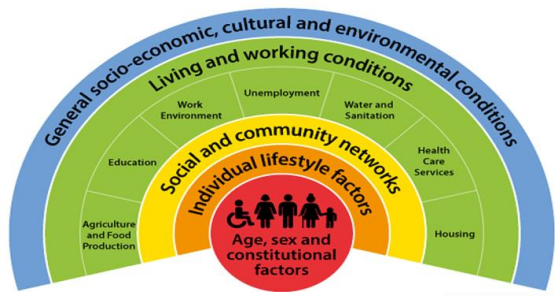
"If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete"

Jack Kornfield