



# Collier's Journey to Trauma Informed Care Strategies for Eliminating Points and Levels: Lesson Learned

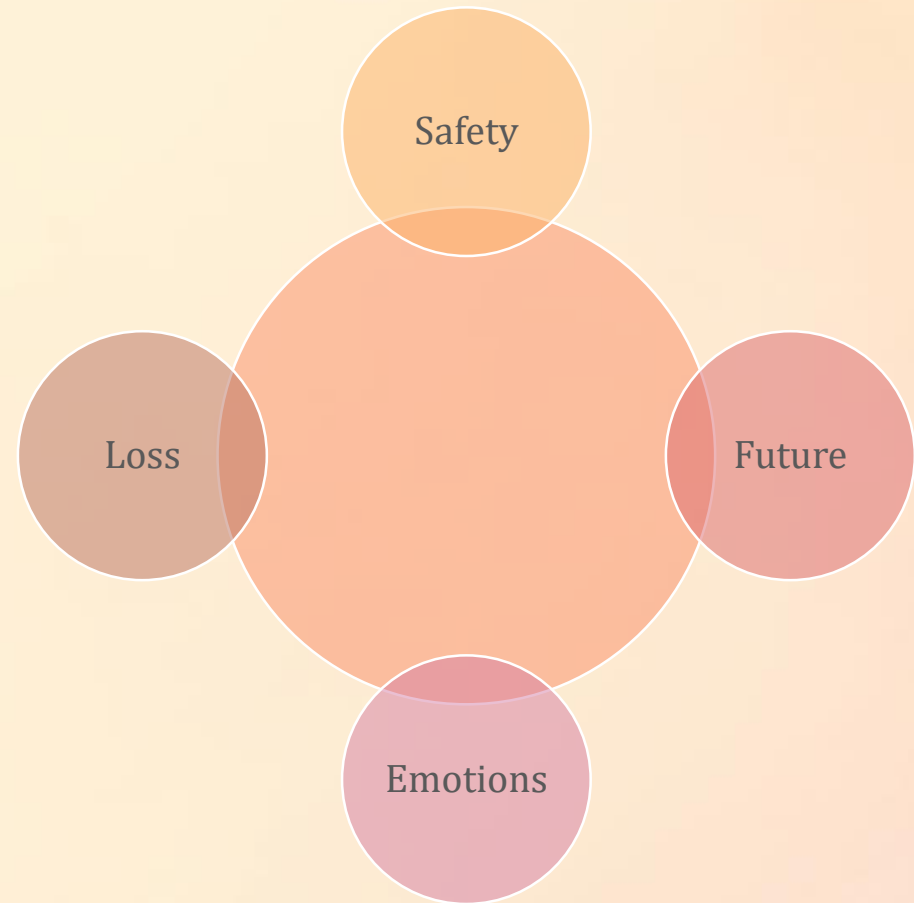
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# What was happening???

- We started our formal journey in February 2012. Residential programs were experiencing a **collective disturbance** where staff and youth were having difficulty practicing open communication, emotional intelligence and feeling safe with one another.
- Staff felt “hopeless” when the increasing needs/behaviors of the clients were increasing and had used the old ways of action/consequence as a means to manage behavior. EXCEPT behavior in fact was not changing, it was increasing. This led to burn out from the staff and frustration from the youth and families – **Our Parallel Process**.

# So how do we become trauma-informed?

- Through research of several models, Collier chose The Sanctuary Model® as our framework. This evidence based model is supported by The California Clearing House and The National Traumatic Stress Network. While this is not the only model or theory we use, this was our first step to becoming trauma informed.



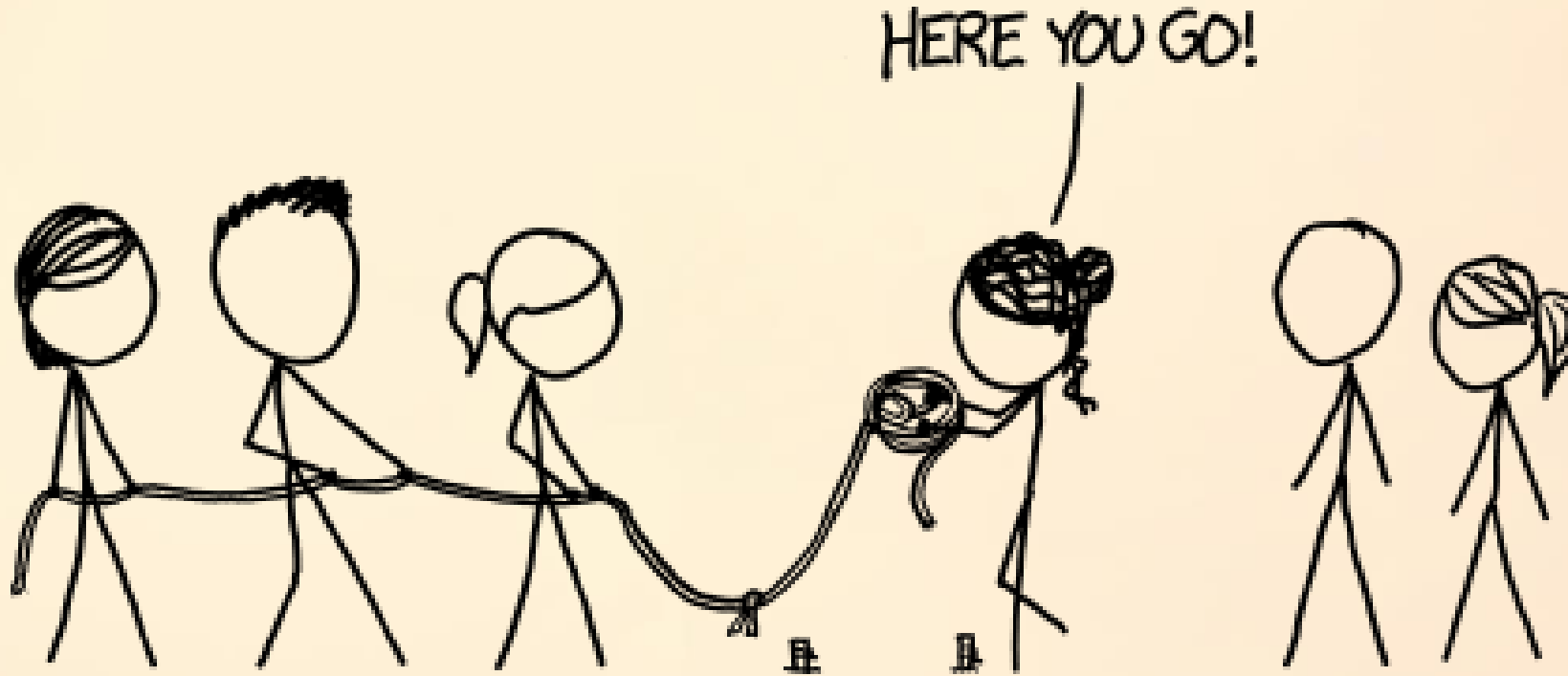
# The Shift

- Sanctuary® took 5 years to fully implement. What does that mean? It is not just about learning, its about creating a trauma informed culture.
- The major component is the shift in our language and primary question from *“What is wrong wrong with you”* to *“What has happened to you,”* which has made a very positive impact. It’s about understanding what is going on and engaging in conversation that is important. It’s not about “controlling” the behavior or the situation through consequences. We no longer “ground” or sanction youth for acting out behavior – although we will limit their ability to be out in the community independently when there are safety concerns and we have openly discussed our concern with the youth.

## ***IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE YOUTH, IT IS ABOUT THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION***

- Committing to Sanctuary® has meant committing to change, organizational, cultural and personal change. It took time to shift our thinking and practice, to learn new concepts and ways of relating to challenging and unpleasant behaviors. It continues to be easier to focus on the youth than to look at ourselves and ask – what can we be doing differently – or what are we doing that is not helpful. This takes courage and humility. It has meant becoming vulnerable, as our youth are vulnerable.

What would happen if we didn't let go?  
What would happen if we did?




# Letting go....

## What we think is true.....

- Letting go of what we thought was “control”
- Not being able to “ground”
- Feeling like children were able to “get away with anything”
- Feeling “disrespected”
- Youth “caught an attitude”

## What is really true!

- Staff have the ability to help the youth manage their emotions. Youth have the ability to understand the natural consequences of real life situations.
- Staff understand the neurological response of trauma. Fight, Flight, Freeze
- Staff, youth and families understand traumatic reenactment. We help youth to label their true emotions.
- Youth are hurt and feel vulnerable. Youth and staff practice emotional intelligence to find out what is happening behind the behavior.



*What do our clients see as triggering events/situations?*

- \* Restraints
- \* Watching someone get restrained.
- \* Making fun of residents with each other and with other residents.
- \* Restricting phone calls to family members.
- \* Asking the same question over and over.
- \* Absence of caring.
- \* Staff allowing violence to occur.
- \* Walking into a room without knocking.
- \* Yelling one's name across a room.
- \* Taking things without permission.
- \* Talking with your hands.
- \* Using verbally aggressive language.
- \* Staff/residents being passive aggressive.
- \* Physical boundaries.
- \* Taking food off one's plate/refusal to provide food.





Remember: Everyone in the classroom has a story that leads to misbehavior or defiance. 9 times out of 10, the story behind the misbehavior won't make you angry. It will break your heart. - Annette Breaux

- Starting in the beginning of 2019 Collier's Residential Programs slowly began to bring the youth together to eliminate the level system.
- 2 month project beginning with youth recreating the handbook and developing a youth mission statement



## Introducing NHA

Moving away from point and levels

*"Collier gets me in my feels." SF, Age 18*

Our youth, today, are the ***sound of change***. The mission of Collier Home is based on the philosophy of deep respect for the inherent worth of each individual, of regard for the environment and belief in the capacity for personal change. Collier commits itself to form relationships with people so that each person may experience a sense of belonging, dignity, hope and ***empowerment***.

*Our sound of change is our story, our feelings, our life and our future. Make the most of it."*

*SN, age 14*

# Youth Empowerment

When our voices are heard  
we feel

Safe

Respected

Trusting

Love

Empathy

Recover

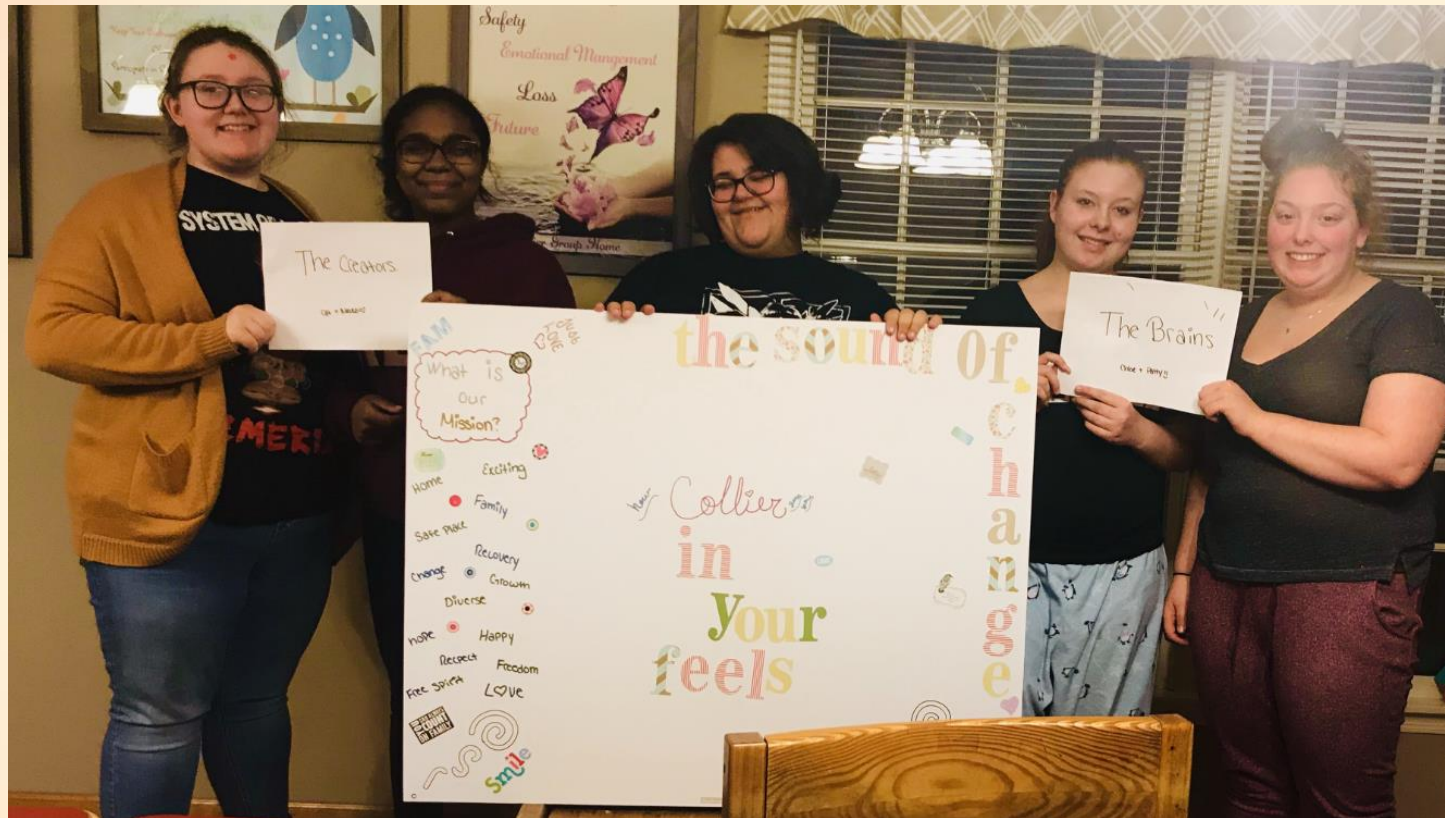
Happy

Freedom

COURAGE!

In control of my life PERIOTT

Written by: our lovely youth



## Sensory Zen Dens

- Youth were able to create “Zen Dens,” in their rooms reflective of their self-care plans. Youth engaged in a group creating a vision board to put in their room as visual empowerment and representation of each individual



- Youth engage in weekly group counseling with house social worker, Annmarie DeRosa, where the youth discuss triggers, boundaries and what's happening in the home in order for all to be more conscious and aware of our surroundings. Youth came up with examples of boundaries and triggers that are displayed in a creative way in the Youth Rec Room



- Generational and Cultural upbringings come into play when we are trying to help our youth conform and follow the norms...ITS WHAT WE KNOW
- IT IS A PROCESS
- It's a shift from power struggles to allowing natural consequences to come into play..
- It's about staying consistent with the norms and expectations
- Its empowering and giving all your energy to the things our youth are doing right

## SO WHATS THE CONSEQUENCE?!

The question of the hour

## Growth & Change Youth Sheet

### Youth Contract

As we move towards the new school year we are excited for everyone to start fresh and REGROUP!

Some of the social responsibilities in the house are the following

#### Chromies and Phones

**Phones/chrome books will be given once room is clean you will lose your phone if your room is dirty.** In the AM, if your room is not clean, **You don't get your phone you will be able to receive your phone when you get home and it is clean.** If you do not have a phone same applies for the chromie

CLEAN ROOM= ALL dirty clothes in bin, All clean clothes folded. No items on the floor.  
NO FOOD. Bed is made

If you **refuse Choose not to** to hand in your phone, you will not get the phone the next day.

Vaping is illegal for individuals under the age of 21. If anyone is found to have these items or found to be asking others for jul pods, they will be confiscated **and you will be placed on red flag status and you are not allowed out a reset status will apply to assess safety**

**SHOUT OUT TO all the extra circular and working gals!!! ADD POSTIVE ENERGY!**

#### Meal norms

Freezer food is only for Friday and Saturday evenings and are portioned by a staff member

# Youth Developed Social Responsibility Norm Report

When we come home day chores must be complete

3-6 is homework time, so chrome books will only be given out for homework and can be done in dining room

Leisure chrome book time is after dinner !!!!!

Because we value your privacy and right to have individual peers outside the home, there is no social media live, and we are to face time in areas that are private unless you have head phones and not disturbing others

No one is permitted upstairs unless otherwise given permission from a staff member. **This is something that is subjected to change with consistency, boundaries, and respect**

**R.E.S.P.E.C.T yourselves and one another!**

#### Social Responsibility

**When reflecting S+ and U's in each chart, we must specify reasons why they are receiving it**

**Everyday**

**For ALL youth**

**If youth presents with a clean room, completes their chore correctly and completes hygiene they should receive an S+ automatically in those areas.**

- How we assess safety in the home
- Red Flag shifted to Reset Status
  - Substance abuse
  - Considered missing
  - Physical abuse
  - Lack of boundaries etc
  - Risky Internet Behavior

Requires a youth and family meeting STAYING  
SOLUTION FOCUSED

Remaining on the lower level of the home to  
maintain safety

If the safety concern is associated with a phone  
or internet. Time on electronics will be limited

**SAFETY FIRST**



• ~~Points and levels~~



- Self Care Plans/ Treatment Plans/ Safety Plans INDIVIDUALIZED

Crisis Interventions: Always being present and aware of our surroundings.

What's happening with our youth?

Ex: Youth coming home from school and throwing items in the house and cursing because she was in an altercation at school

Instead of going straight to the behavior. We need to look at the cause

# It's a trauma informed culture

Its fostering relationships

Mindful communication. Listening

Its building trust

Allowing our youth to make mistakes and grow from them without judgement

Its showing compassion

To what has happened

Its awareness

Of ourselves, our own trauma, our generation our culture. Everyone's story is different

- When we had the level system I felt like it was uncalled for. When we had the level system it was hard to get to a higher level because I was not earning anything with the requirements and it made me feel angry all the time when I saw other people getting things and I was not .
- When we got rid of the level system I felt like I was gonna improve in a lot of areas. Now it's easier to make goals and help me earn more things. This change made feel like I was going forward and helped me improve on a lot of my areas where I needed help and I feel like I earn extra incentives now



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pt-qcEQ8acM>