

Much has been written on the topic of trauma-informed practice and, specifically, trauma-informed interviewing. A good way to think about this is creating the space and conditions that allow the person who you are interviewing to share their story with you, free of pressure and other influences that may shut down sharing or negatively shape how they tell their story.

The way we recall information from a trauma experience may be more fragmented than recalling other events like going to the grocery store or filling your car with gas. It is helpful to understand there may be gaps in

how they remember events or share the story with you. Allow them the ability to share at their own pace and in the order that is the least stressful for them.

While more related to the analysis and report, gaps in the story or memories that are not clear or consistent are often seen as signs of fabrication or inaccuracies in the courts and with law enforcement. Understanding that an equally plausible hypothesis may be fragmented, traumatic memory is an important consideration in trauma-informed interviewing.

This does not mean you should avoid asking questions or asking for clarifications. Be aware that stopping the story flow may make it difficult for them to find their train of thought again, but if there is a point that needs to be clarified, don't shy away from asking because they have been through a difficult time. It is important the timeline and descriptions of events are accurate. What should be avoided is any type of aggressive questioning, skeptical tones, or the implication you don't believe the story or think they are not telling the truth.

