



Supportive Tips for Student Affairs Professionals:

Offering Support to Students Virtually through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Take as much time as you need to **tend to your own nervous system** before putting pressure on yourself to create an offering or a program.

Explore **different technology platforms** & move forward with the one that feels most aligned and comfortable for you. If live zoom sessions make you feel anxious, you could explore pre-recording on your own time & making them available later or recording audio files.

Screen fatigue & overstimulation is real. Do the best you can to space out your offerings & squeeze in unplugged **moments of rest**. If you can, select moments throughout the day to turn off all devices.

Integrate **supportive & empowering language, choices, & multiple options** to support students with varying needs. Remember folks are feeling many different things right now. It is not up to you to map their experience. Create space for them to be exactly as they are.

Create **intentional, guided spaces** for students & staff to connect authentically with each other and share about their experience navigating this time. **Normalize** the wide range of fears, emotions & uncertainty that folks may be experiencing.

Consider the trauma-informed elements of **safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment, & cultural competence**. How can these frameworks anchor the way you hold space virtually?

Remember **consistency & repetition** in the way you set up your offerings can help support a student who might be struggling with a dysregulated nervous system.

If you are a therapist, consider integrating some **embodied tools** into your practice such as: safe visualization, intention setting, movement, grounding exercises, meditation, or mudras. This can help your clients find stabilization and safety in their body amidst this new way of connecting.

Social engagement & safe connection is so important right now. You can still be a supportive presence even through a screen.

Before jumping right in, spend time helping students **orient to their home space**. You might invite them to create an emotional safety ritual or carve out a designated study space.

Be mindful of your **boundaries & working hours**. It can be very easy to work much longer hours as there is not much physical separation between work & home. Give yourself buffers of time to work through technology issues & invite in extra compassion and breaks amidst moments of frustration.

Provide some **supportive guidelines** to your students in advance on what to expect when working virtually. Examples might include: setting community agreements, what confidentiality looks like in a group virtual space, guidelines around chat functions, etc.

Allow for **different levels of readiness** to integrate practices & routines. Allow yourself to be hopeful that they will get there at their own pace. This can also apply to you (staff person!)

Honor all that you are doing and holding in this moment.

You are doing an amazing job.