



# BIRTH TRAUMA TRAINING

for birth workers

*with Doctor Erin*

*Course outline*

## INTRODUCTION

### Lesson 1: An Introduction to Birth Trauma

This is your introduction to birth trauma. The WHAT, WHY, WHO, WHERE, WHEN and HOW. This is where you begin to see that you don't know what you don't know and how your personal and professional needs are connected to overall transformation – for you, your career and birth culture as a whole.

Lesson	Section	Learning Outcome	Activity <i>Self-development &amp; professional development tasks</i>	Resources & references <i>**note this column is mostly blank. Full resources are only displayed for people who have purchased the course**</i>
0 Introduction		<p>Develop a learning plan that will ensure you are (1) scheduling your learning with regular breaks and time for self-care afterwards</p> <p>Make the commitment to work on your own trauma</p> <p>Make the commitment to catch yourself saying “I don’t have time for…” and swap it with “I don’t value…” and see how that feels</p>	<p>Join the Facebook community and introduce yourself</p> <p>Complete the <b>Intake Survey</b> and <b>Student Agreement</b></p> <p>Optional: Print Workbook &amp;/or Transcripts</p> <p>Look at the resources section and highlight what looks useful to your particular needs</p>	
1	My Births	Learn why I created this course		Birth Trauma Training for Birth Workers (with Doctor Erin) Podcast
	What is Birth Trauma?	An introduction to birth trauma		

	Big T versus Little T trauma	Understand the difference between trauma, traumatic stress and PTSD		
	Who is at risk?	Understand some of the predisposing factors for traumatic birth		
	What is vicarious trauma?	Identify the ways in which trauma develops by directly experiencing, witnessing or hearing about an event		
	Why Does it matter?	Begin to understand how witnessing birth trauma impacts occupational stress and birth culture		
	Learning outcomes and how to tackle this course	<p>Begin to see your personal and professional needs as connected to overall transformation</p> <p>Begin to connect principles from positive psychology, mindfulness and posttraumatic growth</p>		
	Kintsugi	See that transformation from trauma is fractured, but beautiful		
	Pre- Assessment tasks	Gather your baseline level of knowledge and	<b>Take the PRE assessment of learning</b> to get a baseline of your	<b>Assessment 1.0</b> PRE assessment task (online) <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7TVL52G">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7TVL52G</a>

		<p>confidence about birth trauma</p> <p>Begin to check in with comes up for you with your own trauma responses</p>	<p>knowledge and confidence</p> <p><b>Journal prompt 1.0</b>  <i>Note: I don't record personal responses from the PRE assessment. I'll only get group data. Please make a <b>note of your own responses in your journal</b> if you want to keep this info to refer to later.</i></p> <p>Take the suggested measure to self-assess for your own trauma symptoms. It's NOT a diagnosis, just a guide. If you are currently struggling with mental health talk to your care providers about the timing of the course for you</p> <p><b>Movement prompt 1</b>  Go for a walk, dance, cry, get in water, DO something to shift any of the big feelings that may have come up in your body</p>	<p><b>Assessment 1.1</b>  Suggested trauma measure  <a href="https://psychcentral.com/quizzes/ptsd-quiz/">https://psychcentral.com/quizzes/ptsd-quiz/</a></p>
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## Lesson 2: Language & Bias

*“Words are, of course, the most powerful drug...”*

In this lesson we cover why language is so important. How your biases are explicitly and implicitly impacting your work and thus contributing to the presence of absence of trauma-informed care.

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2 Language & Bias	Word Aversion	Understand why is language is so deeply connected with trauma, confidence and power		
	Improved NICE guidelines	Re-affirm what you know about language use in birth, or begin to make discoveries in this area if it's new to you	Read the NICE guidelines article	
	Informed Consent	Take an eagle eye look at how language is used to coerce, even if the intent is not malicious	Look over the informed consent info graphic	
	Using the client's terms	Make connections between language use, familiarity, trust and meaning-making		

	Regional vs historical diffs	Make connections between language use, familiarity, trust and meaning-making		
	Language and the subconscious brain	Begin to understand implicit and explicit bias  Begin to identify the ways in which your implicit bias may impact the people you serve	Actively assess your biases. This is for your own learning. You don't need to share	
	Gender and identity	Begin to be aware of the ways in which trauma is intersectional  Begin to move away from categorical thinking and into dimensional thinking (understand the ways in which birth is, for many clients, non-binary)	<b>Journal prompt 2.0</b> If you have your own business – look at your copy and marketing. Are you making it crystal clear who you work with and/or exclude? What might you need to improve?  Make a plan for self-directed learning and further professional development if there gaps in your knowledge of gender and sexuality	
	What to say	Let go of perfectionism and analysis paralysis, but step into compassion		
	Active listening	What is means to be fully present for someone		
	Blocks to listening	Discover your blocks to listening	<b>Journal prompt 2.1</b> What are your reoccurring listening blocks? Who do you use them with? What	

			can you work towards improving?	
	Blocks to empathy	Differentiate sympathy and empathy and what gets in the way of empathy		
	Asking good enough questions	Begin to identify ways to improve the ways in which you ask questions of clients		
	Categorical or black and white language and birth trauma	Understand what impact “all good” and “all bad” type thinking has on communication and compassion		
	Categories versus dimensions	Understand the difference between these concepts		
	Dismissive birth language	Consider the ways in which dismissive language contributes to birth trauma		
	Sensitive medical examples	Begin to think about words and phrases you’ve maybe been trained to say that carry no emotional weight for you, but are heavy for others to hear		
	Sexual abuse, molestation, and assault	An introduction to the ways in which language can help or hinder interactions with clients with a history of sexual abuse & assault		
	Use of slang and pet names	Mindfully reflect on the quirks in your own language and, while still being	<b>Journal prompt 2.2</b> Make note of what pet names and slang you use.	

		yourself, consider the intent versus the impact	<p>Do you adjust for different people? Why or why not?</p> <p>Had you thought about the fact that pet names or slang could be unintentionally triggering for some clients?</p> <p>Remember here – this is simply a suggestion to be mindful and aware. It’s not a set of rules!</p>	
	Failure language	Understand some of the history of the healthcare system in using failure language as a primer and a scapegoat		
	Authoritarian language	Understand some of the ways in which language is use to bully and coerce in healthcare		
	Possibility versus Probability	Begin to think about ways in which we can challenge others on their authoritarian statements, and advocate for fact-centered language in birth	<p><b>Journal prompt 2.3</b></p> <p>Think about a birth. Maybe your own, or one you’ve attended where phrasing like “we had to do a...(intervention) or you/baby would have died” was used. How can you use this a teaching tool for others? What would you say to someone now?</p>	



			<p>It might start with asking “is this an emergency right now or, do we have time to discuss alternatives?” “Could you give me a percentage likelihood on that?”</p> <p><b>Movement prompt 2.</b> Go for a walk, dance, cry, get in water, DO something to shift any of the big feelings that may have come up in your body</p>	
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### Lesson 3: Healing versus Harm by Staying and Slaying in Your Lane

This is where you implement stellar self-care practices for yourself post-birth, and lead by teaching these skills to others. We also cover what makes trauma worse, and what skills and special considerations are needed to do this work. How to ensure that the intention you're creating (to help and heal) matches the results you are getting.

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3	Snapshot	Begin to consider how to support other while staying within the scope of your qualifications		
	Consequences of birth trauma – negative	Familiarise yourself with the negative implications of a traumatic birth		
	Consequences of birth trauma – positive	Begin to appreciate that trauma is a teacher and that there is also phenomenal growth that can emerge from trauma		
	Macro self-care in the first 48 hours	Evaluate and implement stellar self-care practices for yourself post-birth	<p><b>Journal prompt 3.0</b> Who are your 3 people and what is your coping plan?</p> <p><b>Journal prompt 3.1</b> what do you think</p>	

			might be the difference between being calm versus being relaxed?	
	The AIM method	Begin to learn distress tolerance skills		
	The difference between calm and relaxed	Understand how differentiating calm and relaxed is useful for birth workers		
	Six senses self-care	Begin to understand how caring for the senses relates to trauma		
	Visuals	Use visuals to regulate the nervous system		
	Kinaesthetic	Touch to regulate the nervous system		
	Sound	Sound to regulate the nervous system		
	Smell	Smell to regulate the nervous system		
	Taste	Taste to regulate the nervous system		
	Sixth or other	Begin to appreciate how to take self-care to a deeper level	<b>Journal prompt 3.2</b> List 10 strategies you could use from those covered. Count them off on each finger until you can rattle them off by heart	

	Helping yourself and others with difficult emotions	Learn introductory affect regulation skills	<b>Journal prompt 3.3</b> Reflect on what emotions you struggle to regulate	
	Safety plans	Understand how recognition is better than recall when it comes to regulating the nervous system		
	Translating these skills for clients	Begin to teach these coping skills to others		
	What is a debrief?	Acknowledge some of the differences in what is meant by the term 'debrief'		
	Debriefs – pros	Understand how a debrief might be helpful		
	Debriefs- cons	Understand how a debrief might be harmful		
	Problems with debriefs	Understand how a debrief might be harmful		
	The roulette wheel of groups	Begin to understand the complexities of working with groups		
	Pros of groups	Recognise when a group might be helpful		
	Cautionary evidence against groups	Recognise when a group might be harmful		

	Tips for keeping groups safe	Understand some of the skills needed in facilitating a trauma group	<b>Journal prompt 3.4</b> Can you safely facilitate a group within your current scope of expertise? Do you need further information or skills training in facilitating trauma groups?	
	Working with partners	Understand some of the factors that influence birth partners	<b>Journal prompt 3.5</b> Research some of the support options for birth partners in your area. Share resources you find (there's not much out there!)	
	Gender differences in coping	Recognise some of the basic research in gender differences on coping ( <i>please note limitations with research here too</i> )		
	Working with reluctant partners	Recognise individual differences in help-seeking and coping		
	Principles of behaviour change	Become familiar with some of the basic theory on what changes people's behaviour	<b>Movement prompt 3.</b> DO something to shift any of the big feelings that may have come up in your body.	

## Lesson 4: Treatment & support options

I give you an insider's view of the mental health system, the pros, the cons, the time, the costs, and what other holistic options are available.

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4	Cognitive therapies	Gain an introductory understanding of the pros and cons of CBT and cognitive approaches to trauma treatment		
	EMDR	Gain an introductory understanding of the pros and cons of Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing is used to treat trauma		Birth Trauma Training Podcast episode 19 with Krysta Dancy
	Animal Assisted Therapy	Gain an introductory understanding of the pros and cons of working with animals for trauma		
	Emotional Freedom Technique	Understand and begin to apply Tapping as an option for trauma		Watch my EFT video on YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRgY98vXCiM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRgY98vXCiM</a>
	Hypnotherapy	Gain an introduction to hypnosis, hypnotherapy and the subconscious		

	Rewind Technique	Gain a brief overview of the Rewind technique for trauma		
	Somatic Experiencing	Gain an introductory understanding of Somatic Experiencing and how this relates to the mind-body connection of trauma		
	Alternative Treatments	Gain an introduction to a few of the alternative treatment and support options that exist		
	Treatment issues	Begin to identify some of the issues with treatment for trauma		
	Things to note when seeking support	Begin to understand how important self-education and being your own advocate are in birth trauma	<b>Movement prompt 4.</b> Utilize some of the exercises and strategies you've learned using movement	

## Lesson 5: The Body Remembers

"If they could talk about it [trauma] they wouldn't have it..." - Bessel van der Kolk

Take yourself out of your head, and sink back into your body, because that is where trauma is stored. I'll give you an easy to follow overview of the nervous system, the memory system and how trauma impacts ALL of it.

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5	Fight, flight, freeze, appease	Gain an introduction to the nervous system as it relates to trauma		
	The brake and accelerator analogy	Begin to understand why a sense of understanding and control of one's physiology is so important		
	Emotions and the body	Begin to recognise the link between emotions, language and feelings/sensations		
	Memory	Develop an introductory understanding of how malleable memory is, and how this relates to birth and trauma		
	The four memory systems	Begin to understand the four memory systems and how they relate to trauma		



	Dual awareness	Begin to develop an understanding of intero and extero receptors		
	Trauma and the 5 senses	Begin to understand the links between 'trauma time' and memories for body sensations		
	Sight	Reflect on how memories and triggers can be visual such as flashbacks		
	Sound	Reflect on how memories and triggers can be auditory		
	Smell	Reflect on how memories and triggers can be olfactory		
	Touch	Reflect on how touch can be a trigger for calm versus distressed feelings		
	Taste	Reflect on how tastes can trigger memories and sensations		
	What is dissociation?	Develop an introductory understanding of dissociation		
	How do you know if someone is dissociating?	Develop a beginner's understanding of how to spot dissociation		
	How to help if someone is dissociating		<b>Movement prompt 5.</b> Go for a walk, dance and continue to connect what you've learned about bodily memories and your own self-care practice.	Episode 6 Birth Trauma Training for Birth Workers Podcast

## Lesson 6: Phoenix Rising

Growth, joy, love, transformations. This is where you go back to why you wanted to do this work in the first place. It's going to be equal parts terrifying and delighting. Who are you? Who are you really? How does this influence how you see stress as a challenge instead of a threat?

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6	The role of positive psychology	Begin to understand how joy is your right, and how your happiness relates to work		
	Posttraumatic growth	Develop an understanding of Posttraumatic growth		
	Resilience versus posttraumatic growth	Understand the difference between resilience and PTG		
	Micro self-care	Begin to look at micro self-care strategies		
	What type of learner are you?	Learn about or revisit what type of learning style suits your needs		
	Personality factors	Learn about some of the ways personality style is important to choosing coping and self-care strategies	<b>Journal prompt 6.0</b> Who were you meant to be? Who is your secret self?	
	Personality assessment	Develop a beginner's understanding of how personality is assessed	<b>Assessment 6.1</b> Look at some of the ways in which you	

			might gain insight into your personality	
	Highly sensitive people	Learn about Highly Sensitive people		
	Values in behaviour change	Begin to think about how values relate to behavior change		
	Positive psychology signature strengths	Begin to understand your own personal character strengths	<p><b>Assessment 6.2</b> Assess your signature character strengths.</p> <p><b>Journal prompt 6.1</b> Make a plan for incorporating daily activities that meet your needs, based on your character strengths.</p>	
	Coping research	Begin to evaluate some of your adaptive and maladaptive coping tools	<p><b>Assessment 6.3</b> Look at the suggested coping measures</p> <p><b>Assessment 6.4</b> Take the POST assessment of learning to measure your growth</p> <p>Compare your pre and post responses. Reflect on what you've learned and what you need to</p>	

			propel your learning further	
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