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## Why trauma informed counseling is an essential component of women's addiction treatment?

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Women who are seeking addiction treatment often present with complex spectrum of issues, a history of trauma is often most specific to these presenting issues. Unfortunately, due to the stigma that is attached to women and addiction, trauma symptoms are often not detected and/or explored when women present for addiction treatment. Failing to address trauma symptoms can have devastating implications on the effectiveness of addiction treatment, which may result poor therapeutic rapport and disengagement in treatment. Trauma informed care involves specific framework which aims to assist service providers to recognize, understand and respond to the various effects of trauma. More importantly, it assist women in identifying trauma symptoms, understanding the role that trauma has played in their lives and empower them to create physical, psychological and emotional safety (Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services 2013). A case presentation will be used to illustrate that utilizing trauma informed principles can facilitate greater therapeutic rapport between clients and service providers, increase treatment engagement and significantly affect treatment outcome for women seeking addiction treatment. The objectives include: Attendees will realize the prevalence and the impact of trauma on women who use substances; will be able to identify common signs and symptoms of trauma in women who use substances; will understand the concept of "Trauma Informed Therapy" and the benefits of using this framework with women who use substances and will learn how to integrate intellectual knowledge into best practice.

### Biography

Jacqueline Heron has completed her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Toronto and a Master's degree in Education from Central Michigan University. She works at Toronto Western Hospital as an Addiction Clinician and she also has a Psychotherapy practice in Toronto.

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