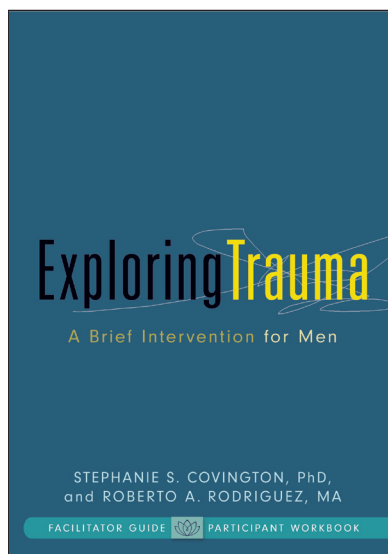


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# EXPLORING TRAUMA

*A Brief Intervention for Men*



## SCOPE AND SEQUENCE



For more information about this program,  
visit [hazelden.org/bookstore](http://hazelden.org/bookstore) or call 800-328-9000.

### Endorsements

“Stephanie Covington and Rob Rodriguez have written a wonderful guide to a brief trauma intervention for men. In six jam-packed sessions, they cover most of the essential elements in much longer approaches. And this is not just an adaptation of her *Healing Trauma: A Brief Intervention for Women* curriculum (though she has judiciously chosen to keep sections of that intervention that are as applicable to men as to women). The real triumph in *Exploring Trauma* is in rewriting the sections that are specifically devoted to men’s experiences. By drawing on the same relational focus that has characterized Covington’s work with women, the authors shed real light on the importance of relationships in men’s lives. They touch on the centrality of healthy boundaries and relationships for men as well as the power of dealing more effectively with guilt, anger, and shame. Covington and Rodriguez maintain throughout this work a positive approach that will bolster men’s strengths and their resilience as they come to terms with the impact of adversity, toxic stress, and trauma in their lives.”

**Roger D. Fallot, PhD,**

Independent Consultant in Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care and Adjunct Faculty,  
Yale University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry

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“Finally, a practical, useful, clear, trauma-informed program to guide facilitators in creating groups for men. Covington and Rodriguez compassionately address the ways in which a man’s previous personal history with trauma can become transformed into stopping his own abusive behavior toward others, connections that are vital if the man is to make significant change. As participants work through the material, they will learn practical ways to reclaim their own sense of safety, manage distress, and build healthier relationships.”

**Sandra L. Bloom, MD,**

Associate Professor, Health Management & Policy, School of Public Health,  
Drexel University, and Author of *Sanctuary Model*

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“Today, there can be no question that many men in prison and jail have themselves been affected by trauma. For too long society has treated all prisoners as alike, and as the predatory transgressor. We know now that approach has failed to reverse the criminal arc of the lives of most men who are released from prison. *Exploring Trauma*

provides the critical means to address trauma in all its forms in the prison and community supervision setting. It is accessible and adaptable and lends itself to small group interactions that are likely to be useful in prisons, jails, and probation and parole agencies. It is an important tool in the belt and should be used widely by corrections agencies.”

**Martin F. Horn,**

Distinguished Lecturer at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City,  
Former Commissioner of Correction and Probation of the City of New York, and  
Former Secretary of Corrections for the State of Pennsylvania

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“In keeping with her groundbreaking role in integrating the treatment of trauma and addictions and providing gender-specific and gender-responsive programs, Dr. Stephanie Covington has done it again. Her new facilitator’s guide, *Exploring Trauma: A Brief Intervention for Men* (coauthored with Roberto Rodriguez), is a comprehensive resource for conducting a short-term group treatment for men. It is highly practical and references up-to-date information regarding male survivors. It is also very descriptive and supports the group leaders and participants over the course of the group. A welcome new resource!”

**Christine A. Courtois, PhD, ABPP,**

Psychologist, Independent Practice, Washington, DC.

Author, *It’s Not You, It’s What Happened to You; Healing the Incest Wound;* and *Treating Complex Trauma: A Sequenced, Relationship-Based Approach* (with Julian Ford, PhD)

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“This is a groundbreaking, inspiring guide to working successfully with men’s trauma. Based on solid scholarship and decades of the authors’ experience with men and women, it is both wise and practical, easily employed and much needed—an essential guide for healing.”

**Samuel Shem, MD, DPhil,**

Author of *The House of God, The Spirit of the Place,* and *Bill W. and Dr. Bob*

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*“Exploring Trauma: A Brief Intervention for Men, by Stephanie Covington and Roberto Rodriguez, is a marvelous plain-speak addition to the field of gender-specific therapies. Building with the evidence-based tools of mindfulness, and cognitive-behavioral techniques, this six-session group format is pragmatic, accessible, and creative. It will be a welcome addition to the seasoned clinician’s shelf—and treatment room—as well as for less experienced practitioners who will appreciate, and benefit from, its nothing-left-to-chance format.”*

**Charles Atkins, MD,**

*Author of *Co-occurring Disorders: Integrated Assessment and Treatment of Substance Use and Mental Disorders**

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“Dr. Stephanie Covington and Roberto Rodriguez have created an impressive, evidence-based program for men. *Exploring Trauma* is an adaptable, brief, and effective approach to helping men recover in the context of relational and developmental trauma and in an eminently gender-responsive manner. This program starts from the position that our world is being ravaged by the outward effects of unresolved and unacknowledged trauma. Our systems of care are impacted greatly by the effects of such overwhelming and unacknowledged trauma. But, Dr. Covington and coauthor Roberto Rodriguez understand the challenges males face in a system of care that fails to acknowledge the impact of developmental trauma and gender biases. This curriculum seeks to bring change, offers a sound solution, and delivers on the promise of hope made: “The journey from surviving to thriving also begins when men realize there is hope and that they often possess untapped strength and resilience.”

I find it reassuring that there are advocates and experts among us, like Dr. Covington and her colleague Roberto Rodriguez, who care enough to take on this tough work and tirelessly push back against the status quo. . . . I am proud to say CeDAR played a small part in helping to bring this curriculum to the field and humbled to consider Dr. Covington a friend and ally in this work.”

**Steven Millette, LMHC, LAC,**

*Executive Director, The Center for Dependency, Addiction and Rehabilitation (CeDAR) at the University of Colorado Hospital*

### **What is *Exploring Trauma*?**

*Exploring Trauma* is an evidence-based, gender-responsive program addressing the trauma experiences of men. This six-session program includes a facilitator guide and a reproducible participant workbook (available in both English and Spanish) designed for working with men in a setting where a short-term intervention is needed. Examples of settings in which the program can be used are a community-based program, such as a community mental health center; an addiction treatment program; a private practice setting; a correctional facility (jail or prison); or an agency charged with addressing domestic violence.

The suggested number of participants for a group is between six and ten men. Ideally, each group would be a closed group, meaning that the program will be closed to new members after the first session so the entire group begins and ends together (although this is not essential). This helps establish connection within the group. The material in this program builds from session to session, and the first session lays the foundation for trust among the group members. Once the program is completed, it may be decided (depending on your setting and if the group members so desire) to let the group continue as an ongoing support group.

The program can be converted to four sessions by combining session 1 with session 2 and session 5 with session 6. This would make it easier for shorter programs to utilize but would require careful consideration to determine what important information will be omitted. This is not recommended unless it is absolutely necessary.

### **What is the format of the facilitator guide?**

Each session contains multiple activities. These activities include discussions, role-plays, interactive projects and grounding/self-soothing exercises. Some sessions utilize guided imagery, or visualization—the goal being to allow men the opportunity to imagine scenarios that are different from their own realities. It offers them an opportunity to safely envision different behaviors.

In addition to the many activities and exercises provided in this program, there are certain yoga poses that can help with the release of emotions stored in the body. *Yoga* is the Sanskrit word for *connection*. These poses help people to be more consciously aware of their bodies and their breathing. This is particularly important for men who have histories of trauma.

Each session ends with a between-session activity that helps the men apply concepts learned during the sessions to their lives.

### **Who are the authors of *Exploring Trauma*?**

**Stephanie S. Covington, PhD, LCSW**, is an internationally recognized clinician, organizational consultant, and lecturer. For over thirty years, her work has focused on the creation of gender-responsive and trauma-informed services. Her extensive experience includes designing women's services at the Betty Ford Center, developing programs in criminal justice settings, and being the featured therapist on the Oprah Winfrey Network TV show entitled *Breaking Down the Bars*.

She has also served as a consultant to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna and was selected for the federal Advisory Council on Women's Services. Educated at Columbia University and the Union Institute, Dr. Covington has conducted seminars for behavioral health professionals, community organizations, criminal justice professionals, and recovery groups in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Africa, Iceland, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand.

She has served on the faculties of the University of Southern California, San Diego State University, and the California School of Professional Psychology. She has published extensively, including eight gender-responsive, trauma-informed treatment curricula. Dr. Covington is based in La Jolla, California, where she is codirector of both the Institute for Relational Development and the Center for Gender and Justice.

**Roberto A. Rodriguez, MA, LADC, LAMFT**, has over ten years of experience in the field of addictions treatment. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in marriage and family therapy. He has worked in intensive outpatient settings and residential settings, with a focus on treatment for adolescents, men, couples, and families. As a licensed alcohol and drug counselor and mental health therapist, he has brought his considerable expertise to the River Ridge Treatment Center in Minneapolis, where he facilitates groups including family groups, Helping Men Recover groups, and groups on trauma and other topics (providing co-occurring disorders, gender-responsive, and trauma-informed services).

He also works with adolescents with legal involvement and provides diversion programming for them and their families.

**Scope and Sequence**

The following chart outlines what participants will learn in this six session program.

Session Title	Participant Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Session 1: Welcome and Introduction to the Subject of Trauma</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the purpose of this program.</li> <li>• define what trauma is.</li> <li>• describe PTSD and Big “T” and little “t” traumas.</li> <li>• explain the purpose of group agreements and what is included in their group agreement.</li> <li>• begin to know the group members and facilitator(s).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 2: Exploring Trauma</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain how gender roles and expectations affect how men view and respond to trauma.</li> <li>• describe the connection that sometimes happens between trauma and abusive or violent behavior.</li> <li>• describe the types of behaviors that would be considered abusive.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 3: Thinking, Feeling, and Acting</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe how one’s belief systems can impact one’s response to trauma.</li> <li>• describe unhelpful behaviors they are using to cope with trauma and some possible alternatives.</li> <li>• practice grounding techniques to help them deal with trauma triggers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Session 4: Beyond Guilt, Shame, and Anger</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the emotional and physical consequences of guilt, shame, anger, and other emotions.</li> <li>• describe the constricting effects of trauma and addiction and the expanding effects of recovery and healing.</li> <li>• describe ways to identify and manage emotions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 5: Healthy Relationships</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• define what boundaries in healthy relationships are.</li> <li>• explain the three key components of a loving relationship.</li> <li>• apply a model for conflict resolution to their own lives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Session 6: Love, Endings, and Certificates</b></p>	<p>At the end of this session, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain how relationships can be enhanced by understanding oneself.</li> <li>• describe love in one’s life.</li> <li>• describe how to end a relationship in a healthy, respectful way.</li> <li>• identify and use resources for the treatment of trauma.</li> </ul>