

 THE CENTER FOR JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING A PROGRAM OF EASTERN Mennonite UNIVERSITY	STRATEGIES FOR TRAUMA AWARENESS AND RESILIENCE (STAR) Level 1 PAX 540 A SPI 2025 Session 1: May 19-27, 2025 <i>Course meeting location and time: TBD</i>
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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

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Email to set an appointment.

Hyojin Chang, MA

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Whether working in peacebuilding, advocacy, healthcare, education, government, care-giving, activism, or in any kind of leadership or community building capacity, stressors add up. Research and experience demonstrate that unaddressed trauma often leads to conflict and violence against self or with others, as trauma-affected people act out against others or become self-destructive. STAR combines theory with experiential learning to increase awareness of the impacts of trauma on the body, brain, beliefs, and behaviors. The course offers tools for addressing trauma and breaking cycles of violence.

STAR's multi-disciplinary framework draws on several fields of theory and practice to support healthy, resilient individuals and communities: trauma and resilience studies (including neurobiology), restorative justice, conflict transformation, human security, and spirituality. STAR centers participants' experiences and insights while offering activities, resources, and a theoretical model to support a journey toward understanding and interrupting cycles of violence at the individual, communal, and societal levels.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

This course invites participants to:

- Explore and share **language and resources about resilience and trauma** - definitions, causes/origins, diverse impacts on body, brain, beliefs and behaviors.
- Understand how **trauma response can contribute to cycles of violence** at different levels: self, relationships, organizations, communities, nations, the Earth.
- Identify and practice tools and **strategies to strengthen resilience and break free from cycles of violence** at personal and collective levels.
- **Deepen commitment to self-care and collective care** as core practices for (re)generating healthy power amidst vulnerability and uncertainty.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES:

The following are reading materials and texts, required for all participants taking the course **for credit**. Note that **non-credit participants** are encouraged (though not required) to read the texts.

Please read **before** the class:

1. ***Yoder, Carolyn. *The Little Book of Trauma Healing, Revised and Updated***, New York, NY: Good Books, Inc. 2020 (ISBN 1680996037)
2. ***Levins Morales, Aurora: *Medicine Stories***. Excerpt can be accessed on Moodle 2 weeks before course begins.
3. Mansfield, Katie [blog]. Why are we talking about trauma?
<https://emu.edu/now/peacebuilder/2019/10/why-are-we-talking-about-trauma/>

Additional readings: *indicates required reading

Articles included on course Moodle page (can be accessed 2 weeks before start of course). Note that not all are required reading.

4. ***Yoder, Carolyn. *The Little Book of Trauma Healing, Revised and Updated***, New York, NY: Good Books, Inc. 2020 (ISBN 1680996037) (to be read before class) retail \$6.
5. ***Ginwright, Shawn. "Transforming Trauma into Hope and Power" (Chapter 2)** in *Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Urban Activists and Teachers are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart*. New York: Routledge, 2016. (ISBN 113879757X) retail \$43. Chapter posted on Moodle.
6. ***Brave Heart, Maria Yellow Horse. 2000. "Wakiksuyapi: Carrying the Historical Trauma of the Lakota."** Tulane University School of Social Work. (posted on Moodle)
7. ***Levine, Peter: *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma***. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1997. (ISBN 155643233X) retail \$12. NOTE: Parts of this text are outdated, however the core message is still relevant. STAR draws deeply on the work of Levine, many of the ideas are foundational to our discussion of trauma. It remains required text – conversation about this is welcome.
8. ***Zehr, Howard: *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*** (ISBN 1561488232) retail \$6. If you have already read this book, we recommend picking up Oudshoorn, Judah, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Sexual Abuse: Hope through Trauma*, Good Books, 2015. (ISBN 1680990551) retail \$6 and/or *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice* by Fania Davis, 2019. (ISBN 978-1680993431) retail \$6.
9. ***Haines, Steve. *Trauma is Really Strange***. Art by Sophie Standing. Singing Dragon, 2016. (ISBN 9781848192935) retail \$12.
10. ***Yazzie, Robert (Honorable Chief Justice). (1994). 'Life comes from it': Navajo justice concepts.** *New Mexico Law Review*, 24, Spring 1994, 175-190. (to be read before exploration of RJ, posted on Moodle)

Recommended readings

11. **Van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score***.** New York, NY: Viking Penguin, 2014. ISBN 0143127748 Chapters 4,5,6. (to be read before class) retail \$11. Detailed background on impacts of trauma on body and brain. **Note this text includes some graphic discussions of traumatic events, including sexual violence.

12. **Doerrfeld, Cori. *The Rabbit Listened*.** New York: Dial Books, 2018. Children's book. ISBN 073522935X. Retail \$11.
13. **Holmes, Margaret M. *A Terrible Thing Happened*.** Magination Press, 2000. Children's book. ISBN 1557987017. Retail \$10. (Available in Spanish)
14. **McLaren, K. *The Language of Emotions*.** Boulder, CO: SoundsTrue, 2010. ISBN 1591797691. Retail \$18. Especially chapters 7 Unintentional Shamans: The Role of Trauma in Soul-Making and Culture-Building; and 8, the Role of Emotions in the Resolution of Trauma.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS:

Engaging in a course focused on trauma, whether for academic credit or for training purposes, can be challenging. We invite all participants to

- ☐ **Show up to all sessions, as the learning is designed as a cumulative and iterative and community-based experience.** We value your presence and insights.
- ☐ **Commit to ongoing self-care during and after the STAR experience.** Learning about trauma and resilience can be draining and energizing. It's helpful to identify your self-care strategies.
- ☐ **Identify and lean on your resilience network.** We will take time early in the course to identify who are some of the resource people you might lean on as you take the STAR learning journey.

Taking the course for Professional Education/Training

Homework assignments are designed to complement and enhance the in-person STAR experience. These are not required of training participants, though you may find they enrich your experience. If you choose to do the assignments, they are just for you – no need to submit to instructor.

Taking the course for Credit

Note that assignments are designed to enhance the learning experience you get in STAR.

Please show up to all sessions. Presence in class will account for 40% of your grade.

Assignments below add up to 60% of your grade. **DO dates are recommended, but all assignments may be submitted at once on Moodle by Friday, Aug 8.**

Assignment	Due date/ do date	(% of grade) 2 credit	(% of grade) 3 credit
SHOWING UP	All sessions	40	40
Lead a centering, releasing or energizing activity. Each day will include centering/grounding upon arrival, an energizer when we return from lunch, and a brief energetic release/brush-off before departure. For-credit participants are invited to lead at least one of these.	At least once during STAR session	3	3

Reflect on STAR activities (2 credit choose 4, 3 credit choose 6) 1) Chaos and connection activity 2) River of Life 3) Parts of the brain 4) Symbols of resilience circle 5) Stone exercise 6) Cycle of Violence mini-dramas 7) Peace, Mercy, Justice, Truth 8) Using the Model as Reflection Tool For each activity), complete the following prompts (with no more than 1 page, single spaced for each activity): I noticed (physical or emotional reaction in yourself and/or the group)... I liked... I learned... I question/wonder...	You might want to draft thoughts in your workbook after doing each activity. Do by June 10.	12	12
Reflect on RJ in practice Draft your answers to questions based on the Restorative Justice film(s) you viewed; add 1-2 notes based on learning from debrief with classmates. (1-2 pages single- spaced)	Do during RJ film discussion sessions.	5	5
20 Questions Often STAR generates more questions than answers. Questions are great! Please turn in twenty questions you carry away from STAR. You can write these as stream-of-consciousness, as a list, in paragraph or poetic form, as you like. Feel free to answer them in your lifetime, or to write 200 questions, but for this assignment, please submit just 20 questions.	Do by June 10.	7	7
Reading Responses (2 credit 8 total, 3 credit 12 total) All students taking for credit: Write a 1-page response to the following 4 asterisked/bolded readings. 2 credit: Choose 4 additional readings and write a 1-page response. 3 credit: Choose 8 additional readings and write a 1-page response.	You are encouraged to read Levins-Morales before STAR You are	24	24

Responses should be single-spaced and may be submitted as a single document. Choose 3-4 sentences/main ideas. What ideas are powerful for you, stretch you, raise questions or inspire you? Feel free to write in the form of questions 1) *Levins-Morales’ essay “False Memories.” 2) *Cabrera’s “Living and Surviving in a Multiply Wounded Country.” 3) *Yazzie’s “Life Comes from It.” 4) Haga’s chapter “On Violence” 5) Ginwright, <i>Hope and Healing in Urban Education</i>, chapter 2. 6) Van der Kolk, <i>The Body Keeps the Score</i>, ch. 4- 6. 7) Haines, <i>Trauma is Really Strange</i>. 8) *Yoder, <i>Little Book of Trauma Healing</i>, Chapter 4: Cycles of Violence and Unaddressed Trauma. 9) Yamada, “Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster” – chapter in <i>This Bridge Called My Back</i>. 10) Sujatha Baliga’s talk: “Have you been angry long enough?” 11) McNab, “Thoughts on Forgiveness.” 12) Turner, “Creating safety for ourselves.” 13) Dzurinko, McCants & Stith, “Campaign for Nonviolent Schools.” 14) Piepzna-Samarasinha, “Care Webs” 15) Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky’s TED Talk: “Beyond the Cliff” 16) Choose another reading from Moodle not listed.	encouraged to read Cabrera on the first night of STAR. Read others as you make time. Do by July 15		
A letter (2-5 pages double spaced) Write a letter to yourself, a friend, family member, enemy, your institution/organization, your community, your country, or the planet. This letter is designed to be shared in order to break free from a cycle of harm. A full-credit assignment will include: 1) your ideas(s) for building safety, support, voice and choice; 2) acknowledgment of what has happened/is happening (naming a specific harm or harms, ways you/your community have/has experienced cycles of violence, including how you/others have experienced harm and/or caused harm); 3) possible ways to reconnect (in self or with others), including addressing justice needs;	Do by Friday, August 8	9	9

4) ways you are recognizing and building your resilience, individually and with others in your micro-climate.			
5) Specific references to at least 5 of the required texts (draw on your reading responses if you'd like!)			

These are brief descriptions of required graded assignments for the course. More details for each assignment can be found on the "Guidance Notes" that will be provided in class.

DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE AND KEY RESOURCES:

Schedule will be shared the first day of the course.
Moodle page and the STAR Level 1 Workbook lay out the flow/sequence of topics we will cover.
Participants are expected to attend each day of class at SPI.

*Assignment Suggested Timeline:

(for-credit students only)

*NOTE: **YOU MAY TURN IN ALL ASSIGNMENTS ON August 8.** THIS TIMELINE IS PURELY TO HELP YOU SPREAD THE WORK OUT, AS IT WOULD BE OF LITTLE BENEFIT TO DO IT ALL AT ONCE.

During STAR	Lead an activity (grounding, centering, energizing or releasing)
Tues June 10	1) Reflections on STAR activities 2) Reflection on RJ practice example(s) 3) 20 Questions
Fri Jul 15	Reading Responses
Mon Aug 8	Letter

SPI ATTENDANCE POLICY:

It is expected that individuals registering for an SPI session will attend the entire course (barring unforeseen travel delays or emergencies). Please contact SPI directly at spi@emu.edu before registering if you know you will have to miss any days of a course. SPI certificates are provided to participants only if they miss no more than one class day unless prior arrangements have been made with the SPI team and confirmed with the instructor. **For-credit participants are expected to attend all class sessions unless they are given permission from the instructor to miss a session.** SPI courses rely on active student participation in a learning community. If a participant misses class repeatedly and this disrupts the learning for others, they will be asked to leave the course and no money will be refunded for remaining course time.

GRADING CRITERIA AND OTHER POLICIES:

SPI provides all students taking the course for graduate credit some supplemental information that will serve as a resource after SPI when students are working on course assignments. This includes information on library resources, EMU's academic integrity policy, and guidelines for writing graduate

papers, information regarding the grading scale and course deadlines, and then some suggestions we have for you in order to make your experience of taking SPI courses for graduate credit as successful as possible! These [documents](#) are all available online.