

**From:** s22  
**To:** s22 DPS  
**Subject:** RE: Trauma informed responses - some interesting references [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 10 April 2024 2:34:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)

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**OFFICIAL**

Hi s22  
Thanks for the email. It is a helpful read.

Kind Regards,

s22

Discretionary Payments | Comcover and Discretionary Payment Claims Branch  
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**From:** s22@finance.gov.au  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:54 PM  
**To:** s22@finance.gov.au  
**Subject:** Trauma informed responses - some interesting references [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

Colleagues,

There has been a lot of talk about 'trauma-informed' responses of late (but we've not yet been able to secure training on that subject). In doing my own research, I have found this very interesting user guide [Trauma-informed-practices.pdf \(nada.org.au\)](#) aimed at front line workers, which I think has some quite sobering reflections for us when we think about the way we deal with people who reach out to us for assistance.

I note that the key principle of trauma informed practice is fundamentally underpinned by a shift from asking 'What's wrong with you?' to 'What happened to you?'. This shift helps you to consider a person's behaviour, however challenging it may appear, to be a response to an experience rather than something that is an inherent flaw. The guide refers to the importance of the language we use when referring to people and issues, and the importance of considering and minimising the impact of bureaucratic processes to mitigate further accentuation of trauma.

I particularly liked the link to the concept of a window of tolerance (see <https://www.mindmypeelings.com/blog/window-of-tolerance>) which gives a model to help understand the range of responses to inputs, which has meaning when I reflected on how Finance's interactions with may impact on people and push them outside their personal window of tolerance.

### WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

The window of tolerance and different states that affect you

- HYPERAROUSAL**
  - Abnormal state of increased responsiveness
  - Feeling anxious, angry and out of control
  - You may experience wanting to fight or run away
- DYSREGULATION**
  - When you start to deviate outside your window of tolerance you start to feel agitated, anxious, or angry
  - You do not feel comfortable but you are not out of control yet

- DYSREGULATION**
  - You start to feel overwhelmed, your body might start shutting down and you could lose track of time
  - You don't feel comfortable but you are not out of control yet
- HYPOAROUSAL**
  - Abnormal state of decreased responsiveness
  - Feeling emotional numbness, exhaustion, and depression
  - You may experience your body shutting down or freeze

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I commend these resources to you, to assist your reflections on the way we collectively do the job of bureaucratic decision-making in a trauma informed manner.

Regards

s22

Assistant Director

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