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# Emotional Wellness: The Heart of Trauma-Informed Leadership

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## The Foundation of Growth is Understanding

Here to guide you every step of the way toward growth; whether it's working on leadership skills, building a cohesive team dynamic, or the latest wellness research.

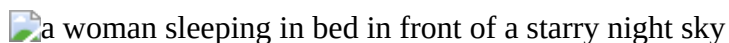
Imagine trying to lead a team while emotionally running on fumes. Now imagine doing it with a smile, a spreadsheet, and a "Let's circle back" attitude. Sound familiar?

If last week's focus was on social wellness (connection as a healing force), this week, we're diving deeper: **emotional wellness**.

Here's the thing—they're connected. But emotional wellness isn't about being upbeat all the time. It's about knowing what's *really* going on inside, owning it, and creating space for others to do the same.

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## What Is Emotional Wellness? (And Why Should Leaders Care)



It's the inner ballast in the storm—your capacity to cope with stress, express feelings in healthy ways, and bounce back when life gets 'lifey'. And in trauma-informed

leadership, it's the difference between reacting and responding.

According to SAMHSA, emotional wellness is a core domain of holistic health, and for leaders, it's a key predictor of team safety and resilience.

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## Emotional Healing as a Leadership Skill

 an illustration of people working on a brain with puzzle pieces and light bulbs

**Let's debunk a myth: leaders aren't supposed to be stoic robots.**

Trauma-informed leadership invites a radical (and research-backed) reframe—*emotional healing* is a strength.

Creating spaces where people can show up messy, unsure, or exhausted...without fear of judgment, isn't "soft." It's strategic.

Dr. Rebekah C. Lloyd, a leading researcher in trauma-informed leadership, emphasizes that emotional safety is *foundational* to performance. Teams don't need more pep talks; they need psychological oxygen.

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## Practical Moves for Emotionally Intelligent Leaders

Normalize emotional language: "How's your energy today?" goes further than "You good?"

- Promote real breaks: Not lunch at your desk. Try 15-minute digital detoxes.
- Model regulation: When stressed, narrate your pause: "I need a moment to regroup before we continue."
- Use wellness resources: From EAPs to breathing apps, tools matter—but *modeling their use matters more*.

Research shows that emotionally attuned leaders:

- Make more thoughtful decisions

- Build higher trust
- Reduce team burnout (Harvard Business Review, 2023)

Not by being perfect, but by being present.

### **Emotional Wellness**

SAMHSA describes it as “the ability to successfully handle life’s stresses and adapt to change and difficult times.” In the workplace, that looks like:

- Leaders who ask before assuming
- Teams that pause before reacting
- Cultures that value *how* we feel, not just what we do

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## **Team Challenge: “Feelings Are Data” Week**

Invite your team to track emotional check-ins:

- Daily mood word (“Energized,” “Foggy,” “Hopeful,” etc.)
- Optional 1-sentence context (no pressure to explain)
- Shared space for emotional vocabulary growth (think: Feelings Wheel!)

This builds awareness, not oversharing. The goal? Language for what’s real.

- Dr. Jennice Vilhauer, PhD, writes, “Acknowledging your emotions is the first step to healing them.”
- Ellen Langer reminds us: “Mindfulness is noticing.”
- Gabor Maté says, “Not all wounds are visible, but all healing begins with safety.”

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### **Final Thought:**

Emotional wellness isn’t a soft skill—it’s a strategic asset. It allows leaders to co-regulate, teams to trust, and workplaces to feel like human places again. Healing doesn’t require a therapist’s couch. Sometimes, it starts with noticing, naming, and making space for what’s real.

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## Alpha Testers Wanted:

InkWell™ went live just last week! We are still looking for early adopters to test and build the program.

If you love goal setting, need a supportive space to work on your thoughts, or love getting ot help design products and earn lifelong benefits, then the Alpha is for you!

Join InkWell™

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Coaching w/ Adam

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