

Violence and Learning

Violence that happened in the past or is happening now can affect our learning. Violence affects our bodies and other parts of ourselves. Violence and trauma change how we learn new things.

We learn from violence

- **We feel the effects of violence in ways that others may not see. Or they may not understand and may judge us so we try to hide them.**

“All or nothing”

Feeling something or some person is totally good one moment and totally bad the next. This feeling could be about learning new things, or about trusting ourselves and others.

“I'm not all here”

Feeling stress about learning, or the place and people where we learn, makes it a lot harder to focus on learning. All this stress can take our minds away or cause us to leave.

“Living with crises”

A crisis can really interrupt our learning. If we experience crises often it can start to feel normal to live in crisis.

“To trust or not to trust”

Feeling like it's hard to trust makes sense when we've been hurt. To learn with a tutor or other students we have to decide how much to trust them and how much to tell them. This takes extra time and energy.

“Keeping it in, letting it out”

We share our knowledge when we write and talk about ourselves with other learners. We may feel ashamed of our knowledge of violence, but we may need to talk about it. It's hard to decide what to tell and what to hide.

It may be hard to move forward

- **We need to believe in our future to move forward. Violence may make that hard.**

“Control”

To believe in our future we need to be in control of it. But being in control of our learning may feel uncomfortable and new. We may need to test our control in what, how and where we learn.

“Connecting”

Learning with others involves trusting them and talking with them. Connecting with others like this is hard if we feel different because of the violence we have gone through.

“Meaning”

Experiencing violence and trauma makes us struggle to find meaning in our lives. Words and ideas need meaning to live in us.

“Support”

We may need extra support to find control, connection and meaning in our learning and to see ourselves as a complete and valuable person. This is our right.

We may feel broken

- **Trauma breaks us up, but our whole selves can help us learn!**

Spirit

Violence convinces us that we are worthless, and that our own knowledge is not worth believing and growing. We can find ways to let our strong spirit help us learn.

Emotions

Violence makes us angry, sad, afraid and confused. We can find ways to use our emotions to help us learn.

Body

Injury and illness is caused by violence. We can find ways to use our bodies to help us learn.

Mind

We are not stupid. We are experts on ourselves as learners. We learned to survive and we can learn new things and change.
