Resilient Oregon

Resilience Toolkit & Resource Guide 2025

Developed & Compiled by Christian Thompson, MSW

Edited by Christy da Rosa, Ph.D., LICSW

(Photo: Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives)

Acknowledgement and Gratitude

This toolkit highlights Oregon-developed resources, examples, and ongoing efforts aimed at building transformational resilience in our communities. While it includes select materials from outside the state, the majority of resources were created by and for Oregon residents, reflecting local knowledge and lived experience.

The development and organization of this toolkit was made possible through the work and contributions generously shared by organizations, advocates, and practitioners throughout the state of Oregon. The author would like to express special thanks and abundant gratitude to the following parties for their willingness to offer resources and feedback regarding this toolkit.

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- The Hearth
- Drew Alcoser, Cascadia Stack
- Marianne Seifert, Lincoln County Public Health
- Christy da Rosa, Trauma Informed Oregon

Oregon Resources

This toolkit is not a comprehensive representation of all the climate resilience work taking place across Oregon. We recognize the incredible breadth and diversity of community-led efforts that may not yet be captured here. Given the evolving nature of climate resilience and collective healing, we warmly welcome suggestions for additions or revisions. If you know of Oregon-based resources, stories, or practices that should be included, or if you have concerns about any content featured, please share your feedback using the Resilient Oregon contact form or by scanning the QR code below.

🌐 Resilient Oregon Toolkit Suggestions & Feedback

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- ACT: Build residents’ social support networks, offering opportunities to establish relationships across the community to serve as protective factors in the event of a crisis while creating spaces to share experiences.

- ASK: Has your community made efforts towards creating healthy, safe, just, and equitable local conditions?
  - ACT: Seek to build climate-resilient conditions and infrastructure while creating a community that is healthy, safe, and just.

<u>Resilience Cycle - Crisis</u>

- ASK: Do members of your resilience coalition use regulation skills to maintain purpose throughout meetings and efforts?
- ACT: Develop universal mental wellness and resilience literacy through encouraging the regular practice and utilization of both presencing and purposing skills.

- ASK: Is your community prepared to navigate challenging interpersonal interactions as it addresses the impacts of the climate crisis?
  - ACT: Develop universal mental wellness and resilience literacy through incorporating conflict resolution strategies into regular gatherings and disaster response plans.

Resilience Cycle - Recovery

- ASK: Does your community provide space for those impacted by the climate crisis to share their experiences and build supportive social connections?
- ACT: Establish regular opportunities for local residents to share their experiences and provide mutual support throughout the recovery process.

- ASK: Has your community made efforts towards establishing culturally-attuned opportunities to heal trauma?
- ACT: Ensure that interventions and recovery efforts are community-led and relevant to the populations most impacted by the disaster or crisis.

Examples and Templates

- Asset Mapping Template
- Resilience Contingency Plan Example
- Neighborhood Block Connection Contact Sheet Template
- Trauma Informed Disaster Intervention Worksheet
- Neighborhood Resilience Action Plan Template

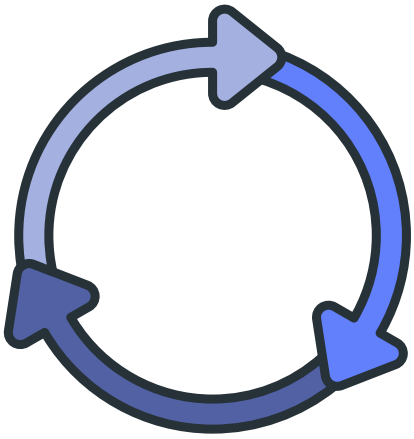
Pathways to Community-led Resilience Action

As the climate crisis continues to worsen, wreaking havoc throughout Oregon in the form of heat waves, fires, and other severe weather events, communities are increasingly finding themselves in need of processes through which to harness their inherent strengths and connections to bolster community resilience. Rejecting definitions of 'resilience' that assert an onus of recovery on the individual, assign the burden of adaptation to worsening climate conditions and deteriorating infrastructure on community members, or prioritize monetary factors over human wellbeing, this document seeks to promote the concept of "transformational resilience". This phrase, coined by Bob Doppelt of the International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) but put into practice by communities throughout the globe for eons in the face of ongoing crises, notes the need to "proactively build the capacity of individuals, families, organizations, and entire communities to cope with climate adversities without harming themselves, other people, or the natural environment and to use these adaptive efforts as transformational catalysts to increase social, psychological, and ecological well being" (Doppelt, 2016).

Choose Your Own Adventure (CYOA) Format

Communities or people seeking to heal and mitigate the impacts of the climate crisis, particularly through addressing the mental health sequelae of these events, are welcome to embark on a **Choose Your Own Adventure (CYOA)** that takes into account the unique factors involved in your region and community, subsequently adopting and adapting the offerings within to best suit the diverse needs of Oregonians throughout the state. This CYOA offers resources and activities to aid in building transformational resilience, initiating with the pursuit of building social connections throughout your community that function as buffers against the mental health impacts of the climate crisis, and concludes with suggestions for ensuring just, healthy, and equitable local ecological, built, and economic conditions through mutual support and processing.

Building community resilience can begin through determining where in the "transformational resilience cycle" your community currently stands. This cycle ranges from crisis, or actively responding to a disaster situation, to disarray, or the long-term deleterious impacts of this disaster, and transformation, noting the interim between disasters that offers an opportunity to incorporate community participation in the development of social supports while moving towards a "just transition" regarding the creation of equitable, resilient communities. Given that these components of the resilience cycle are often non-linear, those embarking on this resilience journey are encouraged to select the material below that best suits their needs at the present time.



Resilience Cycle - Transformation

*This portion of the **Resilient Oregon Toolkit & Resource Guide** offers recommendations and opportunities for communities currently in the 'transformation' phase of the transformational resilience cycle, focusing on building social connections within the community to bolster resilience while creating safe, equitable, climate-resilient physical, economic, and ecological conditions.*

ASK: Does your community have a member-led infrastructure in place to address the mental health impacts of the climate crisis?

ACT: Establish a Transformational Resilience Coordinating Network to aid residents in building strategies that bolster mental and physical wellness.

Transformational Resilience Coordinating Networks (TRCNs) can offer a framework and organizational structure for building a community-level response to the climate crisis and its deleterious mental health sequelae. Embarking on this community mobilization endeavor offers a method of action that incorporates examples from previous resilience work while receiving support from both the Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP) and the International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) to continue building a population-level response to the climate crisis and severe weather events. Below, you will find links to TRCN resources hosted on the CTIPP website, along with information regarding potential opportunities to engage in a global Community of Practice.

Who should be included in this act?

The TRCN framework is able to be adapted to any community, and is currently being put into practice in regions throughout the globe. While the initiative seeks to incorporate community leaders, mental health practitioners, and community-based organizations into TRCN leadership, these coalitions can be joined by any member of the community seeking to bolster mental and physical wellness in the face of the climate crisis.

Resources & Examples for this Act

For more information on Transformational Resilience Coordinating Networks, visit the Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice here:
🌐 Transformational Resilience Coordinating Network (TRCN)

Community of Practice sessions, providing an opportunity for communities throughout the globe to gather and receive knowledge about the TRCN initiative, share challenges and successes, and build resilience skills, are available here:

🌐 Campaign for TraumaInformed Policy & Practice

ASK: Is your community aware of resources and potential partners to aid in resilience-building work?

ACT: Organize local resources and organizations into a *community asset map* for use by residents throughout the region.

Complete a community asset map to aid in developing a picture of your community's inherent strengths and resources, noting the diverse range of offerings within the geographic area to compile a list of organizations and options to bolster resilience. This initiative can serve as an exciting initial step towards community organizing, and serves to orient TRCNs and other community organizations to areas of both strengths and opportunities for growth/further community engagement. Below, you will find resources and templates that can be used and modified to best suit your community's specific needs.

Who should be included in this act?

While community members involved in local nonprofits or community-based organizations may be more familiar with resources throughout the region, it is essential to include representatives from throughout the community to ensure that assets typically overlooked by professionals are included in the map. Additionally, it is crucial to disseminate the information presented in the asset map throughout the community to equip residents with knowledge of local resources that aid in the various stages of disaster preparation or response.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Resources and templates to get your **community asset map** started:

- UCLA Center for Health Policy Research - Asset Mapping Guide
- Advancement Project- Healthy City Community Research Lab - Participatory Asset Mapping
- California Training Institute - Asset Mapping Resource Guide
- Casey Family Programs - Opportunity Map
- National Center for Farmworker Health - Community Asset Mapping Guide with Template

- Switchboard - Community Resource Mapping Templates
- Center on Transition Innovations - Community Resource Mapping
- NOAA - Community Asset Mapping

Community Asset Mapping Template

Community Asset Mapping Template

Vision: Build an understanding of local resources that have supported resilience building efforts

SMART Goal: Map two resources per heading by the end of today's session.

Organization/ Resource	Contact Information/Website	Available Resources/Strengths	Opportunities for Collaboration/Benefits
Health Care Assets			
County public health agencies			
Educational Assets			
Trauma Informed Oregon	Christian - cdt3@pdx.edu	Trauma-informed trainings, online resource library	Resources can be used to build a population-level understanding of the intersection of mental health and the climate crisis.

Inviting community member involvement in crisis preparation

ASK: Is your community prepared to engage in local politics to drive climate-conscious change?

ACT: Equip local residents with the knowledge and tools to engage in advocacy for community resilience at a local, county, and state level.

Assessing community member involvement in the current infrastructure with the intention of bolstering engagement can reveal areas where laypeople can take part in local politics and government to advance resilience-building work within the geographic area. This can take the form of providing public testimony, campaigning for climate-conscious legislation and leadership, and forming advocacy groups to center the mental health needs of the community within the context of climate disasters and crises.

Who should be included in this act?

While political advocacy can serve as a powerful tool for shaping local policy and raising awareness of the climate crisis' impacts, it is essential to incorporate the trauma-informed principles of **safety** and **historical, cultural, and gender issues** into invitations to engage in this act. Consider the safety of residents historically and presently oppressed by all levels of government, and potential threats involved in engaging directly with politicians in a given region. Thus, this act can serve as an option for residents that feel comfortable engaging with government systems while alternative climate-conscious actions are taken by other members of the community.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Below, you will find **resources to aid in engaging in local political efforts and systems:**

- League of Oregon Cities - Oregon Municipal Handbook
- Oregon State Legislature - How to Testify in Committee Hearings

ASK: Does your community have member-driven contingency plans in preparation for potential disasters or challenges?

ACT: Establish a contingency plan that take into account local needs, resources, and potential threats through a trauma-informed lens.

What is a Contingency Plan?

A contingency plan allows communities to develop options to prepare for and respond to disasters and challenges relevant to their region. These plans may differ extensively across communities throughout Oregon, as each locality is threatened by different types of natural disasters and responses are shaped by resources available in a given region. Despite the variation inherent in developing a contingency plan, it's essential to first assess the disasters and other threats that have the potential to impact the community in question. Communities will often know from experience which disasters may impact their region in the future, whether it be earthquakes, wildfires, floods, or other extreme weather events that shape how people will prepare for potential challenges in the future.

The links below offer maps that note the degree of susceptibility for regions throughout Oregon regarding a given type of disaster, along with an example of resources provided for residents of Multnomah County:

🌐 Flood Data Viewers and Geospatial Data

🌐 Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries : Oregon HazVu: Statewide Geoha...

Oregon Statewide Wildfire Hazard Map

🌐 Oregon Natural Hazards & Social Vulnerability Map

🌐 Community Resources for Hazard Mitigation

Who and what should be included in evaluating preparedness?

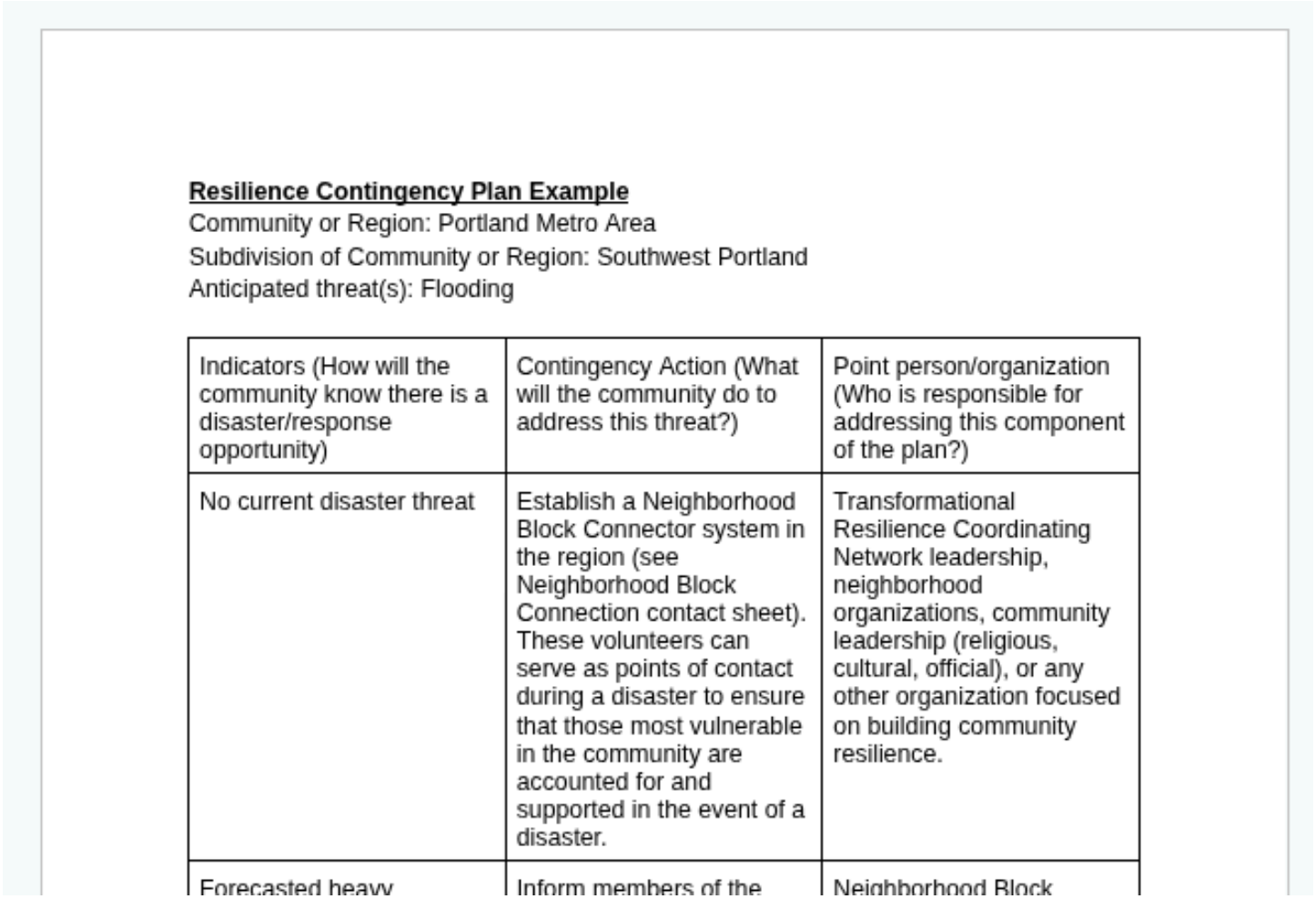
Incorporating the trauma informed principles of **safety** and **collaboration & mutuality**, it is essential to evaluate your community's level of preparedness in a way that incorporates the needs of all people throughout the region. Factors to consider include: community connection and relationships (do people in the community have established social relationships, can these connections be built or improved through preparation efforts?), previous experiences and trust in legal forces or first responders (has the community been harmed by organized responses in the past, do residents trust government agencies?), and stress and activation (how will previous disaster experiences inform future responses, does the community have strong social supports to serve as buffering factors in the event of a crisis, has the community taken steps to build mental health literacy through understanding the impacts of stress and activation?). Therefore, we recommend developing a contingency plan that centers community relationships, strengths, and thriving (rather than survival). An evaluation of your community's disaster responses and contingency plans can be assessed through the Trauma Informed Disaster Intervention Worksheet. This article presents a conversation with residents of Lincoln County about their efforts to build disaster response contingency plans in their community, highlighting an emergency preparedness practice that promotes knowledge of meeting points and other options in the event of a crisis or community disaster.: A Conversation about Emergency Preparedness in Lincoln County

Resources & Examples for this Act

Given that each contingency plan will look different based on the threats, needs, and resources present in your community, the following links and examples offer a starting place for considering how these strategies will materialize throughout your region.

🌐 Disaster Preparedness Plan

🌐 Contingency planning | IFRC



Resilience Contingency Plan Example
Community or Region: Portland Metro Area
Subdivision of Community or Region: Southwest Portland
Anticipated threat(s): Flooding

Indicators (How will the community know there is a disaster/response opportunity)	Contingency Action (What will the community do to address this threat?)	Point person/organization (Who is responsible for addressing this component of the plan?)
No current disaster threat	Establish a Neighborhood Block Connector system in the region (see Neighborhood Block Connection contact sheet). These volunteers can serve as points of contact during a disaster to ensure that those most vulnerable in the community are accounted for and supported in the event of a disaster.	Transformational Resilience Coordinating Network leadership, neighborhood organizations, community leadership (religious, cultural, official), or any other organization focused on building community resilience.
Forecasted heavy	Inform members of the	Neighborhood Block

The example below, produced by the City of Newport, Oregon, offers a framework for organizing a longitudinal preparation effort that involves incremental steps towards building community preparedness and resilience.

- Pacific Homes Beach Club Emergency Tips

Block Connections

Build a team of community members assigned to specific components of the contingency plan (block captains, supplies quartermasters, etc.). An example of a block connections effort is included below:

1. Divide a map of the region into blocks of 5-10 homes.
2. Outreach members of these ‘block divisions’, requesting support in the form of volunteer block captions.
3. Pair Block Captions that have adjacent blocks to serve as an ‘on the ground’ outreach team.

4. Pairs should go to each house within their block division, offer literature regarding the initiative along with HELP/OK signs and their contact information. This is an opportunity for Block Captains to practice community conscientization through explaining the goals of the block connections initiative while discussing any barriers to being prepared with residents.
5. Reminders of this program and organizational effort should be conducted regularly to accommodate any changes in preparedness barriers and ensure residents are maintaining awareness of this support option.
6. System optimization should be iterative and include feedback from Block Captains, residents, and emergency response officials to ensure best practices are being maintained.

A special thanks to Marianne Seifert of Lincoln County Public Health for providing these strategies and resources.

Neighborhood Block Connection Contact Sheet

How are those without transportation, or otherwise limited in their mobility, to be supported in the event of an evacuation or clear and present danger? [See Block Connector example above]

This contact sheet can provide Block Captains with information regarding the needs of those within their region, noting any needs or extenuating circumstances that may need to be addressed or considered in a disaster response scenario. Additional members of the household are also noted to ensure that all residents are accounted for during the response and recovery process.

Click here to download a printable version of the Neighborhood Block Connection Contact Sheet: 🌐 Neighborhood Block Connection Contact Sheet

Resident Name - Primary contact	**Additional Household Members**	**Primary Phone**	**Email Address**	**Residence Address**	**Additional Needs** (mobility, medication, etc.)	**Block Captain Contact**

ASK: Does your community have established rally points to serve as a convening place in the event of a crisis or disaster?

ACT: Ensure that rally points are established and relevant information is disseminated throughout the community.

Why rally points?

Rally points can offer a place where residents can meet and ensure those from within their community are out of immediate danger and accounted for before proceeding to additional disaster response actions. In addition to providing a meeting place, rally points can serve as a location to store first aid supplies, resident contact information, or any additional components of a resident-led immediate disaster response. Many communities have pre-determined rally points for residents to convene at during times of disaster or crisis. If these

already exist in your region, ensure that residents are aware through information disseminated by Block Captains or TRCNs. Otherwise, establishing a rally point can be an effective step in building community resilience and an opportunity to initiate discussions around disaster preparation.

Who should be included in this act?

While rally points can serve as beneficial gathering places in the event of an emergency, it is crucial to consider the needs and abilities of residents throughout the community when establishing a meeting spot. Are community members able to navigate to the location? Are Block Captains or other community members prepared to assist their neighbors during the rally process? Is this location safe in the event of a crisis? These considerations are vital when establishing rally points.

Resources & Examples for this Act

See below for examples from the Portland area regarding community rally points:

- Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Nodes (BEECNs) in Portland
- Multnomah County - Disaster Resource Centers

ASK: Is your community aware of the mental health impacts from the climate crisis?

ACT: Develop Universal Mental Wellness and Resilience Literacy & Foster Engagement in Activities that Promote Wellness and Resilience Literacy

What is universal mental wellness and resilience literacy?

Serving as a key foundational area of the International Transformational Resilience Coalition's TRCN initiative, universal mental wellness and resilience literacy is defined as a component of health literacy, that is, local residents are equipped with knowledge about mental health, trauma, and resilience and able to make decisions based on this understanding. Ensuring that members of the community understand the ways that disasters can cause trauma, limit the brain's ability to make decisions and process information, and complicate recovery processes is crucial to building a response to the climate crisis that is cognizant of the neurological underpinnings of these experiences. Although health literacy initiatives have been on the rise in the US, mental health and trauma are often left out of the conversation as these educational efforts take place. Given that there is no health without mental health, building community-wide mental health literacy serves to not only promote general wellbeing, but offers a framework for local residents to process and heal from their own experiences. Bob Doppelt of the ITRC recommends incorporating the following steps into a mental health literacy building initiative. While these components are not necessarily linear, it is further

recommended that community engage with each step sequentially to promote the development of essential skills across all residents.

- Knowledge of how traumatic stresses can affect the body, mind, emotions, and how to recognize signs of distress.
- Knowledge of and ability to use simple, self-administrable presencing and purposing resilience skills. (See *Resilience Cycle - Crisis*)
- Knowledge of and skills to assist others with mental health problems.
- Knowledge of how to obtain additional information and resources when experiencing mental health problems.
- Knowledge of how to seek treatment for personal mental health problems.

Why is it important?

Partnering with members of the community to build mental health and resilience literacy serves to provide an epistemological basis from which to develop action plans and organize residents. This can begin through assessing the most effective way to practice community conscientization around the mental health sequelae of extreme weather events, climate change driven ecological degradation, and unforeseen environmental impacts. The politicization of our climate, fueled by substantial efforts of the fossil fuel industry to sow doubt regarding the scientific substantiation of the C-E-B crisis, has necessitated a pragmatic approach to communicating the clear and present danger of environmental catastrophes. Effective development of resilience literacy can begin through framing climate crisis driven challenges as “extreme weather events” with acknowledgement of the physical and mental health, along with the economic and infrastructure loss, associated with these disasters. Conscientization around the population-level impacts of trauma, the longitudinal problems associated with adverse childhood experiences, and the necessity of community-wide collaboration to navigate these challenges are also essential in building population-level resilience.

Continuing community conscientization around the impacts of the climate crisis and the pathways towards Transformational Resilience inherently held within the community can serve to build community capacity for efforts that bolster addressing the diverse mental health needs of the region. Conscientization, or critical consciousness, builds upon the work of Paulo Friere and seeks to aid others in building an understanding of the political and socioeconomic conditions of their environment and using this knowledge to resist oppressive systems (More on Paulo Friere’s work). Through building an understanding of the deleterious impacts of the climate crisis on the community, members are then better equipped to change systems that contribute to these effects while understanding their own mental health and wellness within this context. Below, you’ll find resources to bolster community critical consciousness in the face of the climate crisis:

What should be included in this act?

Per the Resilience Coordinating Coalition guidebook (Doppelt, 2024), mental wellness and resilience literacy involves building the entire population's understanding of:

- How traumas and persistent, overwhelming (toxic) stresses can affect their body, mind, emotions, and behaviors, and undermine their mental wellness and resilience;
- Simple, self-administrable "Presencing" (or self-regulation and co-regulation) resilience skills and methods they can use to recognize signs of problems and deliberately calm themselves;
- Simple, self-administrable "Purposing" (or adversity-based growth) resilience skills and methods they can use to turn toward and learn from adversities and find new meaning, direction, and healthy hope; Knowledge and skills that enable them to support other people who experience mental health or psycho-social-spiritual problems;
- Knowledge of when and how to seek personal assistance and treatment for uncontrollable problems

Resources & Examples for this Act

Increase community conscientization regarding the impacts and manifestation of varying types of trauma, as pertaining specifically to the climate crisis and the historical context of the community. In a similar vein to building community conscientization around the climate crisis, connecting these events to residents' mental health and trauma activation can serve to build an understanding around the clear and present impacts of our changing environment on the daily lives and wellbeing of people globally. Below, you'll find resources for building an understanding of trauma, mental health, and their connection to the climate crisis.

The resources and suggestions below can serve as a starting point for building community mental health and resilience literacy:

- Trauma Informed Oregon trainings offer a variety of resources and skills-building opportunities for practitioners, community leaders, and those seeking to expand their knowledge of trauma-informed practices that support addressing the mental health impacts of the climate crisis.
- Build a community library of resources, publicly accessible to all members of the community.
- Host educational nights, bringing the community together for food and conversation about resilience and relationship building. These events can serve to initiate many of the aforementioned social connectivity opportunities.
- Offering resources and trainings for local practitioners to better address the impacts of the climate crisis in the lives of those in their community can serve to equip these professionals to offer support regarding building resilience factors in the lives of those in their care. The Climate Ambassador Training, offered online through Climate for Health, "equips health professionals with the knowledge, hands-on experience, and resources to speak and take action on climate change in their homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, communities, and beyond."
  - Climate for Health - Climate Ambassador Training
- The Community Resilience Initiative (CRI) is a close partner of the International Transformational Resilience Coalition. This resource page has been offered by the CRI, based in Walla Walla, WA, as an entry point to conscientization around the mental health impacts of adverse experiences, chronic stressors, and complex trauma. These resources

can be effective in building an understanding of individual and community resilience while offering an insight into the work underway at the CRI.
    - Community Resilience Initiative - Resource Library
- Another close partner of the ITRC, the Trauma Resource Institute operates out of Clairmont, NH and offers resources and trainings to cultivate "trauma-informed and resiliency-focused individuals and communities throughout the world." The link below offers an overview of these offerings and can provide an excellent starting point for continuing to develop population-level resilience and wellbeing in your community:
    - Trauma Resource Institute - Community Resiliency Model
- This example of a safety plan, available in both English and Spanish, can be used to help community members both establish options to maintaining mental wellness throughout personal and community challenges. As participants consider their support system, these exercises can be expanded to include specific disasters, challenges, and moments of crisis while setting the stage for increased preparedness.
    - Safety plan/Plan de seguridad
- Building a trauma informed community is an effective way to bolster resilience through understanding the impact of trauma and subsequently providing support to those impacted by these events. The link below offers free resources for building a trauma informed approach to community resilience.
    - Trauma Informed Community - Connected Community Toolkit
- Washington County, OR provides this extensive document that examines the impact of the climate crisis on mental health and options for addressing these impacts as both community members and practitioners.
    - Community members are offered the following recommendations to "build personal attributes and social support that will help to prepare for and recover from climate change–related mental trauma":
        - Build belief in one's own resilience.
        - Foster optimism.
        - Cultivate active coping and self-regulation skills.
        - Maintain practices that help to provide a sense of meaning.
        - Promote connectedness to family, place, culture, and community.
    - While community members are encouraged to engage in the following activities to prepare for climate crises and mitigate potentially severe impacts on their mental health
        - Make and practice household emergency plans.
        - Participate in mindset training to prepare for adversity and adaptation through increased awareness of our emotions.
        - Care for oneself through healthy habits.
        - Connect with family, friends, neighbors, and other groups to build strong social networks.
    - Read more about the impacts of the climate crisis on mental health and actionable steps available to both community members and practitioners here: Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance
- This brief infographic, also made available through Washington County, offers considerations for engaging with youth regarding climate anxiety while fostering resilience:
    - A path to a healthier planet for today's youth and generations to come

- While the climate crisis will substantially affect everyone on our planet, vulnerable populations are currently experiencing, and will continue to experience, more severe impacts on mental and physical health. The document below, produced by the EPA, offers educational resources for building an understanding of these disparities while offering considerations for including the broad range of climate impacts often present in a community:
  - Environmental Protection Agency - Climate Change and the Health of Socially Vulnerable People
- International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) Climate Community of Practice (CoP) Resource List 2022
  - This resource list was developed by participants of the International Resilience Coalition's 2022 Community of Practice. These resources include community resilience programs, trainings, resource videos, and examples of resilient community-based projects. This list has not been vetted by TIO.
- International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) Climate Community of Practice (CoP) Resource List
- The additional resources below can aid in continuing to build community understanding of the intersection of trauma, mental health, and the climate crisis.
  - Trauma Informed Oregon - Literature on ACEs and Trauma
  - Evaluation Report: Disaster Resilience Learning Collaborative
  - Trauma Informed Oregon - Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) through Community Resiliency
  - **Trauma psychologist Rob Gordon talks about disaster preparedness**

ASK: Does your community have a resilience hub or otherwise standardized meeting space?

ACT: Assess the efficacy of a resilience hub or meeting space in your community, ensuring that residents are included in the development and implementation of this asset.

What is a resilience hub?

Hubs can serve as valuable resources for certain populations, particularly when there is a foundation of trust between the residents and the hub. These hubs, which can include libraries, community centers, businesses, private homes, and even informal spaces like park benches, provide support, information, and essential resources before, during, and after disasters. They also function as central gathering points where individuals can connect to share information/resources, assess impacts of a crisis or climate change in general, and coordinate response efforts. However, their effectiveness depends on proximity, ease of access, and trust in both the organizers and fellow community members, with the added risk that the physical location itself may be compromised or inaccessible during a disaster.

Who should be included in this act?

Considering the trauma informed principles of **collaboration & mutuality**, **trust & transparency**, **and empowerment, choice, & voice**, it is vital to ensure that all community members are considered when developing a resilience hub or meeting space. **Cultural, historical, and gender issues** can be further considered when assessing which members of the community are typically excluded or underrepresented in resilience efforts, with the intention of bolstering inclusion or creating space for multiple options to be available when it comes to establishing a resilience hub or meeting space. It may be necessary to establish multiple resilience hubs (or similar initiatives) throughout the community to ensure **empowerment, choice, & voice** when it comes to how local residents engage in these resources and center community connection as a protective factor against the mental and physical health impacts of climate change.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Here is a story from Thrive East PDX about how resilience hubs have serve communities throughout the eastern Portland metro: 🌐 Community Resilience Initiative

- In conjunction with creating Resilience Hubs in your community, ensure that members are aware of structural resources and services available in the event of a disaster. This example illustrates the previously established resources already present in many communities across Oregon:
  - 🌐 Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Nodes (BEECNs)
- Further examples of resilience hubs in action:
  - Vashon Island, WA - Vashon Resilience Hub
  - Communities Responding to Extreme Weather - Resilience Hub
  - Unite Oregon - Community Resilience Hubs
  - Rogue Climate - Resilience Hubs
  - Oregon Just Transition Alliance - Community Resilience Hubs

ASK: Does your community have “hard skills” regarding disaster management or survival?

ACT: Develop local knowledge disaster response options, first aid, and resource navigation that serves to bolster opportunities for mutual aid and community preparedness.

Why are these components of preparedness important?

Given the compounded traumatic impacts on mental health stemming from the loss of resources to meet physical needs, such as food and shelter, and the potential for bodily harm to occur during or in the wake of a community crisis, it is essential to ensure residents throughout the area are prepared and equipped to meet these challenges. Upholding the TIC Principles of **Safety, Peer Support, and Collaboration & Mutuality**, these skills offer community members the opportunity to care for themselves and their neighbors while

diffusing the onus of preparing for any possible need across community members to ensure a balanced contribution to population-level resilience building. To this end, it may be beneficial to build these skills according to the expertise already latent within the community. For example, those already trained in first aid can teach these skills to others while remaining the "primary contact" in the community if this need should arise, while those with experience navigating organized response systems can shoulder this responsibility in the event of a crisis.

Who should be included in this act?

While these "hard skills" can be handled by specific groups in the community, it is also important for each community member to understand the contingencies in place for disaster response and have resources/supplies ready to meet their household (and then some) needs.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Emergency Management and Response

- Have threats, in addition to assets, been assessed throughout the community? Determining likely hazards and threats to the community can aid in bolstering a coordinated response plan that takes into account specific challenges and needs that may impact your region. However, it is important to maintain a strengths-based, community relationship centered approach while assessing threats, as fear-mongering or other non-trauma informed practices can serve to weaken a pragmatic, thoughtful response to challenges and crises. It is recommended that threat assessments be done after community asset mapping and strengths determination practices to ensure a focus on these constructive components of disaster preparedness and response.
  - FEMA - National Risk Index
  - Oregon National Risk Index document - FEMA - Oregon Risk Report
- Which specific trauma-informed interventions have been made available if these threats were realized? The attached worksheet offers an opportunity for community members and leadership to explore the available resources, interventions, and initiatives within a framework of the principles of trauma-informed care, offering a direct connection between the essential steps being undertaken by the community to address the impacts of the climate crisis and the vital considerations associated with a TIC framework. The use of this worksheet should be iterative, used throughout the intervention development process to note any gaps or needs in resources or planning. See the example below to get started!
  - Trauma Informed Disaster Response Worksheet
- Does your community have adequate resources and preventative measures in place if these threats were realized? Again, asset mapping can be a useful tool to ensure that any gaps in resources or planning are addressed according to the needs of the community and principles of TIC.
  - The 2023 Lahaina Fire on the Hawaiian island of Maui offers a glimpse into the challenges that can arise due to failures on the part of government and 'official' responses falling through in times of crisis. Infrastructure mismanagement,

compounded by severe winds, resulted in a quickly escalating wildfire accompanied by minimal forewarning to the local community on the part of officials. As a result, catastrophic loss of life and massive property damage ravaged the island community, leaving only residents to attend to the needs of their neighbors as a Federal response faltered. Disasters such as this fire underscore the often essential nature of maintaining close knit, organized local resilience initiatives to disseminate information throughout the community quickly and mount a response expeditiously following the emergency.

- Develop a one, 3, 7, 14, and 21 day plan specific to your communities assets and threats. After completing the aforementioned steps, planning contingencies for increments of time following a potential disaster or challenge can provide a tangible application of the assets, threats, and trauma-informed interventions worksheets. Below, you will find resources in aid in initiating this process, along with a story from an Oregon community about disaster preparation that speaks to inherent strengths and challenges.
  - Oregon Department of Emergency Management - "Be 2 Weeks Ready" toolkit
  - American Red Cross - Disaster Preparedness Plan
  - FEMA - Basic Preparedness
  - Story - Recipe for disaster: Oregon Coast group puts a twist on emergency food preparedness
- Satellite phones or alternative ways to communicate if lines are down or infrastructure is overwise incapacitated can serve as a vital preparatory measure to ensure ongoing coordination and support among members of the community or outside responders.
- Does your community's response plan include considerations for those most severely impacted by climate crises and disasters? The list below includes considerations for a wide range of populations potentially impacted by disasters in your community (Derezotes, 2025) :
  - Communities of color and those experiencing poverty - May live and work in vulnerable environments while experiencing resource disparities and housing mobility challenges.
  - Aging populations and those experiencing chronic health challenges - May experience mobility and health issues that complicate preparation and evacuation efforts while having an increased risk for the physical impacts of disaster events.
  - Immigrants and those with language barriers - May experience challenges regarding social isolation and resource challenges that complicate response coordination and evacuation.
  - Youth - Dealing with the physical and mental health impacts of the climate crisis and associated long-term trauma.

Survival & First Aid

- How are these skills represented in the community? Include community members with experience relevant to responding to medical and mental health emergencies in your community's asset map and ensure that they are prepared to respond if necessary during and after a disaster event.

- As a component of social connection, organize skills workshops to bolster these 'hard skills' that invite local residents to come together to learn from professionals or experts in first aid, disaster preparation and response, and resilience-building initiatives like community gardening.
- Are members of the community prepared to meet the specific health and safety needs of those in the population who are most vulnerable to challenges that arise from impacted infrastructure (mobility challenges, chronic health issues that require ongoing treatment/medication/support, the elderly, those with SPMI challenges, those living with special needs...)
  - Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response - Disaster Response for Homeless Individuals and Families: A Trauma-Informed Approach
- How can your community take steps towards building and sustaining food sovereignty and stability? See below for examples of these efforts in action:
  - Video - NAYA Community Garden
  - Take a virtual tour of Black Futures Farm, a Portland-based community organization seeking to "heal the connection between Black people and the land, and we achieve this by cultivating a healthy place for the Black community to gather in joy."
    - Black Futures Farm
    - Black Futures Farm - Virtual Tour
    - Click here for an example of Portland's community garden offerings and sign up process - Portland Parks & Recreation - Community Garden
    - And an example of these Portland-based community gardens in action to address food insecurity - Portland Parks & Recreation - Produce for People
  - NAYA - Food Sovereignty
  - Grow Portland - Youth outreach while learning gardening skills
  - University of Minnesota - 7 Effective Steps to Start a Community Garden
  - Plant a Seed and See What Grows - 6 Steps to Starting a Community Garden in Your Own Neighborhood
  - Oregon Community Food System Network

- Organize teams of local healthcare professionals and practitioners to be ready to meet the needs of community members in the event of a disaster. These can be people who specialize in medical responses, mental health first aid, or other domains that serve to address the immediate needs during and following a disaster.
  - Disaster Response Provider/Practitioner Outreach List

Navigating Disaster Resources

- Who can your community contact to follow up on government responses? Ensure that members of the community with experience interfacing with institutional response to disasters are prepared to incorporate these skills into your community's action plan. These members of the community can fill the role of liaison in the event of an emergency, maintaining knowledge of paperwork and official processes for obtaining resources and support. Ensure that members of the community ready to address this need are included in the Disaster Response Provider/Practitioner Outreach List.

ASK: Has your community developed a disaster intervention approach that considers trauma-informed practices?

ACT: Promote a local understanding of the impacts of trauma and the intersection of these impacts with disaster response and preparedness.

What are impacts of trauma when thinking about disaster response and preparedness?

Trauma and stress can affect how individuals respond to disaster situations. It can shape how people perceive risk, who they trust, and whether they seek help. During a crisis, stress and trauma responses can lead to heightened fear, withdrawal, or difficulty making decisions. For communities with historical or collective trauma, disaster responses may unintentionally exclude underrepresented communities due to linguistic, cultural, economic, or social inaccessibility.

Who should be included in this act?

People with lived experience with trauma and disasters, particularly individuals from underrepresented and historically made systemically vulnerable communities, must be at the center of this action. People who have survived disasters, systemic oppression, or intergenerational trauma carry essential local knowledge about what supports community connection, safety, and resilience long-term in their communities. Their insights can bring attention to missing areas in traditional disaster planning and challenge systems that unintentionally reproduce harm. This includes Indigenous elders, unhoused individuals, immigrants, disabled people, youth, and others whose needs and strengths are often overlooked. Community-based organizations and grassroots leaders who are already working with these communities can also play a critical role in reimagining disaster interventions from a trauma informed perspective. By grounding this Act in the voices and experiences of all community members, we can build disaster response and preparedness systems that are effective, relevant to all community members, and rooted in community resilience.

Resources for this Act

Trauma Informed Disaster Intervention Worksheet

The worksheet below offers an opportunity to connect community efforts and interventions with the Principles of Trauma Informed Care, building a picture of these principles in action while promoting a trauma informed disaster response plan.

For more information about the TIC Principles, visit: Trauma Informed Oregon - Six Principles of Trauma Informed Care

TIC Principle	Community Domain	Specific Intervention
Safety - Throughout the community, people feel physically and psychologically safe.	Example: *Block Captions (See PHBC Guide)*	Example: *Each resident within the block region has agreed to meet at a rally point in the event of a disaster, ensuring that those with additional needs receive support to do so.*
Trustworthiness and transparency - Efforts to bolster community resilience are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust.	Example: *TRCN Leadership*	Example: *All actions and meetings conducted by TRCNs are open to community participation and observation.*
Peer support and mutual self-help - These are integral to efforts to build community resilience and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.		
Collaboration and mutuality - There is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. The community recognizes that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach. One does not		

have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.		
Empowerment voice, and choice - Community aims to strengthen members' experience of choice and recognizes that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach. This builds on what individuals and communities have to offer, rather than responding to perceived deficits.		
Cultural, historical, and gender issues - The community actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases , offers culturally responsive services, leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.		

ASK: Has your community expanding on previous asset mapping efforts and developed a resilience action plan?

ACT: Develop a Neighborhood Resilience Action Plan

What is a Resilience Action Plan?

A Resilience Action Plan is a structured framework that helps communities prepare for, respond to, and grow from climate-related disasters while centering community connection and well-being. It should be developed by the community that will be impacted by the plan and implement it. It goes beyond traditional emergency preparedness by incorporating:

- Social and psychological support systems

- Long-term community sustainability
- Adaptive capacity building
- Mental health considerations
- Social equity and inclusion

Why Focus on Your Neighborhood or Community?

Neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of disaster resilience for several reasons:

1. Immediate Response: In disasters, neighbors are typically first responders
2. Shared Resources: Communities can pool resources and skills they have immediate access to
3. Social Support: Strong community relationships reduce the impact of stress and isolation
4. Local Knowledge: Residents understand and are invested in their area's unique challenges and strengths
5. Collective Action: Organized communities recover faster and more effectively

Steps for Mapping Assets and Resources

The first step of developing a neighborhood resilience action plan is mapping out your neighborhoods assets. While “mapping out assets” can sound intimidating, this can be as simple as a running document of all resources in your neighborhood you may have access to or as refined as mapping out resources with a spreadsheet and an actual map. However you approach this process, what is most important is knowing what is in your area in the event of an emergency.

1. Physical Assets: Physical assets can include any infrastructure that you feel would be helpful in the event of an emergency. This can include buildings and agencies and tangible materials in your area, like a neighbor’s power generator. It can feel discomforting to include private property in the resilience action plan. Yet, the development of the plan can be an opportunity to connect with neighbors with specific resources and needs. Consider the following physical assets that are walking distance from your neighborhood (i.e., 5 miles or less):

- Community centers and gathering spaces
- Parks and open areas
- Schools and religious buildings
- Medical facilities
- Local businesses with essential supplies
- Emergency shelter locations
- Water sources
- Power infrastructure
- 72 hour kits (with hand-cranked radio, solar powered charger)
- First aid kits
- Home generators
- Trucks
- Food storage

- Places of meaning (i.e., parks, common meet-up spots)

2. Human Resources: Human resources refer to the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of people in your neighborhood. During emergencies, knowing who has specific expertise can be crucial. While respecting privacy, create opportunities to discuss emergency preparedness with neighbors and document who is willing to help. Consider the following human resources within your neighborhood:

- Medical and Mental Health Professionals
- Emergency Response Trained Individuals
- Trade Professionals
- Community Support
  - Teachers and educators
  - Social workers
  - Childcare providers
  - Translators/interpreters
  - Care workers
  - Grief counselors
  - Community organizers
- Specialized Knowledge
  - People with local environmental knowledge
  - Those familiar with local government systems
  - Individuals with wilderness survival skills
  - People with food preservation knowledge
  - Those with experience in previous disasters
  - People well connected with the neighborhood

3. Social Networks: Social networks are the relationships and connections that help communities function and respond effectively during crises. These networks often become critical support systems during emergencies. Consider mapping the following social networks:

- Formal Organizations
  - Neighborhood associations
  - Homeowners' associations
  - Block watch groups
  - PTAs and school networks
  - Religious congregations
  - Cultural organizations
  - Service clubs (Rotary, Lions Club, etc.)
  - Environmental groups
- Informal Networks
  - Parent groups
  - Walking groups
  - Book clubs
  - Garden clubs
  - Sports teams/leagues

    - Social media groups
    - Mutual aid networks
    - Neighborhood chat groups (WhatsApp, NextDoor, etc.)
- Made Vulnerable Population Networks
    - Senior citizen support groups
    - Disability advocacy networks
    - Single parent support groups
    - Immigrant/refugee communities
    - Youth organizations
    - LGBTQ+ support networks
    - Recovery communities
- Business Networks
    - Local business associations
    - Farmers' markets
    - Food co-ops
    - Small business alliances
    - Local chambers of commerce
- Support System Networks
    - Meal delivery networks
    - Transportation assistance groups
    - Childcare sharing circles
    - Tool-lending libraries
    - Food banks and pantries
    - Clothing exchanges
    - Emergency housing networks

Important Considerations for Network Mapping:

1. Relationship Building
    - Create opportunities for regular interaction
    - Host community events
    - Establish communication channels
    - Build trust before disasters occur
2. Network Maintenance
    - Regular updates of contact information
    - Periodic check-ins with network leaders
    - Documentation of network capabilities
    - Identification of network gaps
3. Communication Protocols
    - Establish primary and backup communication methods
    - Create phone trees or text groups
    - Develop offline communication plans
    - Consider language and accessibility needs
4. Network Integration
    - Connect different networks to each other
    - Create resource-sharing agreements
    - Develop collaborative response plans

- Build cross-network relationships

The strength of social networks often determines a community's resilience during and after disasters. Focus on building and maintaining these connections during normal times to ensure they function effectively during emergencies.

Addressing Gaps in Care, Shelter, and Psychological Support

Identifying and addressing gaps in your resilience action plan requires a thoughtful, systematic approach that considers both immediate needs and long-term resilience. Begin by conducting regular community assessments through informal conversations, surveys, or community meetings. These discussions should focus on understanding who might need extra support during emergencies – this may include older neighbors, people with disabilities, families with young children, those with chronic health conditions, and people who may not have the financial means to personally prepare for disasters.

Work on building a network of support before disasters strike. Consider training community members in psychological first aid – a skill that helps people support others in the immediate aftermath of a crisis. Establish regular community gatherings where people can build relationships and discuss their concerns openly. These connections become crucial during emergencies, as they help prevent isolation and provide emotional support when formal systems are overwhelmed.

For shelter considerations, take a collaborative approach. Focus on creating a distributed network of shelter options rather than relying on a single location. Work with local property owners and faith-based organizations to identify potential emergency shelter locations that are walkable and accessible. Additionally, consider what external social connections people may have in the event that these local emergency shelters are also impacted by a disaster. Consider creating agreements with local hotels or apartment complexes for emergency housing. When mapping shelter resources, think beyond basic roof-and-walls shelter – this means planning for privacy areas, quiet spaces for children or sensitive individuals, and areas where people can maintain their daily routines as much as possible.

Care gaps often become apparent in the details – medication storage, backup power for medical devices, access to specific dietary needs, or stress regulation. Address these by creating neighborhood resource lists and buddy systems. Encourage households to share their specific needs with trusted neighbors who can check on them during emergencies. Create neighborhood care teams that can coordinate responses to specific needs – for example, one team might focus on checking on older residents, while another coordinates pet care for evacuated families.

This process relies on regular communication and updating plans. Host annual community meetings to review and update your resource lists and support networks. Create clear, accessible documentation of available resources and how to access them. Develop multiple communication channels – both tech-reliant (like neighborhood apps and text groups) and

tech-independent (like predetermined meeting points and bulletin boards) – to ensure information can flow even when normal systems are disrupted.

What works during the first 24 hours of an emergency might not be sustainable for a longer crisis. Plan for different time horizons – immediate response (first 72 hours), short-term support (up to two weeks), and longer-term recovery (months). For each phase, identify the most critical needs and create specific action plans to address them. This might mean organizing neighborhood skill-shares where people can learn basic first aid, psychological first aid, emergency food preparation, or stress management techniques.

Most importantly, approach gap analysis and planning with a spirit of community building. Every conversation about emergency preparedness is an opportunity to strengthen neighborhood bonds and build trust. When people feel connected to their neighbors and confident in their community's ability to support each other, they're better able to weather crises and maintain social cohesion through challenging times.

Engaging Local Agencies and First Responders Suggestions

When finalizing your resilience action plan, you may be interested in connecting with local agencies and first responders for their recommendations and awareness of what resources your neighborhood can depend on in the event of a disaster. Before contacting other partners, it is recommended that as a community, planners review trust, safety, and the current relationship neighbors may have with local agencies and first responders. Hold space for positive and negative relationships, recognizing that people with a history of trauma or systematic oppression, older adults, people with disabilities, and others may have differing experiences with local partners. Review with the group which local agencies and first responders the neighborhood feels safe enough establishing a connection with in the resilience action plan.

1. Initial Outreach

- Contact local emergency management office
- Connect with fire and police departments
- Reach out to public health departments
- Engage with social services
- Partner with mental health agencies

2. Building Relationships

- Invite agencies to community meetings
- Participate in emergency preparedness training
- Join local emergency planning committees
- Share your community's specific needs and concerns
- Establish regular communication channels

3. Integration Strategies

- Align community plans with official protocols
- Create clear communication pathways
- Participate in joint training exercises
- Share resource inventories
- Develop mutual aid agreements

Resilience Action Plan Template

1. Community Profile

- Who is in your neighborhood?
- What are the geographic boundaries of this plan?
- How would you describe the history and culture of this community?
- Who are the existing networks, groups, and leaders?

2. Assessment

- What is this plan for? (i.e., wildfires, smoke, earthquake, etc.)
- What are the potential concerns and past impacts of these risks?
- What resource gaps should be identified?
- What resources are available in the community?
- How would you describe this community's social cohesion/connection and wellbeing?

3. Action Items

Connection & Communication

- Form coordination team
- Create contact lists
- Map resources
- Establish communication protocols
- Community outreach
- Identify core trainings or narrative alignment (i.e., CPR, psychological first aid)

Preparation

- Develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships
- Develop emergency procedures
- Create resource sharing agreements in the event of an emergency
- Build agency relationships

Long-term Actions

- Conduct annual drills
- Update resource maps
- Develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships
- Develop sustainable practices

Evaluation and Updates

- Community gatherings or different ways people can update the plan
- Annual or as needed resource updates
- Update procedures as needed

Remember: A successful Resilience Action Plan is a living document that grows and evolves with your community's needs and experiences. Regular updates, community involvement, and attention to both physical and psychological resilience are key to long-term success.

Neighborhood Resilience Action Plan Template

Asset	Contact Information	Notes & Opportunities for Collaboration
Physical Assets (Community centers and gathering spaces, Parks and open areas, Schools and religious buildings, Medical facilities, Local businesses with essential supplies, Emergency shelter locations, Water sources, Power infrastructure, 72 hour kits (with hand-cranked radio, solar powered charger), First aid kits, Home generators, Trucks, Food storage, Places of meaning (i.e., parks, common meet-up spots), etc.)		
Human Resources (Medical and Mental Health Professionals, Emergency Response Trained, Individuals, Trade Professionals, Community Support, Specialized Knowledge, etc.)		

Social Networks (Formal Organizations, Informal Networks, Made Vulnerable Population Networks, Business Networks, Support System Networks, etc.)		

ASK: Has your community sought to expand residents' social networks as a protective factor against climate crisis impacts?

ACT: Build residents' social support networks, offering opportunities to establish relationships across the community to serve as protective factors in the event of a crisis while creating spaces to share experiences.

Why build community social support networks?

Social supports and relationships across the community can serve as protective, or buffering, factors that aid residents in preparing for, responding to, and healing from a crisis or disaster. These connections serve to not only improve mental health, but create a community of mutually supportive residents that are prepared to offer each other aid in the event of a crisis. According to Bob Doppelt of the ITRC, community members with positive social connections are typically more trusting of others and willing to cooperate under duress, which in turn encourages others to more trusting and cooperative. Additionally, he notes that people who feel connected to others have lower rates of mental health challenges in conjunction with higher self-esteem and more empathy for others. Thus, establishing strong social connections throughout the community can create a positive feedback loop that enhances wellness throughout the whole person.

Resources & Examples for this Act

The suggestions below offer examples and prompts to begin promoting social connections across communities:

- Organize social events that build community connections centered upon transformational resilience, opening conversations around mental health and the climate crisis. Prioritize relationship building, as these links serve as protective factors in disaster situations. Strong ties can facilitate challenging conversations around personal subjects, such as mental health and emergency preparedness, while peripheral connections serve as points of immediate support in the event of a crisis. To this end, it can be beneficial to organize a "Community Connectivity Coalition" that is tasked with pursuing and creating opportunities for social engagement and relationship building across typically separated groups across the local community. This can take the form of:
  - Activity groups, such as recreation or community improvement/cleanup through gardening and garbage removal;
  - Gatherings such as block parties or regionally-relevant celebrations;
  - Educational events that feature guest speakers and community members knowledgeable in local ecology, sustainability, and resilience building;
  - Food-oriented events that feature local, sustainable options that support members of the community while bringing them together;
  - Entertainment, such as movies or plays, that involve utilizing public space to bring members of the community together to meet and relax;
  - Local environment clean-up initiatives, bringing together local residents to address liter, pollution, or habitat degradation through completing community-led projects.
  - Any other events that serve both the interests of local residents while building community connections as a protective factor.
- Seek to partner with community members and organizations that can develop culturally-attuned spaces for affinity and identity, such as Raíces de Bienestar, that offers culturally-grounded healing spaces and services for the Latine Community to reclaim their mental health
- Utilize free, web-based tools (such as Nextdoor, social media, email distribution lists, etc.) to build social connection within the community while ensuring information can be disseminated quickly and easily in the event of an emergency
- Build community conscientization around the public health crisis of loneliness and isolation, encouraging the intentional formation of social connections through utilizing resources that address this ongoing global challenge.
  - Foundation for Social Connection Action Network
  - Foundation for Social Connection
  - Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection
- Establish a community garden, offering residents an opportunity to build relationships around healthy, organic foods while developing skills that contribute to food sovereignty and disaster resilience. Growing food for the community further presents opportunities for connection as harvested items are distributed throughout the community via donation baskets, contributions to groups serving those living with food insecurity, and farmer's market events that bring neighbors together. Through healing the land and providing sustenance to those in need throughout the community, cultural wisdom and practices can also be centered in a way that is cognizant of the **Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues**, preserving these land-restorative ways of community provision that have

been oppressed due to a dependence on current industry. See here for current initiatives regarding community gardening and food sovereignty underway at the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA): https://nayapdx.org/services/community-garden/

- Residents can organize to petition local governments and authorities to prioritize responses to the climate crisis that consider the mental health impacts throughout the community. This can materialize through the formation of groups that contact legislators, provide testimony, and support candidates that run on transformational resilience oriented platforms. Residents can even take these initiatives a step further through getting involved in local government themselves, seeking to champion the resilience of their communities through promoting transformational resilience on the legislative level.
  - Here are some resources for contacting your legislators and providing testimony.
    - Oregon State Legislature - How to Testify in Committee Meetings
    - Portland Children's Levy - Public Testimony and Meeting Guide
  - These resources and action steps from the American Public Health Association focus on legislative advocacy while drawing connections between the climate policy and public health: American Public Health Association - #ActOnClimate
- Partner with local organizations, professions, and venues to host "industry nights", offering an opportunity for community members involved in first response, healthcare, local politics, and other influential groups to come and engage in a personable way around opportunities for addressing the climate crisis and its mental health sequelae available via their profession.
- Utilizing local leadership and practitioners
  - Explore partnership and engagement with local faith communities, affinity groups, and interest-based clubs to organize neighborhood connection activities. These gatherings can be useful in building connectivity and cross-organizational relationships while serving as a starting point for developing resilience action plans and Block Connector strategies. The aforementioned groups may already have contingency plans in place regarding natural disasters or crises, offering an opportunity to share strategies across organizations in the community. During the response to the 2020 Rogue Valley Almeda Fire, local faith leaders, business owners, and community mental health practitioners banded together with members of the community to organize donations, assist in navigating resources, and provide for immediate needs such as food and clothing. Through using the networks of support and relationships with the community developed previously, these disaster responses were streamlined in a way that facilitated effective, expeditious, and culturally-attuned assistance to members of the community. In anticipation of continuing natural disasters and climate crisis associated events, organizing leaders from diverse sectors and communities across the region and establishing contingency plans for these challenges can serve to bridge the gap of large-scale responses while building social connections between these groups and leaders. See here for a story about these connections in action: Jefferson Public Radio - The Almeda Fire: One Year Later
- Distribute an opt-in check-in list for folks with chronic health/mobility/mental health challenges. This document could include lists of medications, safety plans, contact information for residents' supports that live out of the area.
- Introduce affinity-based support groups that seek to utilize language, practices, and organizational styles that speak to participants. Both the climate crisis and mental health can be challenging for some members of the community to feel comfortable discussing,

and the opportunity to join trusted people in dialogue centered upon these topics can open the door to fruitful conversations. For example, addressing the impacts of the climate crisis can be framed as responding to “severe weather events”, while those with presuppositions regarding mental health stigmas may respond to considering the challenges that the climate crisis may have on overall community wellbeing, particularly for the most vulnerable members.
    - Men's “Coffee in a Barn” support groups foster conversations around the impact of the climate crisis on mental health in a casual, culturally-attuned setting that is member-led and facilitated. These conversations, framed as an opportunity to build social connections in the community, offer residents the agency and autonomy to discuss challenges and needs through language that upholds the values and concerns relevant to the community in question. Through similar frameworks, often politically fraught topics can be explored and addressed in a way that feels salient to the group.
    - The Community Resilience Initiative’s framing of the climate crisis as severe weather events and associated disasters offers an insight into ‘packaging’ these challenges in a way that invites community members into efforts to address these issues, using language that avoids terminology that has become politized or otherwise taboo. - Community Resilience Initiative

Story Circles *modified from process developed by Roadside Theater 1999*

What is a story circle?

Story Circle is a group of people sitting in a circle, telling personal stories, led by a Story Circle facilitator. Each Story Circle is different according to its purpose.

What is and is not a story?

- A story is a narrative of events drawn from the teller’s personal experience.
- A story is not a lecture, an argument, a debate, or an intellectualization, although these elements may be part of a story.
- A story can be fashioned from a memory, a dream, a reflection, a moment in time, or more.

Story Circles Set Up:

- A quiet space with good acoustics where interruptions are unlikely to occur.
- Consist of from 5 to 15 people sitting in a circle without notepads, pocketbooks, etc., and
- Have one trained facilitator who begins, oversees, and ends the Circle.
- Have a stated time period in which the Story Circle will take place.
- Have a purpose articulated by the leader and agreed to by the participants.
- Allow for silences between stories.
- Be as much about listening as about telling.

The Facilitator’s Role:

- Be clear about the purpose of the particular circle. (Connection to the land, building intergenerational relationships, experience of race)

- Know, or determine with the group, the theme for the particular circle. The theme must complement the story circle's purpose. For example, if the purpose is to explore cultural identity, a circle theme could be family holiday traditions. If the purpose is to get to know neighbors, the theme of the circle might be stories of home.
- Introduce themselves, describe the circle's purpose and theme, and state the time the Story Circle will end.
- Tell the rules of the Story Circle and answer participants' questions about them.
- Emphasize the idea that listening to the stories of others is as important as telling your own, noting that deep listening can engender a meditative quality in the circle.
- Discourage participants from thinking too much about what they will say when it is their turn, asking them to trust that their story will come from their listening to the stories of the others.
- Tell the group how long the circle will last, and ask participants to pace the length of their stories to the time available, taking into consideration the number of participants. For example, if there are 12 people in the Circle and 60 minutes for storytelling, each story should be approximately 5 minutes in length.
- Announce the manner in which the facilitator will politely indicate to a teller that he or she has passed the time limit and needs to wrap-up the story.
- Begin the circle with a story that sets the tone for the purpose and theme of the circle, or state the theme and ask who in the circle would like to tell the first story.
- After the first story, go around the circle clockwise or counterclockwise, with each person telling or passing when it is their turn. The rotation continues until everyone has told a story.
- Reserve time after the telling for participants to reflect on what has just transpired by asking everyone for their observations and comments.
- If appropriate, ask, "What invitation to action do you hear in the stories shared?" Then ask: "What invitations do you hear for us as a group as a result of the stories shared?" You can have people write down their response or share them out loud depending on time.
- When possible, end with a group song or poem (perhaps taught and led by a participant) that brings closure to the spirit of the particular Story Circle.
- End the Story Circle on time.

Story Circle Rules

- There is only one Story Circle facilitator.
- There are no observers – only participants.
- Participants speak only when it is their turn.
- People are in charge of their own sharing. Anyone can decide to pass, knowing their turn will come around again.
- Each participant should seek to honor the time limit so that everyone has a chance to share.
- After everyone in the Circle has had the opportunity to speak or pass, the rotation begins again for those who have passed.
- Listening deeply is the most important part of the Story Circle experience.
- Participants should not distract themselves by thinking ahead about what story they will tell. Rather, participants should listen to the stories told, and, when it is their turn, tell a story brought to mind by the previous stories, or pass.

- Participants and the facilitator never comment upon another participant's story other than to say, when it is their turn, "That story reminds me of . . ."
- There is no cross-talk in a Story Circle
- We are here to listen and bear witness to each other's experience. We are not here to fix or advise one another.

For additional information about facilitating Story Circles, click here: Story Circles.docx

A special thanks to The Hearth for providing this document. For more information about this organization and their work, visit The Hearth • Real Stories by Regular Folks

ASK: Has your community made efforts towards creating healthy, safe, just, and equitable local conditions?

ACT: Seek to build climate-resilient conditions and infrastructure while creating a community that is healthy, safe, and just.

What is a "Just Transition"?

A *just transition* is a vision and process that prioritizes building a future rooted in justice, equity, and safety as communities respond to and prepare for the climate crisis. It calls for more than simply returning to "normal" after a disaster or disruption—especially when that normal has long been shaped by systemic inequities, environmental injustice, and generational trauma. Instead, a just transition seeks to transform the physical, economic, and ecological conditions of a community so that they are resilient, sustainable, and designed for the well-being of all, not just a few.

Why is this important?

This is important because the climate crisis disproportionately affects those who are already burdened by structural inequalities. Without intentional efforts to center equity and healing, recovery efforts can reinforce the very systems that make communities vulnerable in the first place. A Just Transition insists that resilience means not just bouncing back—but building forward into a more inclusive and just future where no one is left behind.

Resources & Examples for this Act

- Complete a Just Transition checklist - Available along with several other resilience development checklists as a component of the International Transformational Resilience Coalition's Resilience Coordinating Network Handbook.
- Examples & Resources
  - Example from Lincoln County - Newport's PREPARE IN A YEAR
  - Healthier Together Oregon - Healthy Communities

    - Beyond Toxics
    - Psychology Today - Resilience Test
    - Healthy Places by Design - Community Action Model
- A salient component of building/creating a safe, equitable, and just living environment involves ensuring a community free of environmental toxins, which serve to disrupt both healthy human functioning and the natural ecology to which people are inexorably tied. Lead and other heavy metals, runoff from agricultural and industrial chemicals, and pollution generated by human waste and refuse all contribute to longitudinal health impacts that disproportionately affect communities already impacted by structural and systemic oppression. As one's physical health and local ecology is degraded by environmental toxins, deleterious effects can be experienced regarding mental health, cognition, and healthy development in children. Additionally, many common environmental toxins, such as lead, directly contribute to or exacerbate mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety. Efforts to ameliorate these impacts can initiate with the organization of a team tasked with the evaluation of environmental toxin sources throughout the community, seeking to discuss these challenges with those most affected while offering advocacy, information and resources, and legal recourse to limit the degree that our bodies and land are poisoned by corporate interests or lack of top-down action. Through ensuring that the baseline environment is free from or limited in environmental toxins, communities are better equipped to meet the challenges of the climate crisis while building a safe, healthy future for all residents.
    - Oregon Environment Council
- Creating healthy, safe, and equitable conditions can begin with leaders in the community, ranging from TRCN leadership, those in charge of community-based organizations, and culturally influential individuals, seeking to model environmentally conscious consumption and limiting their contribution to the C-E-B crisis. This can take the form of ensuring that materials used in community meetings and the day to day operations of pursuing a 'Just Transition' are ecologically responsible (recyclable items, non-toxic materials, eco-friendly energy, etc.) while offering resources to facilitate an individualized examination of these practices for community members.
    - Ecological Footprint Calculator
    - Ecological Footprint Overview
- Create localized Ecological Regeneration Innovation Teams that engage residents regarding strategies that promote sustainable practices and preservation of natural resources and lands. These teams can partner with local organizations and groups to implement practices that reduce waste, consumption, and longitudinal impacts that negatively affect the local natural environment. Additionally, these efforts can center on taking an active role in the regeneration of natural spaces through strategic planting, trash removal, and community conscientization around the value of maintaining these vital resources. In a similar vein to the Ecological Regeneration Innovation Teams, Habitat Restoration Teams can be organized to pursue the revitalization of community natural spaces and vital ecological resources such as waterways and conservation areas. These teams can use their knowledge and resources, gleaned through the volunteer efforts and expertise of community members, to in turn promote conscientization around the crucial practices that serve to maintain a healthy, just, and transformational resilient community.

    - Click here to learn about work currently underway to restore portions of the Willamette River - Willamette Riverkeeper's Habitat Restoration Program
    - Click here to learn more about work underway by the Oregon Natural Desert Association that "sustains and enhances the health of Oregon's high desert through stewardship and restoration." - Oregon Natural Desert Association
    - Click here to learn about SOLVE Oregon and their work to clean and maintain the state's natural spaces and ecosystems - SOLVE Oregon
- Seek to provide opportunities for building leadership skills and community-driven relationships for members of the community typically excluded from these opportunities. Below, you'll find examples of leadership and community building initiatives that serve BIPOC communities throughout Oregon.
    - 🌐 AfroVillage
    - 🌐 Home | The BIPOC Rise Moor
    - 🌐 Oregon Futures Lab
- These guiding questions from Derezotes (2025) can serve as a framework through which to develop community-led initiatives that seek to both protect and heal the natural environment while building transformational resilience for local residents.
    - Five questions to consider when seeking to protect nature

1. What do we want to protect?
2. Why does it need protection?
3. What do we need to do to protect it?
4. What are the known potential impacts of such "protection" (and lack of protection) on the larger ecosystem?
5. With which human individuals and populations do we need to cooperate to get this done?

Resilience Cycle - Crisis

*This portion of the **Resilient Oregon Toolkit & Resource Guide** offers recommendations and opportunities for communities currently in the 'crisis' stage of the resilience cycle. These skills and resources can aid in responding to these acute mental wellness and physical health impacts of climate crisis disasters while maintaining community connections that serve as protective factors in the face of these disasters.*

ASK: Do members of your resilience coalition use regulation skills to maintain purpose throughout meetings and efforts?

ACT: Develop universal mental wellness and resilience literacy through encouraging the regular practice and utilization of both presencing and purposing skills.

What are Presencing Skills?

Presencing Skills offer those engaged in resilience building initiatives opportunities to center self-care and reflection throughout their practice. It's recommended to initiate gatherings with a Resilience Pause, inviting regulation and calm into the meeting space before embarking on efforts to address community challenges and traumas. The prompts below offer starting points for incorporating Resilience Pauses into your work, however, it's essential to center the cultural and emotional needs of participants through offering moments of reflection that honor these essential components of inclusion.

What are Purposing Skills?

Centering the purpose of work being undertaken by the community to build resilience in the face of the climate crisis is essential to maintaining a focus and mental wellness during adversities. It can be beneficial for members of TRCNs or other resilience-oriented groups to establish a list of shared values that serve as overarching guides to reflect on throughout the work. Developing a document of shared values can further contribute to the **Collaboration and Mutuality** principle of trauma-informed work as community members engage in a shared understanding of the essential purpose of their resilience building efforts. These purposes or values can be incorporated into the coalition's community agreement and continue to be revisited in conjunction with the initiative's bylaws.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Resilience Pause - Bright Spot

Participants are invited to spend a moment reflecting on a "bright spot", or positive point of gratitude, that they have experienced since the last gathering. A round of sharing can then commence, offering an opportunity to introduce community members and share encouragement before undertaking often challenging work.

Resilience Pause - Box Breathing

Group members are welcome to find a comfortable body position, placing their feet flat on the floor and feeling the support of their chair. An intentional pattern of breathing, involving a 5-second inhale, 5-second breath hold, 5-second exhale, and a final 5-second breath hold can then invite participants to focus on their body and relax the senses. This breathwork can continue until group members are ready to begin their meeting.

Resilience Pause - Reset Button (Adapted from Doppelt, 2024)

Begin by taking 3-5 long deep breaths. Don't worry about the shape of the breath. Just allow your body to breathe in whatever way feels comfortable.

After you have taken a number of breaths, bring your awareness to your inner experience.

Begin by spending about a minute or so noticing your body sensations. Examine your body for sensations that are pleasant, neutral, or unpleasant. Once again, do not judge them or try

to change them in any way. Just notice the physical sensations that exist in your body in the present moment.

Now, keep your attention focused inward and turn your attention to any emotions that are present. Are you feeling happy, sad, excited, or depressed? As with your thoughts, don't become engaged in the emotions, judge them, or try to change them in any way. For a minute or so just notice the emotions that exist at this moment in time.

When you are ready, shift your attention to the thoughts that are going through your mind at this present moment. Are you thinking about something that happened in the past such as regret, disappointment, or a traumatizing event? Are you planning something in the future or imagining a difficult or frightening situation? Are you thinking about an existing noise, pain somewhere in the body, or how to do this exercise? Spend a minute noticing the types of thought going through your mind.

Strive to notice the types of thought going into your mind without getting caught up in the content of those thoughts. As best as possible, acknowledge the thoughts as temporary mental events that come and go, much like clouds moving across the sky. Don't try to change them, and don't judge them in any way. Just notice the types of thought that are popping into your mind at the present time.

After noticing your thoughts, bring your attention back to your breath and inhale and exhale slowly 3-5 times. When you are ready, bring your attention back to the external world.

ASK: Is your community prepared to navigate challenging inter-personal interactions as it addresses the impacts of the climate crisis?

ACT: Develop universal mental wellness and resilience literacy through incorporating conflict resolution strategies into regular gatherings and disaster response plans.

What is this?

Developing mental wellness and resilience literacy means to promote mental wellness and resilience by making knowledge about trauma, mental health, and resilience accessible to all. This involves shared language about trauma-informed approaches, fostering a community-wide understanding of mental health, and addressing mental health stigma that deters talking about and mental health. It means equipping all community members with shared tools and language to navigate stress, disagreement, and trauma in ways that promote healing, collaboration, and cohesion—before, during, and after a crisis.

Why is it important?

When communities face disaster or prolonged stress, people naturally experience intense physical and mental reactions, such as increased heart rate, difficulty breathing, fear, and shattered trust. If these reactions are not acknowledged and addressed, they can evolve into harmful, long-term effects. Over time, entire communities may become trauma-organized, showing signs of despair, distrust, and division, marked by low empathy, increased substance use, aggression, or denial. This impacts a community's ability to problem-solve, care for one another, or even envision healing. Left unaddressed, these patterns can lead to systemic problems like racism, polarization, and declining health outcomes. By building shared skills in conflict resolution and emotional resilience, we can interrupt these cycles early, support individual and collective healing, and prevent trauma from shaping the foundation of our community life.

Resources & Examples for this Act:

Incorporating conflict resolution strategies

Anticipate potential challenges that may arise when agencies and organizations from outside the community arrive after a disaster, incorporating knowledge from the Government Resource Liaison (see *Navigating Disaster Resources*).

- Centering the trauma-informed principle of **Trust and Transparency** can be helpful in mitigating intra-community conflict. All decisions and actions supported by the TRCN steering committee, Block Connection initiatives, and other resilience-oriented organizations throughout the community should be made openly, with the *why* of each action made fully known by all participants and members.
- In all resilience-focused organizational efforts, the trauma-informed principle of **Collaboration and Mutuality** should be centered through the establishment of a living community agreement document. This list of considerations and bylaws should be developed via group consensus and reviewed regularly (e.g. at the start of each meeting, as a component of regular newsletters or communications, etc.), forming the basis for the way the effort operates and members contribute to these efforts. Having a predetermined decision-making process that has been agreed upon by all members further serves to center the trauma-informed principle of **Safety**, ensuring that there are no 'surprises' when it comes to the operations of the resilience effort in question.

Considerations for engaging in dialogue (Adapted from Derezotes, 2025)

- Listen with the intention of understanding
- Use respect when speaking, considering the impact of words and the audience receiving this dialogue.
- Offer contributions to the dialogue from a place of lived experience and personal belief, avoiding speaking for others in the group.
- Ensure that several other group members have a chance to contribute before choosing to speak again.
- Hold space for beliefs, thoughts, and feelings that may differ from your own.
- Take responsibility for your learning edges, judgement, and biases.

- Avoid interrupting others, contradicting the lived experiences or impacts of the climate crisis in the lives of others, or engage in side conversations that serve to dissection those in the room.
- Refrain from monopolizing time, ensuring that others have a chance to share.
- Avoid embodying the role of a teacher or preacher, making space for the expertise, wisdom, and lived experience of others.

Honoring Tension and Discomfort

The following resources have been produced by Trauma Informed Oregon and offer strategies for hosting trauma-informed meetings, navigating conflict, and honoring tension that may arise while discussing the impacts of the climate crisis on community wellbeing.

Given that severe weather events, natural disasters, and the impact of the climate crisis on the stability of day to day life can have a substantial effect on local residents' ability to co-regulate and communicate, it may be necessary to honor tension during all portions of the resilience cycle. The tips and considerations below, developed by Trauma Informed Oregon staff, offer opportunities to aid local residents in navigating challenging conversations that serve to bolster the social connections that serve as protective factors throughout the community.

Normalize discomfort early and often

- Welcome dissonance
- Invite & gracefully receive feedback
- Offer choice in engagement
- Co-create "Discomfort Agreements"
- Give it shared language/gestures

Name the elephant - What is in the room that isn't being said?

- Referring to an obvious problem or difficult situation that people do not want to discuss or address.
- These factors can often add tension to community resilience conversations that are already challenging and are worth noting in an effort to honor tension and open dialogue opportunities for all residents;
    - Varying or Opposing Values
    - World Events
    - Varying Opinions on Right Action
    - Differences in Lived Experience
    - Politics
    - Preconceived ideas regarding climate change, mental health, or community collaboration.

Know your limits

- It's okay to say you don't know
- Practice cultural humility

- Tap out when needed

Additional Facilitation Resources from Trauma Informed Oregon

- TIO Resource Library
- TIO Implementation Tool
- Embodiment Practices for TIC
- Tip Sheet Compendium
  - Managing Monopolizing Conversations
  - Repairing Harm In Meetings
  - Oversharing Personal or Activating Information
  - Interrupting Harmful and Oppressive Language
  - Elevating Voices and Increasing Representation
  - Vocabulary and Definitions
- Hosting a Trauma Informed Meeting Checklist
- Inter- and Intra- Personal Conflict Scenarios Worksheet
- Trauma Informed Facilitator Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities (KSA's)

Resilience Cycle - Recovery

*This portion of the **Resilient Oregon Toolkit & Resource Guide** offers recommendations and opportunities for communities currently in the 'recovery' stage of the resilience cycle. These skills and resources can aid in addressing the impacts of the climate crisis following an acute disaster or community-wide impact while continuing to build social connections and mutual support to promoting the restoration of population-level wellness.*

ASK: Does your community provide space for those impacted by the climate crisis to share their experiences and build supportive social connections?

ACT: Establish regular opportunities for local residents to share their experiences and provide mutual support throughout the recovery process.

Why is this important?

Healing doesn't happen in isolation; it happens in relationship. Creating regular spaces for residents to share their experiences and support one another helps break the silence of harm, restore trust, and rebuild a sense of belonging. These gatherings can foster emotional regulation, reduce isolation, and strengthen the social fabric that communities rely on to recover. When people feel heard and held by others with shared experiences, they are more likely to engage in collective problem-solving and sustain long-term resilience.

Resources & Examples for this Act

Storytelling

Gathering to share stories and experiences centered on the impacts of the climate crisis offers local residents an opportunity to leverage their social connections to find support while fostering solidarity and mutual aid to address both the immediate and long-term needs of fellow residents. Below, you'll find resources and guides to aid in building dialogue around these challenging topics while creating space for those impacted by the climate crisis to share their experiences and find support.

- This document, provided by The Hearth, offers suggestions and processes for facilitating a Story Circle to provide an opportunity for community members to share their experiences - Storytelling
- These resources from the APHA offer an overview and guide for Climate Storytelling:
  - American Public Health Association - Climate Storytelling
  - American Public Health Association - Climate Storytelling: A Quick Guide
- Trauma healing circles (Include resources and examples)
- Building a Culture of Care for Recovery, a Trauma Informed Oregon blog post, offers suggestions and tips for creating an environment conducive to supporting mutual aid and recovery.
- Living Room Conversations offers toolkits and resources for facilitating challenging conversations ranging from mental health and climate change to politics and faith. Click here to explore their guides and resources: Homepage - Living Room Conversations

Navigating Climate Grief

Climate, or ecological, grief is an emerging area of consideration as humanity continues to bear witness to massive losses in biodiversity and habitat. As members of your community continue to experience acute and ambiguous loss in the form of other people, beautiful landscapes, economic opportunity, and overall wellness, it is vital that a population-level approach is utilized to address the mental health impacts of mourning the climate crisis. Given that this expression of grief is relatively nascent in terms of its ubiquitous global impact, it can be challenging for communities to come together reflexively such as in the case of community-level violence or other tragedies, leaving residents with minimal overarching modalities through which to initiate an often challenging conversation and process. It is then necessary to explore practices and grieving processes utilized by communities already in the thick of the climate crisis driven disasters and longitudinal challenges, such as The Hearth based in Southern Oregon. These organizations and communities can offer evidence-based practices, such as storytelling and other forms of **peer support, mutual self-help, and collaboration** to establish paradigms and processes through which to assess and address community-wide climate grief.

For more information about climate grief, visit: American Psychological Association - Is climate grief something new?

- Visit here to explore stories from The Hearth story nights, offering a wide range of narratives from engaging storytellers that center on community resilience and self-actualization: Stories from The Hearth

- Visit here to read a blog post from TIO's Christy da Rosa, exploring the impact of climate grief and mental health on activism efforts, along with suggestions for incorporating "active optimism" and storytelling into an imaginative practice: The Importance of Imagination – Active Optimism and Resilience
- Explore the Disaster Resilience Learning Network (DRLN), a coalition that brings together "community leaders of color with the purpose of advancing equitable disaster resilience through healing-centered, culturally-grounded collaborations and actions." Disaster Resilience Learning Network - Building Trusting Relationships and Collective Healing in a Time of Disaster
- Connect with a story from a community member involved with the DRLN: United Way - Healing in a Like-Minded Space

Engaging with others in a trauma-informed way that is mindful of the impacts of climate grief and ongoing challenges caused by the C-E-B crisis is an essential component of peer support, mutual self-help, and collaboration. This is of additional importance when taking into account cultural, historical, and gender issues, as existing power dynamics or traumas caused by oppression can introduce further harm as practitioners or community leaders fail to account for their positionalities when seeking to partner with underrepresented community members in the name of mutually processing climate grief. The disproportionate impact of climate crisis related disasters and challenges on low-income, BIPOC, and otherwise oppressed communities can introduce additional considerations and opportunities to hold space for diverse perspectives when discussing climate grief. See below for resources and tips to aid in holding discussions for processing climate grief or otherwise traumatizing events:

- Dougy Center - After a School Shooting or Large Scale Tragedy
- Dougy Center - Talking with Children About Tragic Events
- Trauma Informed Oregon - Engaging in Sensitive Conversations
- Trauma Informed Oregon - Helping Children and Adolescents Cope With Traumatic Events

Climate Circles

Cascadia Stack, a Portland metro area initiative that seeks to build social connections centered upon the impacts and experiences associated with the climate crisis, offers a Climate Circle program to facilitate conversations around these topics. According to founder Drew Alcoser, Cascadia Stack's vision involves:

> "neighborhood-level support group gatherings, normalizing self-care, throughout the Cascadia bioregion. Through our training program, we can build relationships with CBO's to hold Circles, and train others: youth, elders, disabled, LGBTQ, BIPOC, and neurodiverse laypersons to hold Circles within their own communities."

To this end, Cascadia Stack offers regularly facilitated Climate Circle gatherings throughout the Portland metro area, along with training sessions that aid organizations and practitioners in developing their own Climate Circle initiatives. For more information, visit Cascadia Stack's website: 🌐 Cascadia Stack

Community Engagement Around the Impacts of the Climate Crisis

The six paradigms (adapted from Derezotes, 2025) below offer various dimensions of community engagement around the climate crisis to consider when building dialogue around

these impacts. These paradigms, derived from therapeutic frameworks, can serve to contextualize the diverse ways that the climate crisis can impact residents and an example of a resilience effort that seeks to address this psychological domain.

- Psychodynamic (engaging the psychological underpinnings of community climate anxiety and trauma) - Invite those engaging in a story circle to share how they experienced a local natural disaster, such as destruction due to a wildfire or challenges associated with severe weather events.
- Cognitive-behavioral (connecting our beliefs and values to resilience-oriented efforts) - Facilitate dialogue around local residents' values regarding maintaining natural areas and parks in the community.
- Experiential-phenomenological (developed personalized avenues of action in partnership with the community) - Invite local faith organizations to develop community gardens, involving their members in activities that support resilience and build social connections.
- Transpersonal (expanding resilience efforts outside of the individual) - Encourage dialogue around aspects of the natural environment that are held as sacred or important to community members, exploring how these resources can be maintained for future generations.
- Biopsychosocial (connecting the mind, body, and social components of residents' lives) - Organize local clean up efforts, nature-oriented activities like community hikes, and other activities that engage both the body and mind in a way that orients the natural world and residents' place within this framework.

ASK: Has your community made efforts towards establishing culturally-attuned opportunities to heal trauma?

ACT: Ensure that interventions and recovery efforts are community-led and relevant to the populations most impacted by the disaster or crisis.

Why is this important?

When recovery efforts are led by those most impacted, they are more likely to be culturally relevant, trust-building, and responsive to real needs, not just assumed ones. Community-led interventions honor lived experience, elevate local wisdom, and avoid the harm that can come from top-down solutions that overlook nuance. This approach builds agency and dignity in the recovery process, helping to restore power to communities who may have historically been systemically harmed or excluded. In doing so, it lays the groundwork for more just, equitable, and lasting recovery outcomes.

What can this act include?

As trauma is not only a psychological experience but also a physiological one, it often becomes stored in the body in the form of tension, dysregulation, and chronic stress

responses. Somatic practices—derived from the word “soma,” meaning “body”—are therapeutic approaches that emphasize the body as a primary site of healing. These practices help individuals tune into bodily sensations, notice where trauma may be held, and gently guide the body toward regulation and release. Techniques such as breathwork, grounding exercises, body scanning, gentle movement (like yoga or tai chi), and touch-based therapies can support nervous system balance and reduce the lingering effects of trauma. By reconnecting mind and body, somatic work provides a path to healing that complements talk therapy and other cognitive approaches. The following resources offer opportunities to explore these methods, foster self-awareness, and build resilience by honoring the body’s role in recovery.

Resources & Examples for this Act

- 🌐 TIO Events | Somatic Moment 2025 - Public
- 🌐 Radical Rest
- 🌐 Embodiment Practices for TIC | Trauma Informed Oregon
- 🌐 Mindfulness Institute | VA Portland health care | Veterans Affairs

Establish Ongoing Opportunities to Recognize Trauma

The reality of current and historical traumas, coupled with the ongoing deleterious effects of the climate crisis on community-wide mental and physical wellbeing, necessitates establishing ongoing opportunities to heal trauma at a population level. These efforts provide community members with spaces to center the trauma-informed principles through culturally-responsive mutual aid and support.

- Invite local artists to create pieces that celebrate their community’s resilience and successes while raising awareness to the potential challenges ahead.
- Healing circles and non-denominational spiritual gatherings, offering a chance to cross ideological boundaries in mutual support and healing.
- The Disaster Resilience Learning Network (DRLN) is a network for and by community based organizational leaders who work with disaster-impacted communities of color in Oregon. They offer insight into the approaches that coalitions have taken to support a community’s underrepresented populations in the wake of a disaster.
- *Spotlight*: Coalición Fortaleza, emerging as a response to the historic destruction caused by the 2020 Almeda Fire in Southern Oregon, seeks to support the Latino community throughout the Rogue Valley disproportionately impacted by this tragic event. Their work involves supporting financial literacy and wealth building among the Rogue Valley’s Latino and indigenous residents, offering opportunities for entrepreneurs, and advocacy and support for housing to ameliorate the impacts of the Almeda Fire. Read more about Coalición Fortaleza here: Coalición Fortaleza