

Trauma Informed Witness Management and Evidence

Suvidha Kalra, BSc, LLB, CHT

Level

Intermediate

Room

Track

Legal

CE

CPA/BBS/CJER/MCLE

Bio

Suvidha Kalra, BSc, LLB, CHT has been a criminal prosecutor for over 15 years. As a senior prosecutor she has prosecuted a wide variety of offences including: domestic violence, aggravated assault, robbery, sexual assault, and homicide. Suvidha specialized in the prosecution of internet child exploitation for a period of 7 years. During this time she acquired specialized training in working with vulnerable and traumatized victims. In addition to being a lawyer, Suvidha is a Certified Hakomi Therapist. She has trained prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, and victim advocates in both Canada and the United States, in trauma informed practice.

Narrative

In this course participants will learn about the impact of trauma on witness evidence and will be provided with practical tools for use in office and courtroom settings. These tools and strategies will assist counsel to create an environment of safety for witnesses, interact with victims and witnesses in a sensitive and compassionate manner, and effectively examine traumatized witnesses by conducting an embodied examination. The four-step Kalra Method incorporates principles of neurobiology, trauma psychology, and psychotherapy into the witness preparation, examination, and debrief process. This integration results in the mitigation of symptomatology associated with the traumatic injury and facilitates access to detail rich evidence, during the trial and discovery process.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the impact of trauma on a witness's ability to provide evidence
2. Differentiate between a regulated and dysregulated nervous system
3. Assess the type of nervous system intervention required to maintain a witness in the Window of Tolerance
4. Apply the correct regulation technique if a witness becomes dysregulated
5. Apply relational language to facilitate interpersonal safety and co-regulation
6. List three steps required to conduct a somatically informed examination