

# Today's Presenter



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# Library Safety and Security

A Holistic Approach



## Melissa Munn

Bachelor in Criminology - theory based which gives an insight into what motivates humans to commit crime.

10+ years working with marginalized and vulnerable populations – insight into the value of relationships to meet your goals.

11+ years in library leadership.  
Understanding the role of the library in the community and the challenges for staff in managing spaces.

When you think about library safety and security, what are the things you or your staff are uncertain how to handle?

Illegal

Low Level

Uncomfortable

# Tension Points

- First Amendment vs Workplace Violence/Anti-Harassment policies
- Hate Speech/Conduct
  - Be sure to understand the specifics about hate speech
  - How does this contradict our right to harassment free workplace?
  - How do we identify behavior that is actionable?
  - Do we respond to the impact on staff or the legal right of our patrons?

## Other Tension Points

- Photography/Filming in the library
- Service animals
- People experiencing homelessness
- Mental illness/Substance use disorder



# Philosophy

Holistic  
Overall Goal  
Relationships  
Prepared  
Toolbelt  
Trauma Informed



# Holistic

“Relating to or concerned with wholes or with complete systems rather than with the individual parts”



“Lotus” by Taltan is licensed under CC By 2.0

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# Organization

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# Spaces

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# Humans

# Organization



"Barriers" by Rob Oo is licensed under CC By 2.0

# Removing Barriers

- Requirement of ID/Library card:
  - Computer
  - Check out
  - Reserving rooms/spaces
- Fines/Fees
- Policies
- Transportation

# Policies/Practices

Laws vs Policy vs Practice  
Meeting Room Use  
Confidentiality  
Exclusion Policies  
Library Use/Behavior Policies



"Inclusivity" by markus119 Flickr Creative Commons

# Behavior Policies

Simple

Broad

Observable

Targeting populations



# Excluding Patrons

## Whole Picture

- Take into consideration the totality of the circumstance
- "What is happening right now – what do I need to address?"
- Always room for exceptions

## Inform/Warn/Ban

- Let them know
- Give patrons the opportunity to make the right choice
- Follow through

# Incident Response

Reporting

Who has access - impact

Follow up with Staff

Communication Plan





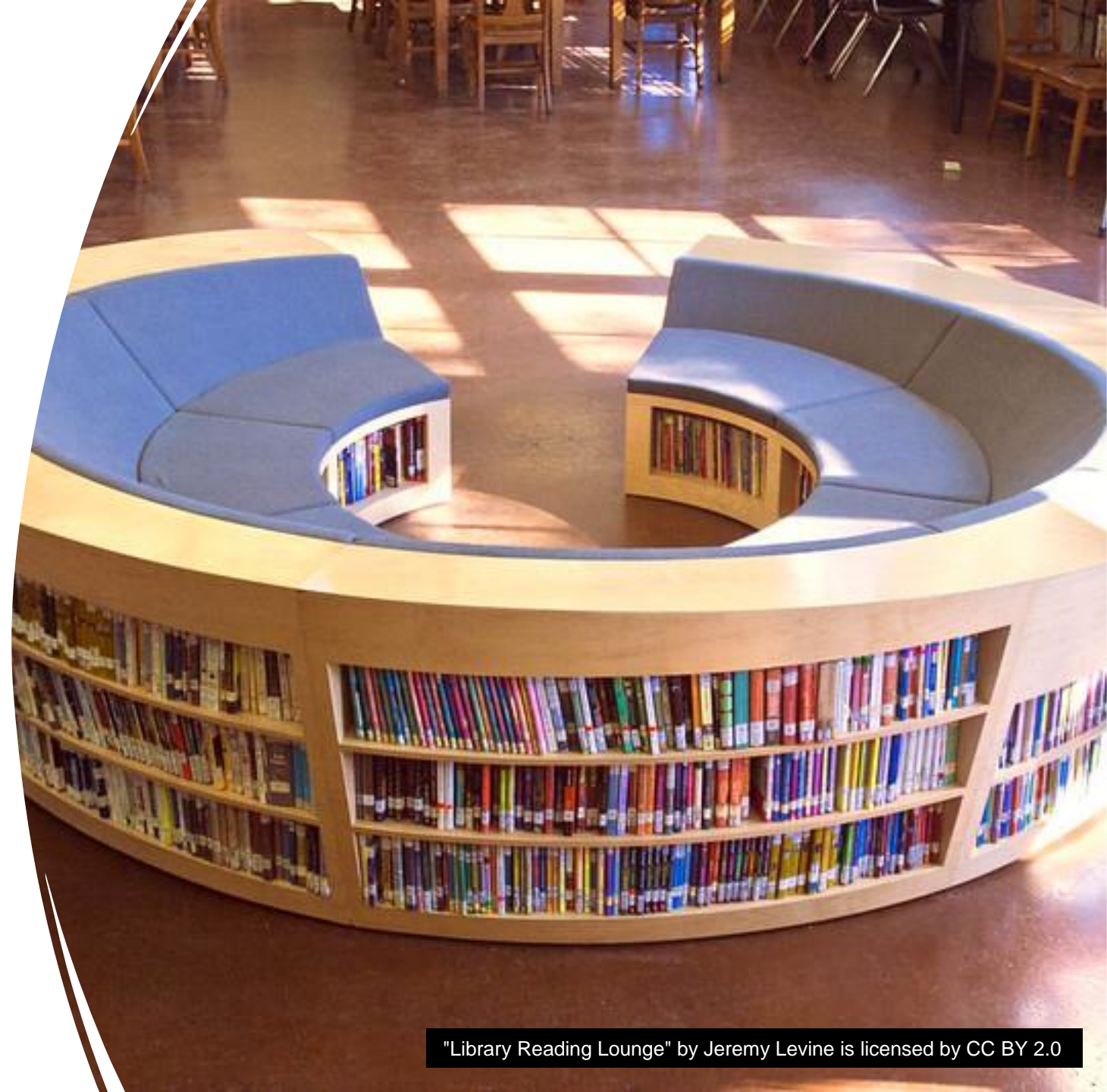
# Spaces

"Space" by Sayanee Basu CC BY-NC 2.0)

# Physical Spaces

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- What environmental changes can we make to create a welcoming and safe library?
  - Sight lines
  - Restrooms
  - Exterior modifications
  - Inclusive spaces
  - Furniture
- Accessibility/Universal Design strategies



# Managing Public Spaces

- Focus on the behavior vs policing the space
- Be present on the floor
- What are staff empowered to do?
- Trauma Informed Approaches
- Human Centered Engagement

# Trauma Informed Approaches

- Staff wearing name tags
- Gender neutral restrooms
- Behavior expectations posted/readily available to patrons
- Sensory friendly tools: noise canceling headphone, or checking out laptops
- Trauma informed programs: stress reduction, mindfulness tools, coping skills
- Staff care: training for managers and incident debriefing

Shift to Healing Centered Engagement – how can that look in your library?

Questions?



# Humans (Staff)

#336 Anti-Racism by Yasmeen (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



TRUST

TRAINING

SUPPORT

RELATIONSHIPS

# Trust

Listen

Empower

Two Way Street





# Training

Five  
Universal  
Truths



Regardless of cultural differences, all people want:

To be treated with dignity and respect

To be asked rather than told to do something

To be told why they are being asked to do something

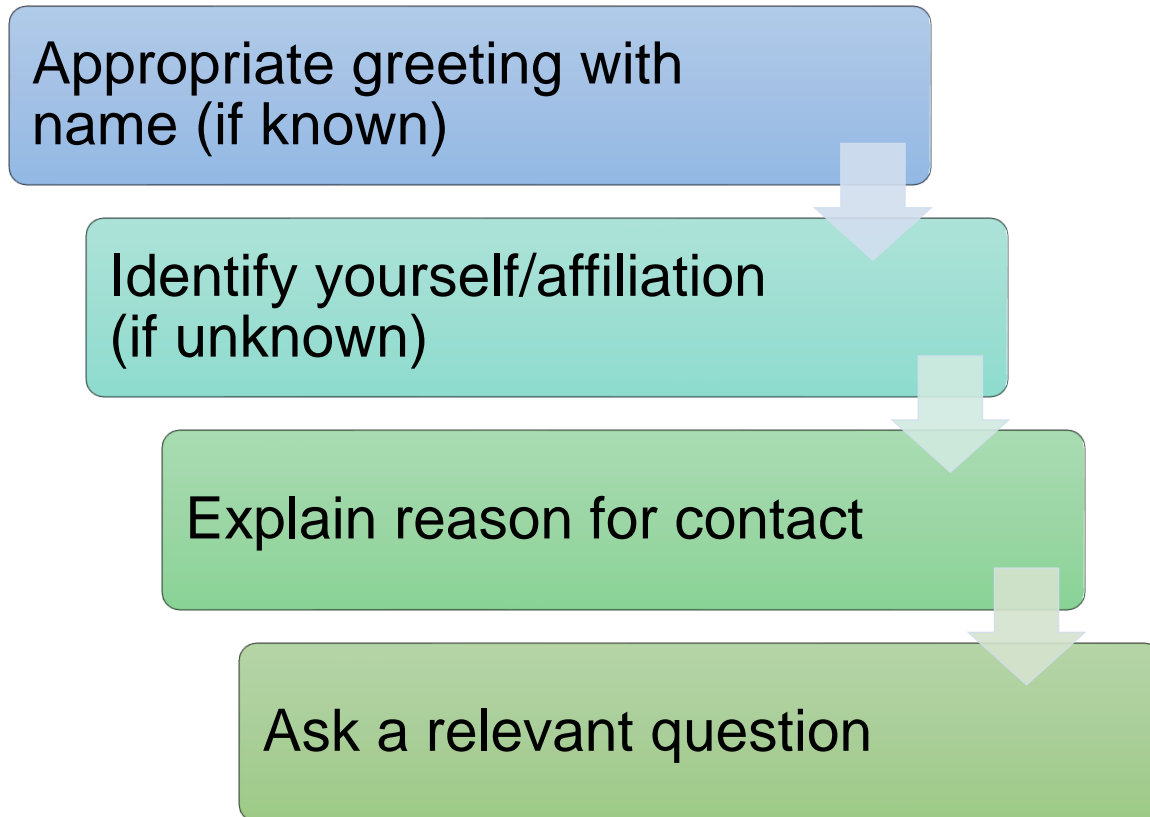
To be given options rather than threats

To be given a second chance

\*Verbal Defense and Influence

# Universal Greeting

\*Verbal Defense and Influence



*“Hi, my name is Melissa,  
I work for the library.*

*I noticed that your voice was carrying  
across the library and I could hear  
you at the desk.*

*Could you please keep it a little  
quieter, so others are not  
disturbed?”*

# Training

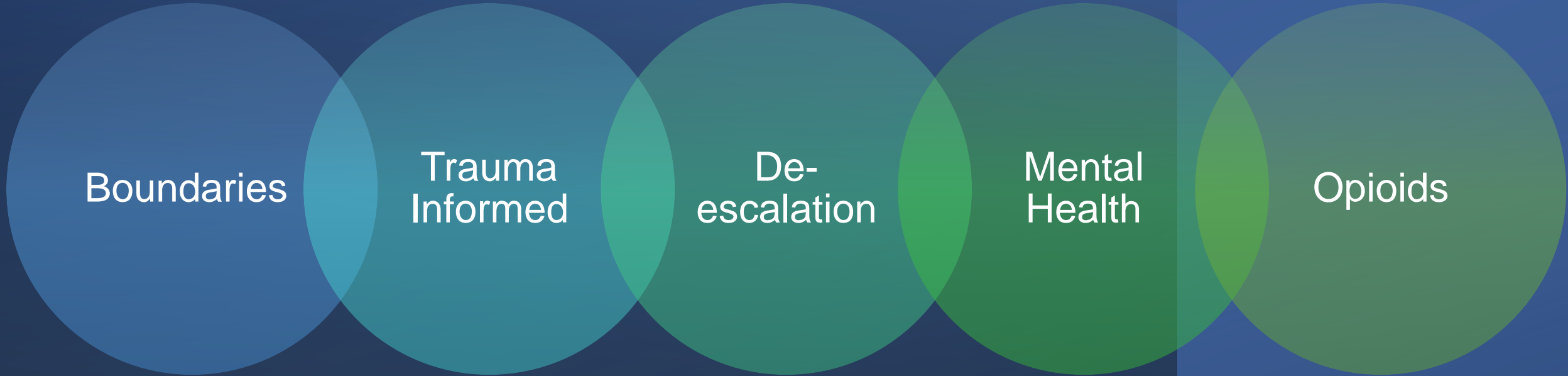
Boundaries

Trauma  
Informed

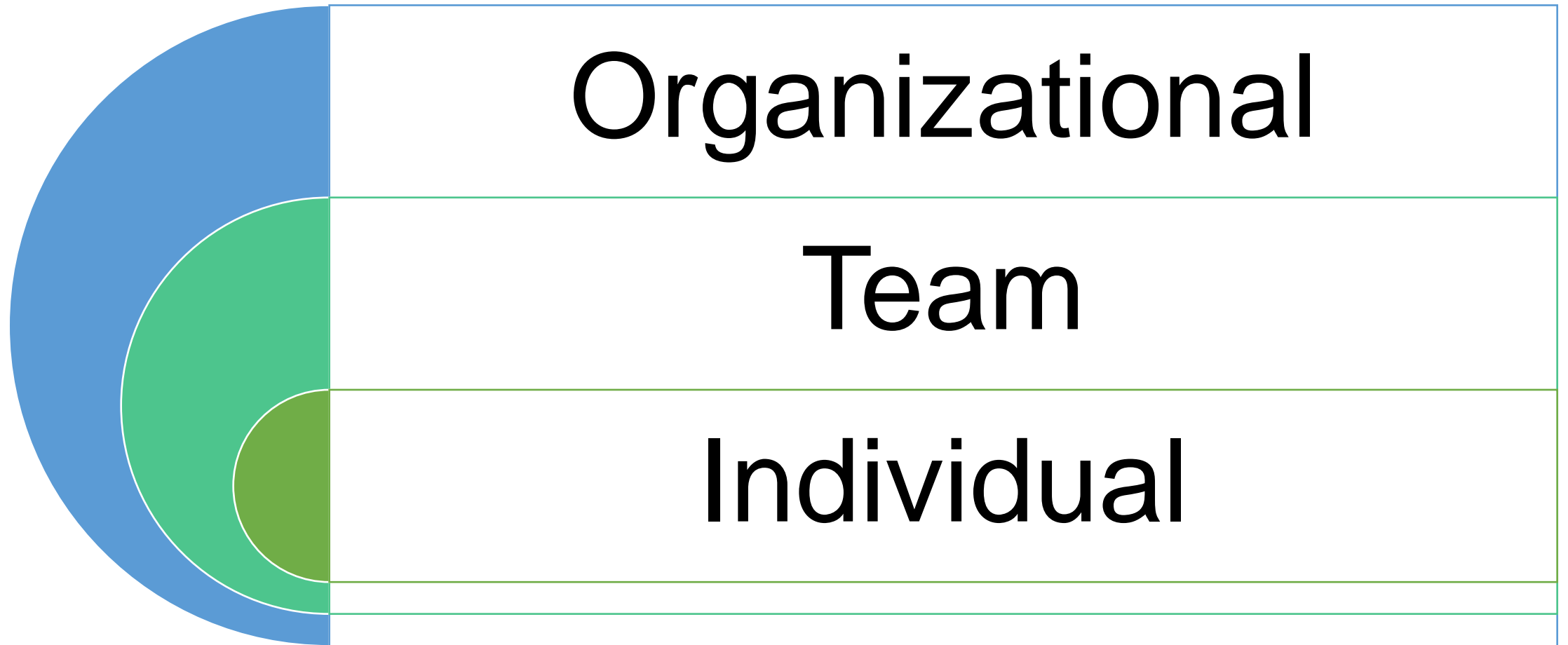
De-  
escalation

Mental  
Health

Opioids



# Boundaries at Work



# Tips for De-escalation

- Self-awareness, what are you bringing to the interaction?
- Behavior is communication
- Recognize our buttons
- Over/under responding – escalates the situation
- Understanding the power dynamic

# Building Relationships

Patrons

Team

Social Services

Schools

Civic Organizations

Police

# Police Partnerships

Mission Clash

Clarify Language

Each is Different

Understand Laws

CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)





# Staff Support

Practicing own  
healthy  
boundaries

Promote  
healthy work  
life balance

Acknowledging  
harm

Trust staff  
regarding  
impact



School diversity many hands held together by [Wonder woman0731](#) is licensed by [\(CC BY 2.0\)](#)



Provide avenue  
for them to  
access support

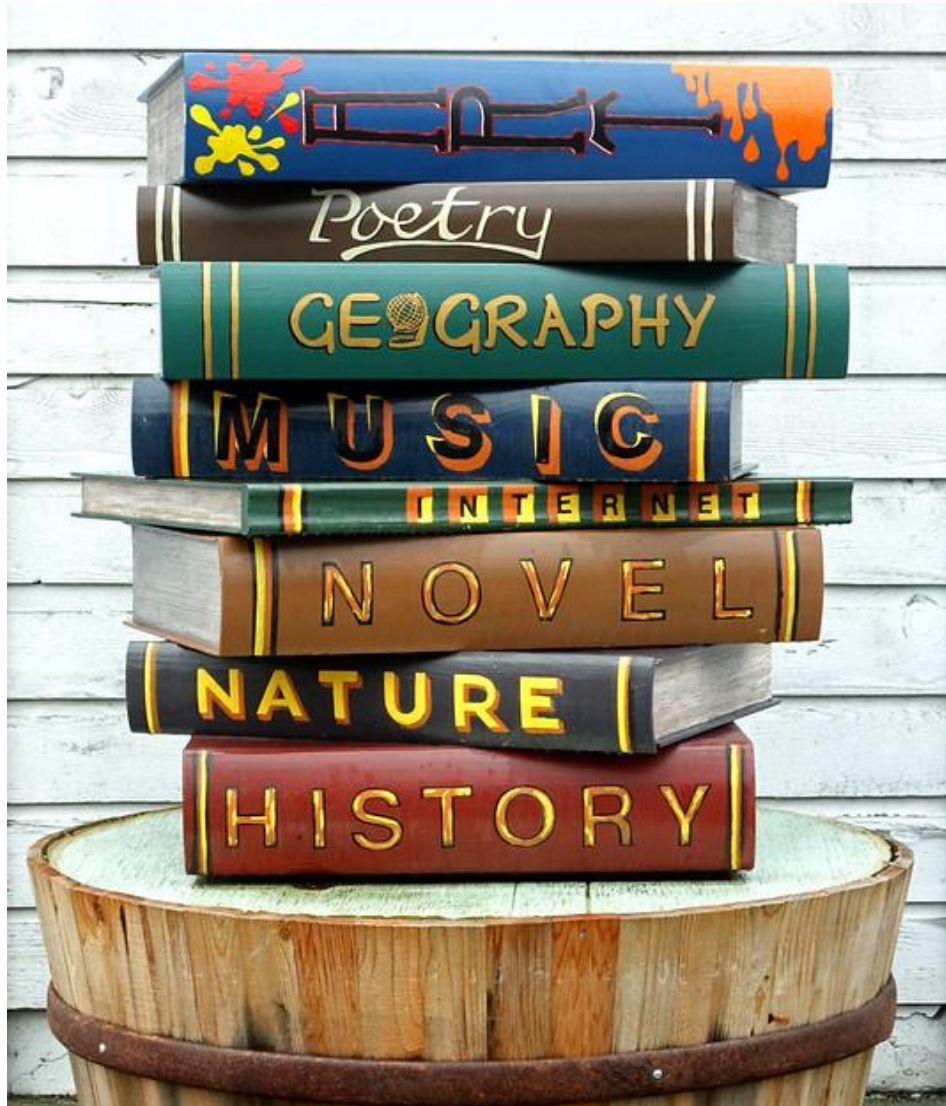
Time away from  
work

Understand  
what motivates  
staff

Shifting  
mindset on  
resilience

- Healthy boundaries
- Empowered supported staff
- Universal Greeting
- Presence on the floor in all spaces
- Get to know your patrons, learn their names
- Know the leader of the group
- Understand your resources/partners

Take aways – Tools on your toolbelt



“The most important asset of any library goes home at night - the library staff.”

–Timothy Healy

# Public Health Crisis Management Playbook

*for Archives, Libraries, and Museums*



[oc.lc/realm-playbook](https://oc.lc/realm-playbook)

**REALM** REopening  
Archives, Libraries,  
and Museums  
PROJECT



# Questions?

Thank you!

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