

Trauma Informed Victim Interviews (TIVI) for the Justice System

Part Two

Battered Women's Justice Project
January 11, 2019



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-TA-AX-K027 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this (document/program/exhibit) are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Officer Preparation for TIVI

- Read all reports previously done in case
- If reports are not yet done, talk to officers previously involved in case
- Check criminal histories of known suspect
- Google Investigation
- Try to leave bias on the other side of interview room door

Google

Search Google or type a URL



- **Officer Preparation**
- **PHASE ONE** – Set Tone and Rules (Recording Optional)
- **PHASE TWO** – Crime Scenario Narrative (Recorded)
- **PHASE THREE** – Closure and Case Plan (Recorded)

TIVI Phase One-Set Tone & Rules

- Introductions
- Set the tone for the interview
- Explain the purpose of the interview: To gather as much information as possible about the experience
- Explain that the interview will be recorded
- Explain the importance of giving **ALL** of the information

Explain the rules for the interview

- “Thank you for being here. I’m here to gather as much information as you are able to give me about your experience”
- “Always tell the truth”
- “Don’t guess”
- “Tell me everything. Sometimes victims are embarrassed or feel like they have done something wrong or feel responsible for what happened. But, it is important to tell me everything. Don’t leave anything out”
- “What you say is important, so we are recording this interview”

Start with mindfulness

Using mindfulness techniques to begin the interview will calm down the trauma response and allow victims to access more memories.

- “Are you comfortable?”
- “Is there anything you want to ask me before we start?”
- “You are safe here right now.”
- “Take a deep breath and relax.”
- “This will probably take ____ minutes or so. Is that OK?”

AND THEN YOU PAUSE.

TIVI Support Person Rules

- If support person is requested:
- **Discuss SP rules:**
 - Do not ask or answer questions or give input
 - Be supportive – handout tissues, etc.
- **Remain silent**



TIVI Phase Two Crime Scenario Narrative

- “Help me understand everything you are able to remember about what happened.”
- **DO NOT INTERRUPT VICTIM NARRATIVE**
- For follow up:
 - Ask open ended questions to maximize narratives
 - Ask questions in “headline” style
 - Ask questions focused on threat, emotions, and senses
 - Use silence as an interviewing tool
 - If hard questions are necessary, explain **WHY** you are asking

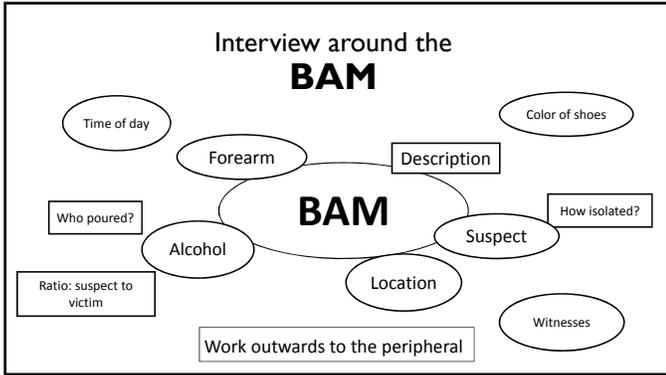
Hint- look for the trigger

CONSENT
IS EVERYTHING.

bam

This is where we need to concentrate. Where was the change?
What did it **LOOK** like? What did it **FEEL** like?

We need to get this described.



Follow up questions after the narrative

Ask questions in "headline" style to give victim time to retrieve memories around that subject

- Look for minimizing statements
 - "You talked about how it 'didn't really hurt.' Tell me about that."
 - "What were you feeling?"
- Look for passive voice
 - "You said 'the gun went off.' Tell me all about how the gun went off."
 - "How were you feeling when the gun went off?"
 - "Tell me about the gun."
- Look for "gaps" in victim narrative
 - "You said you were in the kitchen and the next thing you talked about was being on your bed. Tell me about how you got to the bedroom."

TIVI Phase Three, Closure and Case Plan

- How you end the interview may determine whether the victim stays involved in the system
- Minutes of skillful support from any sensitive person immediately after a crime can be worth more than hundreds of hours of professional support later
- Express thanks for what the person has done so far
- Encourage the person to focus on their life and healing
- Explain the next steps in the process
- Never make promises about outcomes
- Explain best way to make contact with officer/advocate/prosecutor
- Connect with victim advocate (If not done in Phase One)

Real Interview

Follow up question in "headline style"

Silence as an interview tool

Headline question focused at an element of a crime.

Start of the bam?

Based on feelings

Gleaned additional information to corroborate

Real Interview

Open question on feelings

Sensory details

Possible witness to corroborate

Real Interview

Polite resisting

Physiological response
(reflexes go down, freeze)

Thumb bruise, matches "work out"



Right Side



Hole



Red Mats



Tight Space





WEST VALLEY CITY
Unity Pride Progress

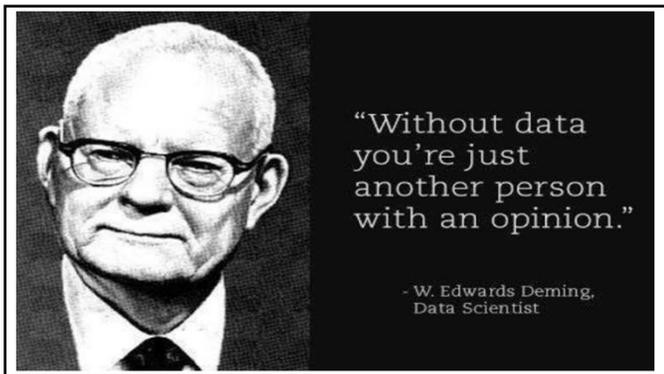
- West Valley City Police Department Project
- Trauma Informed Protocols
- Trauma Informed Victim Interviews
- NIJ study May 2014 to May 2015

Changes to protocol

- Administration policy changes
- Training – Entire PD, not just investigators.
- All in Trauma, most in the interview process
- Outline first responders “Just the Basics” duties
- Call out detectives early in the case
- Written statement by victim containing “Just the Basics”
 - 1) what happened
 - 2) where it happened
 - 3) who did it

Changes to protocol

- Victim Advocate involved early in the case
- ** Trauma Informed Victim Interview (TIVI) **
- **Screen all known suspect cases with prosecutors**
- Keep victim involved in the process – notify of screening decision ASAP



Study Findings

Measurable Outcomes	NIJ SANE TOOLKIT	PILOT STUDY Findings to date
Screening of Adult Sexual Assault Cases	33%	68%
	75%	56%
Charges Filed	9%	32%
Prosecuted	6%	24% 24% (48 cases adjudicated)
Successfully Prosecuted	6%	22%

Study findings – Victims response

- Study Statement: I have been given the time to tell **West Valley City Police Department** what happened to me.
- **Victims' Responses:**
 - Strongly Disagree – 1 response; 3%
 - Somewhat Disagree – 0 responses; 0%
 - Neither agree or disagree – 0 responses; 0%
 - Somewhat agree – 0 responses; 0%
 - Strongly agree – 33 responses; 97%

Study findings – victim unsolicited quotes

- "They made me feel safe."
- "It is a very hard thing to go through and it's nice to be able to trust all of them and to be treated without prejudices."
- "This situation was really hard to explain, remember dates, and the officer did very well in making me feel comfortable and safe to tell my story."
- "They want to help get you through this horrid experience. So caring and understandable!"
- "The officers understand me, help me, listen, and I can tell they support me. To be a victim is hard."



"How I was treated before and now were like night and day."
"Before I was berated on phone calls and yelled at because I had been drinking."
"This time, I was so relieved that a police officer would listen to me. *I was treated with respect this time.* I was so happy to find out that my case would be reopened."

Justin Boardman
www.justinboardman.com
jboardman.training@gmail.com
801-231-0881

Donna Kelly
dokelly@slco.org
