



EPISODE #4

PODCAST MINI-SERIES: Stage 2 - How Lacking Self-Awareness Can Leave a Lasting Impact

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JULIA ROSE POLK: You're listening to the Trauma Camp for Teachers podcast... Episode #4.

Welcome to the Trauma Camp for Teachers podcast, where educators like you get the guidance and support they need to manage their classrooms with confidence, clarity and compassion. I'm your host, trauma therapist and trainer, Julia Rose Polk. Now, let's get started.

Hey you... Julia Rose here. So, in today's episode, i'm going to be taking you into Stage 2 in the Path of Progress, and this stage is all about SELF-AWARENESS. And I'm going to walk you through the three milestones that you will help you know where you are in this stage, and what you need to do next.

But before we dive in, let me tell you that this episode is sponsored by my free masterclass, The Top 10 Truths Every Teacher Needs to Know About Trauma. So if you've struggled with classroom management, or have ever wondered how to respond to your struggling students, or if you are not actively building emotional connection and trust with your students every single day... You know that doing these things are easier when you really understand how trauma and stress affect the brain, right? Everything in your classroom is easier when you understand this, when you have somebody that is saying, "Hey, this is what's going on right there..." and eventually, helping you know what to do in those super tough situations. So if you want to start building your trauma-informed teaching foundation right now, inside your classroom, and inside yourself,

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TEACHERS

**EPISODE 4: HOW LACKING SELF-AWARENESS CAN LEAVE A
LASTING IMPACT**

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I'm your person. And I've got a free masterclass that will show you step by step how to get going. So go to traumacamp.com/materclass — simple as that — traumacamp.com/masterclass, and I'll show you how to get started so that you can be growing your awareness and skills, and get a head start on your trauma-informed teaching journey today.

All right, ya'll, let's go ahead and jump into today's episode.

So, when it comes to self-awareness, this might seem like an obvious stage, but I really want to break it down for you, because there is often a misunderstanding about what Self-Awareness is.

Dictionary.com defined self awareness as: The conscious knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, and desires. And I like this definition, yet I would add two parts to it that are specific and relevant to trauma-informed teaching.

The first thing I'd add to this definition is that it also requires a felt sense of your own experience. So, its not just about what you cognitively know about yourself... self-awareness is also determined by how Connected you are to yourself from moment to moment. So... do you have a finger on the pulse of your emotional world? Can you sense when you're starting to feel overwhelmed? Or when you're getting irritated? Or when you need to cry? Are you aware of how this feels in your body? So... do you have a FELT SENSE of your experience right now. This is really important, because being able to identify how you are feeling IN THE MOMENT will determine how you choose to respond to a child that you're working with. RIGHT?

So let me give you an example: If Jessica is hysterically crying in the corner of my classroom and cant seem to be calmed down... if I notice that I've got a little twinge of concern in my chest, but mostly just compassion for whatever she's experiencing right now... then I may feel regulated enough to approach her and help her get a little more regulated. But if i notice within myself that I feel really annoyed that she's disrupting class, and I feel that surge of irritation that comes



along with that... my first order of business will be to pause and take a few deep breaths... and remind myself that she's doing her best in this moment.

So, having a felt sense of what's going on inside of you from moment-to-moment will be a major component of building your SELF-AWARENESS muscles. The SECOND thing I would add to the definition of self-awareness is that you are able to connect what you are experiencing TODAY to some of your past experiences.

Now here's what I mean by this... let's say, you are someone who gets really irritated and feels personally disrespected when children "think they're all that..." or act "entitled." You would be developing your self-awareness if you were then able to reflect on where these particular beliefs come from for you, and why they're so emotionally charged. And you might then ask yourself questions like: How was I treated when I acted like this as a child? How was I received? And what was that like for me?

And I'll share a personal example about this... when I was a child, one of my main caregivers would call me a "spoiled little brat" whenever I would push back or not align with whatever they were wanting me to do... and here's the thing. Objectively, I can say that this caregiver wanted me as a little girl to feel confident in the world. But this caregiver ALSO had heard this SAME shaming language while SHE was growing up...

And so, later, when she was able to connect this pattern of calling me a "spoiled little brat" to her own experience of being shamed for expressing her needs and wants... only then was she able to realize that I hadn't been doing anything other than being a child, and that she had brought her own trauma and shame and pain, and projected it onto this similar situation.

THAT component of self-awareness... the being able to CONNECT our present experiences with our past... this is a huge part of developing your capacities in this stage. Now, let me walk you through the 3 milestones - the early, middle and end-stage milestones - that you will be reaching in Stage 2, so you can



figure out where you are in this stage of self-awareness.

So here we go: You are in the Early Stage if you are JUUUUUSSSSST starting to become aware of your inner world and your lived experiences. And so, you are just starting to develop a curiosity and awareness of what perspectives, beliefs and emotions you experience, and bring into your classroom.

You are in the MIDDLE stage if you are able actively Identify emotional and physiological triggers and hot zones on a daily basis.

And you are in the END-stage milestone if you are able Utilize a personal check-in tool or practice to routinely to gauge internal states and needs.

So, Early stage milestone: You're just getting acquainted with your inner world and reflecting on your own experiences. Middle-stage milestone: You're able to identify some of your big triggers or sensitive spots that come up on a daily basis. End-stage milestone: you are regularly able to do self-checkins to guage and assess your internal states, and what's coming up for you on a regular basis.

So, there you have it! That is what you can look forward to in Stage 2 and the milestones you will reach as you work toward self-awareness...

Now, before we wrap up this episode, i want you acknowledge something real quick... if you're anything like me, you might be hearing all of this and feel this visceral urge to want to be as self-aware as possible. The idea that you could have these blind spots or be bringing your unconscious baggage into your work or your relationships might really scare you. And so, i'm going to tell you what I've needed to hear many times over... that we ALL have blind spots. And we are all unconscious in some ways... and that that's o-kay.

It's enough that you're working on this. And becoming "self-aware" is not a destination. It's a muscle that gets stronger with use. So, just know that wherever you are in this stage right now, is exactly where you're supposed to be. So, there you have it. You're now formally acquainted with STAGE 2 of the



PATH OF PROGRESS: SELF-AWARENESS. And you've now learned the 3 milestones that you'll walk through in this stage.

So, if you're ready for the next stage... head on over to the next episode, where we'll get really specific about stage 3 on the Path of Progress: Skill Set. I Can't wait for you to join me in that one... I'll see you there. Bye for now!

Now, to make this podcast actionable for you, and to make sure sure my mini-trainings and supports come directly to you each week... i want you to pause what you're doing right now - unless you're driving, if you're driving keep focusing on the road... but if you're not driving, I want you to pause what you're doing and take 2 seconds to hit the "Subscribe" button for this podcast. That will make sure that the nuggets of actionable and digestible bits of expertise that I have to offer will be sent directly to you each and every week, no questions asked, no extra work required. So go ahead and subscribe... Oh, and if you want the juicy email updates that I send all my subscribers about each podcast, head on over to traumacamp.com/podcast, and subscribe to my email list so I can send you all my exciting extras and updates! I'm so glad you're here and can't wait to have you tune in each week for this podcast.

Thanks for listening to the Trauma Camp for Teachers podcast. At www.traumacamp.com/podcast.