



# Seeking Safety Trauma Therapy Program

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Learn more about the program: [LisetteLahana.com](http://LisetteLahana.com)

**Mondays 9-10:20pm 445 Bellevue Ave. Suite 104 Oakland, CA 94610**

## **Module I**

### **From Learning to Action: Healing from PTSD**

#### **Introductions and Group Orientation**

Seeking Safety will be introduced including the structure of group, the workbook, and what to expect as the group progresses. Members will have a chance to share about what brought them to group and set personal goals for themselves both in relationship to self, your recovery and connections to others.

#### **Safety**

Safety is described as the first stage of healing and the key focus of this treatment. We discuss a list of over 80 Safe Coping Skills, and explore what safety means to you.

#### **PTSD: Taking Back Your Power Part I**

We define and discuss post traumatic stress disorder and how you might experience it. What coping skills, negative and positive, have you developed to deal with your feelings?

#### **PTSD: Taking Back Your Power Part II**

We continue discussion about PTSD, focusing on how you can use compassion to “take back your power.” Compassion includes changing how you talk to yourself about what happened to you and how you can treat yourself with kindness and understanding.

#### **Detaching from Emotional Pain: Grounding**

A powerful strategy, “grounding”, is offered to help you detach from emotional pain. Three types of grounding are presented (mental, physical, and soothing), with a group exercise to practice. The goal in “grounding” is to shift attention toward the external world, away from negative feelings inside.

#### **Coping with Triggers**

We discuss how to actively fight triggers of PTSD, negative compulsions and addictions. A simple three-step model is offered: change who you are with, what you are doing, and where you are.

## **Module II**

### **Building Relationships**

#### **Commitment**

Making and keeping promises, to self and others, are explored. We discuss creative strategies for keeping commitments, and feelings that can get in the way.

#### **Healthy Relationships**

Healthy and unhealthy relationship beliefs are discussed. For example, the unhealthy belief “Bad relationships are all I can get” is contrasted with the healthy belief “Creating good relationships is a skill to learn.” We will discuss how your reaction to trauma and PTSD can lead to unhealthy relationships.

#### **Boundaries in Relationships: Part I**

Boundary problems are described as either too much closeness (difficulty saying “no” in relationships) or too much distance (difficulty saying “yes” to being in relationship with others). Ways to set healthy boundaries are explored with a focus on how to say “no” and create healthy limits in your relationships.

#### **Boundaries in Relationships: Part II**

We continue our dialogue and reading about healthy boundaries, focusing on ways to say “yes” to connection to others, building relationships and trust in others.

#### **Getting Others to Support Your Recovery**

In group you’ll identify which people in your lives are supportive, neutral, or destructive toward your recovery. Discussion of how to help your family and friends understand your PTSD and/or addiction including through letter writing.

#### **Honesty**

You are encouraged to explore the role of honesty in recovery and role-play specific situations. What is the cost of dishonesty? When is it safe to be honest? What if the other person doesn’t accept or appreciate your honesty?

Learn more about Seeking Safety and the program’s author Dr. Najavits through [SeekingSafety.org](http://SeekingSafety.org)

## **Module III**

## **Recovery and Emotional Wholeness**

### **Stop Addiction from Controlling You**

Addictions or negative behaviors are often used when we don't know how to cope. Compulsive behaviors or negative coping tools are commonly seen in people who have suffered through trauma. They can include drugs, alcohol, food, shopping, TV, gambling and/or sex. For those who don't have addictions, we'll talk about the ways you attempt to cope that end up hurting you, others or have negative consequences.

### **Self-Nurturing**

Safe self-nurturing is distinguished from unsafe self-nurturing (e.g., substances and other "cheap thrills"). Pleasure is explored as a complex issue when you are a trauma survivor or have addictions.

### **Integrating the Split Self**

"Splitting" is one major emotional defense that people use when they have been through trauma. Together we will look at these splits and discuss how to feel more integrated day to day.

### **Recovery Thinking**

Thoughts associated with PTSD and substance abuse are contrasted with healthier "recovery thinking". We will look at how to change your thinking using various tools and techniques.

### **Compassion**

This topic encourages the use of compassion when trying to overcome problems. Compassion is the opposite of "beating oneself up", a common tendency for people with PTSD and those who have addictions/compulsions. A loving approach toward your self produces lasting change.

### **Healing from Anger**

Anger is explored as a valid feeling that is inevitable in recovery from PTSD and/or addiction. Anger can be used constructively (as a source of knowledge and healing) or destructively (a danger when acted out against self or others). Guidelines for working with both types of anger are offered.

## **Module IV**

## **Awareness and Self-Care**

### **Red and Green Flags**

You are guided to explore the ups-and-downs of recovery in both PTSD and addiction through discussion of "red and green flags" (signs of danger and safety). A safety plan is developed to identify to take care of yourself in situations where you are at risk of relapsing or being triggered.

### **Creating Meaning**

We discuss how you make meaning in the world and how being a survivor of trauma has impacted your thinking. Meanings that are harmful versus healing in recovery are contrasted.

### **Taking Good Care of Yourself**

This topic explores how well you take care of yourself and how to plan to take better care of your needs. You are encouraged to look at all the aspects of your life such as nutrition, sleep, health and friendships.

### **Respecting Your Time**

Time is explored as a major resource in recovery. You may feel you have lost years to your problems, but you can still make the future better than the past. Do you use your time well? Is recovery your highest priority? Balancing structure versus spontaneity; work versus play; and time alone versus in relationships.

### **Relaxation**

Group members will learn relaxation techniques such as mindfulness meditation, progressive relaxation and other visualization skills to increase your ability to feel relaxed and soothed.

### **Asking for Help**

Both PTSD and addictions lead to problems in asking for help. This topic encourages you to become aware of your need for help and how to ask for it in your own way.

### **Final Group and Graduation**

Group members will talk about their process of recovery during the program, what's changed, successes as well as ongoing personal goals. Members will take part in a closing ritual to mark graduation from group.