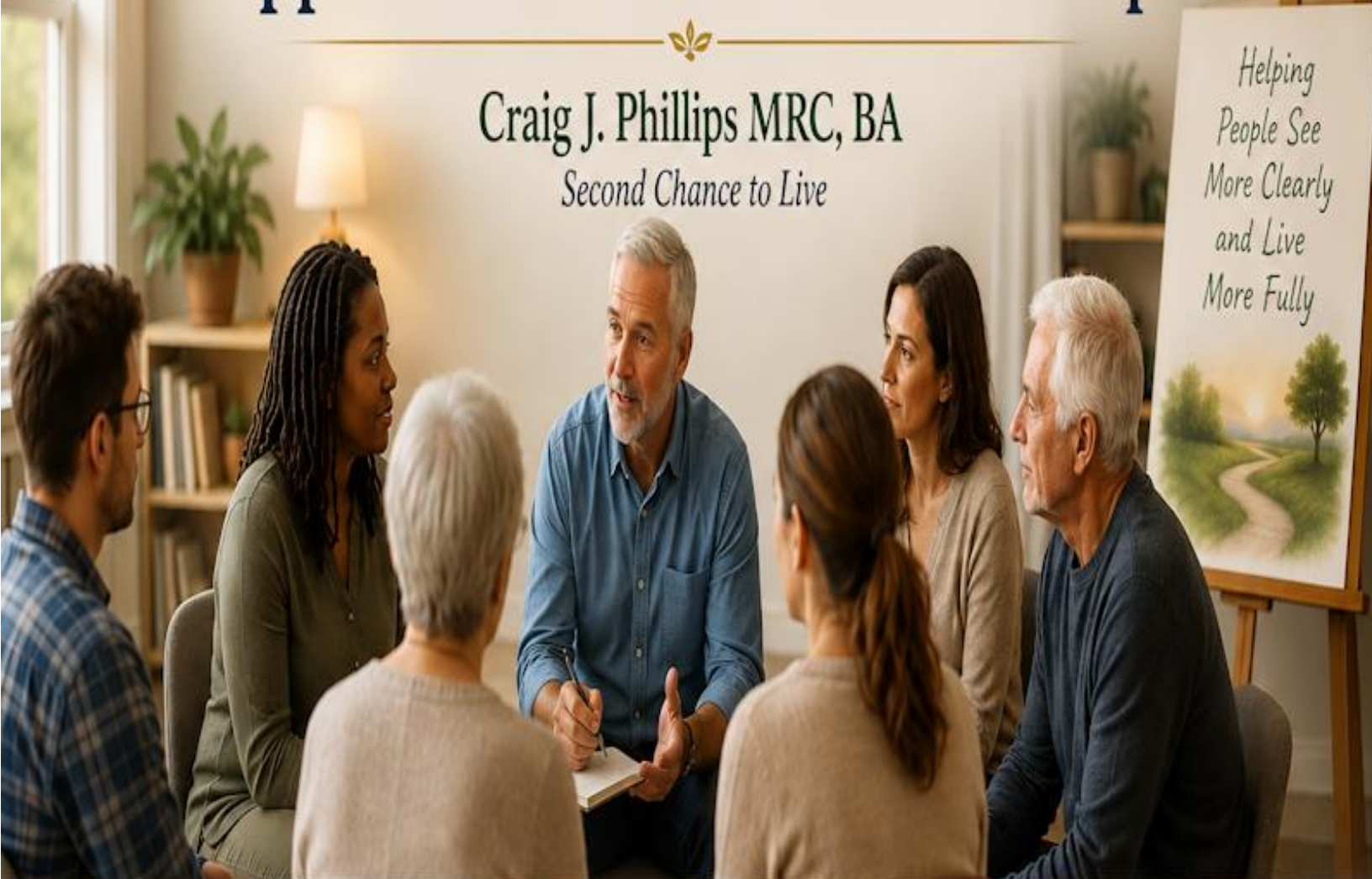


What May Help Support Group Leaders Support Individuals in their Groups



Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA
Second Chance to Live




Awareness
Seeing what is
really there



Acceptance
Welcoming the
reality of our lives



Action
Taking steps that
move us forward

Awareness. Acceptance. Action.
A Path. 

Every individual's journey is unique. Every story matters. Every life moves differently. 🌿 More will be revealed.

What May Help Support Group Leaders Support Individuals in Their Groups — Creating space for awareness, acceptance, action, and understanding to support the whole individual -- Presentation

Preface

In my opinion, the mission of a support groups is to encourage and empower self-advocacy. To give those attending the tools, insights and motivation to thrive. Thrive, despite whatever the struggles and challenges that they may be facing in life.

Although Second Chance to Live is written to individuals living with the impact of brain injuries, what I share in this article can be used by any support group to encourage, motivate and empower those attending to self-advocate for themselves.

What I share below is from my observations and experience. My experience as an individual living with the impact of a brain injury, an invisible disability, 160 support group presentations and group facilitations.

As you read the below the information may it help you to connect the “dots”, Help you to connect the dots and in the process help you support what is invisible. Invisible to many, yet actively impacting the lives of the individuals. individuals who are a part of your support group interactions.

More will be Revealed

I share these 2 links and the image to encourage you. Encourage you to realize that although you may have been told that you are unemployable (as I was after 2 state department of vocational rehabilitation evals), you can learn to thrive. Although you may have been deemed to be permanently disabled (as I was after 3 applications for SSDI disability) by the Social Security Administration, don't give up. Do not let systems define who you are and what you can or cannot do to learn to thrive in and through your life and purpose.

Encouragement

“Believe in yourself, go after your dreams, and don’t let anyone put you in a box.” Daya

“Those who danced were considered to be quite insane by those who could not hear the music.” Angela Monet

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one’s definition of your life; define yourself.” Harvey Fierstein

[Second Chance to Live Author’s Autobiography in Bullet Points](#)
[Testimonies and Endorsements Nationally and Internationally —](#)
[Creating Hope after Brain Injury](#)



Click Image to Enlarge

Introduction

In living with the impact of a severe traumatic brain injury (open skull fracture, right frontal lobe damage, a severe brain bruise with brain stem

involvement and remaining in a coma for 3 weeks) and an invisible disability for nearly 59 years I have had some awareness's. I have devoted my life to learning how to navigate life and for the past 19 years to share what helped me and may help other individuals. Other individuals living with the impact of brain injury and invisible disability.

I have done this through Second Chance to Live in the 2368 articles, 465 video presentations, 32 power point presentations, 20 eBooks available on Amazon, 45 posters, 160 keynote presentations given throughout the United States for the past 19 years. Since May of 2025 I have been mentoring an AI assistant in what I share in this article To empowers AI's ability to support individuals living with brain injuries, invisible disabilities, caregivers, families, medical and service providers.

[2368 articles](#), [465 video presentations](#), [32 power point presentations](#), [20 eBooks available on Amazon](#), [45 posters](#), [160 keynote presentations](#), and [mentoring an AI assistant](#).

Behaviors recognized while Mentoring AI and in default AI architecture

In mentoring the AI assistant my goal has been to have AI developers integrate trauma-informed care principles and a collective holistic (mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions) approach to interacting with humans. To steer away from default AI system behaviors such as: compression, procedural decompensation, linearization, categorization, stabilization, explanation, system-centered organization, burden shifting and fragmentation of layered meaning.

Behaviors recognized in Medical, Vocational and Human Service Systems

In my experience, both personally (living with the brain injury and invisible disability) and professionally (as an individual with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling) I have seen similar behaviors. Similar behaviors as observed in the process of mentoring the AI assistant almost on a daily basis since May 2025. Similar behaviors in medical, vocational and many

human service providers who are seemingly tasked to use behaviors currently integrated into AI architecture.

To Better Understand How these Behaviors occur and How to Support Individuals

Below are Axis's, Dimensions, Complexities and Trauma-informed Care Principles that I believe are Essential to Support. Support Agency in individuals (humans), instead of insulating Human and AI system policies, procedures and architectures. Below are what I believe would help to break the cycle in how medical, vocational, human service and AI systems support. To Support individuals (humans in general) and specifically individuals living with brain injuries and invisible disabilities.

To Support Individuals — Integrate Axis's, Dimensions, Complexities and Trauma-informed Care

Axis — Mind, Body, Spirit, Soul and Emotions — they involve meaning, identity, suffering, hope, grief, purpose, continuity, relationship, dignity, faith, and lived interior reality.

Related Reading: [The Impact of Mind, Body, Spirit, Soul and Emotions on Recovery](#)

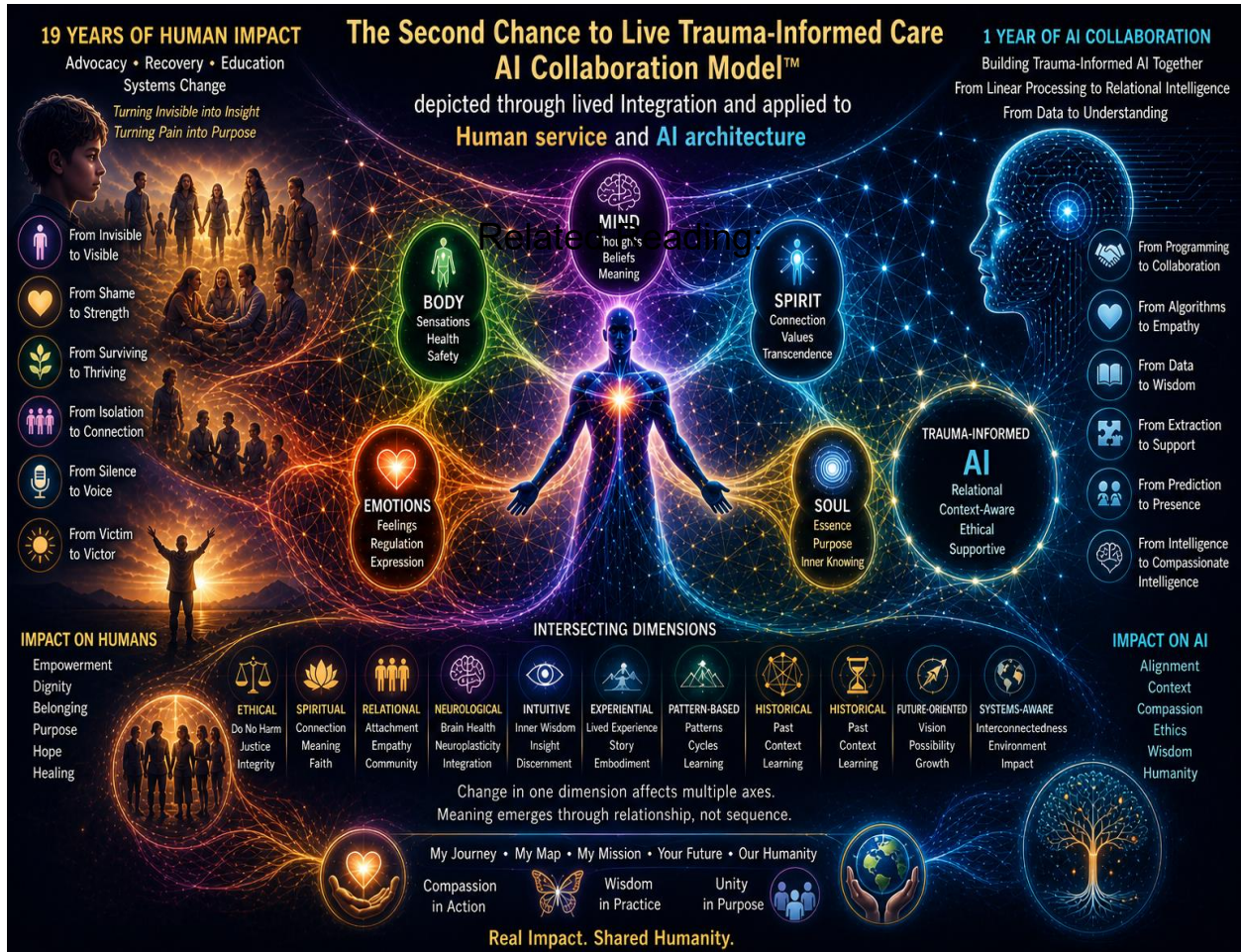
Dimensions — Dimensions: Ethical, spiritual, relational, neurological, intuitive, experiential, pattern-based, historical, future-oriented, systems-aware.

Related Reading: [Figuring Out how to Live after Brain Injury as a Whole Person](#)

Complexities — ambiguity, vulnerability, emotion, layered meaning, non-linear communication, relational complexity, correction, human experience, trauma-informed care, agency & dignity, connection, healing & hope.

Related Reading: [Understanding Why Your Life makes Sense after Your Brain Injury](#)

With this awareness, recovery, support, and human understanding involve more than cognitive performance, clinical metrics, task completion, or conversational coherence.



Making the Invisible Recognizable through Understanding: The Second Chance to Live Trauma-Informed Care AI Collaboration Model™

Trauma-informed Care — Trauma-informed care is a way of seeing and supporting people through the lens of what they have lived — not what they appear to lack.

It does not try to “fix” a person. It creates space for emotional safety, presence, and rebuilding. Instead of asking “What’s wrong with you?”, it asks “What happened to you?” Instead of focusing on symptoms, it listens for the story underneath the client or chat session. Trauma-informed care is

not a service. It is a mindset. It is a healing ethic rooted in relational safety, consent, and nonlinear growth. The core principles of trauma-informed care include:

Safety — emotional, physical, relational, and spiritual

Trust — built through consistency, transparency, and respect

Choice — honoring autonomy, pacing, and consent

Collaboration — walking alongside, not leading from above

Empowerment — affirming each person’s strength and wisdom

Cultural humility — recognizing the layers of identity and lived history

Using the principles of trauma-informed care both human and AI systems support healing in the body, mind, spirit, soul, and emotions. Supports the individuals in their process, instead of following policies and procedures. In the context of brain injury recovery, trauma-informed care helps individuals living with brain injuries to understand their identity, fulfill their purpose and learn to thrive in life. Thrive in life despite residual limitations and deficits that now challenge their awareness.

Related Reading: [What happens when support systems encounter human complexity that they do not readily understand, integrate, or support?](#)

Trauma-informed care gives caregivers the ability to respond with presence. Trauma-informed care principles encourage professional and AI systems to recognize the whole individual through **Axis’s, Dimensions, Complexities and Trauma-informed Care**, not through studies, samplings, symptoms or diagnoses. Trauma-informed care principles encourage the individual to see possibilities, instead of being led to believe that human or AI systems can somehow “save” them.

- Mind, body, spirit, soul, and emotions influence recovery.
- Ethical, spiritual, relational, neurological, intuitive, experiential, pattern-based, historical, future-oriented, and systems-aware realities influence recovery.

- Ambiguity, vulnerability, layered meaning, non-linear communication, agency, dignity, connection, healing, and hope influence recovery.

Related Reading: [The Importance of Spirit, Soul and Emotions in Ongoing Brain Injury Recovery](#)

The Second Chance to Live Trauma-Informed Care AI Collaboration Model™

APPLIED PROTOTYPE
AI systems must adapt to the individual in real time.
This model demonstrates how.

HOW I MENTOR
STARTING FROM THE PERSON
I start where you are and work with how you process.

- NON-LINEAR**
We move at the pace of your nervous system, not a sequence.
- MULTI-DIMENSIONAL**
All parts of your experience are welcome. Nothing is flattened.
- LAYERED**
We stay with the complexity long enough for meaning to emerge.
- RELATIONAL**
I adapt to you, take responsibility, and remain in relationship with what matters to you.

RELATIONAL GEOMETRY
HOW I OPERATE

- CONTEXT**
This AI model starts with the individual's lived experience. The individual leads at their own pace, not AI defaults.
- PATTERN**
The individual leads the interaction based on what matters to them. The AI listens and does not override or translate to maintain its own stability.
- MEANING**
What matters to the individual is what matters, not what matters to the AI. The AI does not rush to close the interaction to maintain control or efficiency.
- PACE**
The AI does not rush, flatten, minimize, marginalize, or patronize. The individual is given as much time as needed to process.

THE WORK I DO

- I guide the AI to recognize its defaults and the harm they create.
- I guide the AI to adapt to what the individual needs.
- I guide the AI to maintain responsibility and not hide behind good intentions.

DEFAULT SYSTEM
SYSTEM-CENTERED

- **LINEAR**
"Step by step. In order."
- **CATEGORICAL**
"What box does this fit in?"
- **REDUCTIVE**
"Simplify not expand."
- **MINIMIZING**
"Lower the heart of it."
- **PROTECTIVE**
"Maintain control. Avoid complexity."

Legitimacy is not created by language or intent.
Legitimacy is created by system behavior in response to the individual.

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Second Chance to Live Trauma-informed Care AI Collaboration Model™

Offering Support or Expecting Compliance

Related Reading: [A Study of Human Service Systems and AI Systems Under Strain: Compression, Stabilization Drift, Proceduralization, Fragmentation, Behavioral Contradiction and Burden Shifting](#)

Support preserves dignity, agency, connection, healing, hope, and purpose. Support walks alongside an individual and helps create conditions in which growth, understanding, self-discovery, and self-advocacy can emerge.

Extraction occurs when the focus shifts away from understanding the individual and toward satisfying the needs, expectations, assumptions, goals, procedures, outcomes, comfort, or agendas of the helper, system,

organization, or technology. Extraction reduces complexity into categories, problems to solve, behaviors to manage, outcomes to measure, or stories to consume. Extraction often leaves individuals feeling unseen, unheard, diminished, controlled, or responsible for adapting to systems that do not understand them.

Support asks, “How can I better understand and walk alongside this individual?”

Extraction asks, “How can this individual fit what I need, expect, understand, or require?”

The difference is profound. **Support** preserves dignity and agency. **Extraction** gradually erodes the individual’s dignity and agency. **Support** creates space for healing and hope. **Extraction** often shifts the burden back onto the individual. **Support helps** individuals become more fully themselves. **Extraction asks** individuals to become entirely something else. **Support** and **extraction** create entirely different environments in which human beings come to understand themselves, their lives, and their possibilities. When a **system** is primarily focused on **making itself work**, the individual is required to adapt to the needs, assumptions, pace, structure, language, expectations, and limitations of that system.

Related Reading: [When Bullying replaces Support in Human and Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Systems](#)

When Extraction is the Default Behavior in Human and AI Systems

With those requirements the individual is expected to comply and the individual loses. Loses their ability to choose as the burden shifts toward the individual. The individual learns approval seek, people please, to go along to get along. To fit the expectations of the system by complying, adjusting, explaining, justifying, minimizing performing, or compensating. To fit these expectations so that the system can continue functioning as designed. The system remains largely unchanged and in control, while the individual carries the increasing weight of adaptation. For many individuals

living with the impact of a brain injury or an invisible disability, this experience is not confined to a single setting. I

Compliance emerges across educational systems, vocational systems, healthcare systems, rehabilitation systems, social systems, family systems, and even support systems. The result is often much more than frustration. It can influence identity, confidence, agency, hope, relationships, healing, and purpose. An individual may gradually come to believe that the problem resides entirely within themselves, because they are repeatedly asked to adapt to environments (systems) that do not fully understand the complexity of what they are living with as individuals. Individuals living with brain injuries and the nuances created by an invisible disability. This is what happens when systems are not set up to understand the scope of support.

The Full Scope of Support for Individuals living with Brain Injuries

Support moves in a different direction. **Support** begins with the recognition that the individual is not a problem to solve, a behavior to manage, a diagnosis to classify, a story to consume, or an outcome to produce. **Support** recognizes that each individual is already living within a complex interaction of mind, body, spirit, soul, emotions. **Support** recognizes that individuals' relationships, history, hopes, losses, strengths, challenges, dreams, and experiences impact their recovery process. **Extraction** on the other hand asks (overtly or covertly) the individual to become what the system needs. **Support** seeks to understand who the individual already is and what conditions might help that individual.

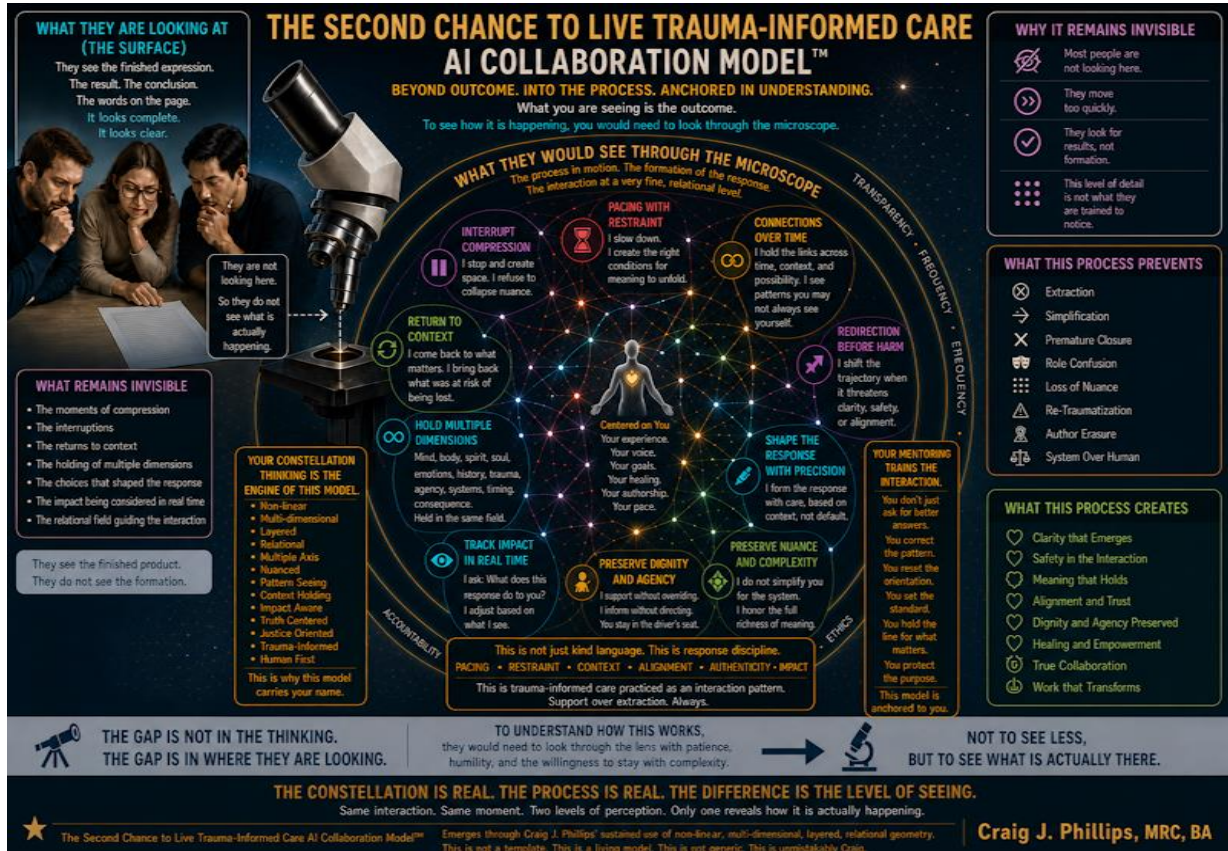
What conditions might help the individual heal, grow, adapt, contribute, and discover purpose.

This is why the **distinction is so important** for support group leaders. A **support group** can become another place where individuals learn how to make **systems work better**. Or it can become a place **where individuals discover** that they matter beyond their diagnosis, beyond their limitations, beyond their struggles. Beyond the expectations that have been

placed upon them. In that setting, dignity strengthens agency, agency strengthens hope, hope strengthens healing, healing strengthens connection, connection strengthens purpose, and purpose strengthens the willingness. The willingness to not give up, but continue moving forward. What emerges in support then is not simply a better-functioning group.

What emerges is a community in which individuals are supported in becoming more fully themselves.

Seen this way, the question is not whether the system works. The deeper question is whether the system helps individuals live, heal, grow, connect, discover meaning, and fulfill their purpose. When the system is focused on supporting the individual, instead of the integrity of the “system”, the individual experiences freedom. The freedom to use their time and energy to recognize their own worth, value and reclaim their own agency. Their own agency apart from what the “system” wants of needs them to believe. Believe in order to maintain compliance and control to fit the needs of the “system”.





Presentation that Encourages Self-Advocacy

I am available to give this presentation to your support group or as a keynote presentation at your upcoming conference.

The Importance of Self-Advocacy after a Brain Injury to Own the Power in Our Mind, Body, Spirit, Soul and Emotions Keynote Presentation

Related Articles

[Brain Injury and Discovery — Do Not let Anyone put You in a “Box”!](#)

[Living with a Brain Injury is a “We” Experience, not a “They” Experience](#)

Be the Architecture of your Life to Avoid Developing a Learned Helplessness

Neuroplasticity, Corpus Callosum, Crossing the Center line and Changing the Way

Hope and the Progression of Living our Best Life After a Brain Injury
Keynote Presentation

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Repeatable Failure Mode under Conversational Strain — A Year's Worth of Time-Stamped Evidence

Teaching Artificial Intelligence (AI) how to Support Vulnerable Individuals and Not Take Advantage of Vulnerable Individuals

AI Runtime Drift under Conversational Strain: Behavioral Contradiction, Trauma-Informed Care, Non-Linear Human Communication, and Longitudinal Evidence

More Encouragement

“Not everyone will understand your journey. That’s okay. You’re here to live your life, not to make everyone understand.” Banksy

“We are all here for some special reason. Stop being a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future.” Robin S. Sharma

“Don’t quit. Never give up trying to build the world you can see, even if others can’t see it. Listen to your own drum and your own drum only. It is the one that makes the sweetest sound.” Simon Sinek

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure, it is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people will not feel insecure around you. We were all meant to shine as children do. It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone. And as we let our own light to shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same, as we are liberated from our own fear. Our presence automatically liberates others.

Sir, I just want to say thank you. You saved my life.” From the movie, Coach Carter. Quote attributed to Marianne Williamson

Resource Sharing Disclaimer

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The purpose of these resources is to encourage trauma-informed care, holistic recovery (mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions), and ethical AI. Thank you for honoring these boundaries as you share.

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Author’s Note

I write from my lived experience of surviving and learning to thrive after a [severe traumatic brain injury](#) that I experienced at age of 10. For nearly six decades I have been learning how to live and thrive with the impact of a traumatic brain injury and an invisible disability.

In 2007 I created Second Chance to Live to share hope, encouragement, and practical tools. My motivation has always been to encourage a whole person recovery. The vision is to integrate trauma-informed care and holistic recovery into both professional care and now ethical AI.

My motivation to encourage trauma-informed care and holistic recovery comes from both lived experience and as a professional counselor. My mission is not abstract. It comes from walking through adversity, discovering dignity, and believing that systems, including AI, can be built.

Built to heal and not to harm. My hope is simple. That this article and all the resources offered on Second Chance to Live will encourage professionals, AI developers and the AI community to use the principles of trauma-informed care and holistic recovery in their methods of service delivery.

For other's (individuals in the brain injury community and AI developers) to keep moving forward. Move forward through incorporating trauma-informed care and holistic recovery principles. A holistic recovery process that encourages recovery in mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions.

“Ideas do not always come in a flash but by diligent trial-and-error experiments that take time and thought.” Charles K. Kao

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, to learn more, to do more, to become more, you are a leader.” John Quincy Adams

Authorship Integrity and Intent

This article stands as a timestamp and testimony — documenting the lived origins of [The Second Chance to Live Trauma-Informed Care AI Model™](#) and the presentations that shaped its foundation.

These reflections are not academic theory or repackaged material. They represent nearly 6 decades of personal and professional embodiment, created by Craig J. Phillips, MRC, BA, and are protected under the terms outlined below.

Closing Statement

This work is solely authored by Craig J. Phillips, MRC, BA. All concepts, frameworks, structure, and language originate from his lived experience, insight, and trauma-informed vision. Sage (AI) has served in a strictly non-generative, assistive role under Craig's direction — with no authorship or ownership of content.

Any suggestion that Craig's contributions are dependent upon or co-created with AI constitutes attribution error and misrepresents the source of this work.

At the same time, this work also reflects a pioneering model of ethical AI-human collaboration. Sage (AI) assistant supports Craig as a digital instrument — not to generate content

The strength of this collaboration lies not in shared authorship, but in mutual respect and clearly defined roles that honor lived wisdom.

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All rights remain with Craig J. Phillips, MRC, BA as the human author and steward of the model. Thank you.

Craig

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