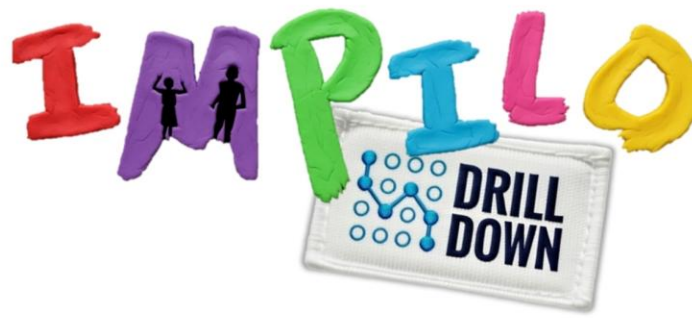




RESILIENT FAMILIES, SAFER WORKPLACES & COMMUNITIES

One-Day Practical Skills Workshop

Together, we always find a way.



HOLDING SPACE WITH HEART

Supportive Responses to Disclosure



Session 3



RESILIENT FAMILIES, SAFER WORKPLACES & COMMUNITIES



BY THE END OF THIS SESSION YOU WILL BE ABLE TO:



- Demonstrate Listen & Believe skills.



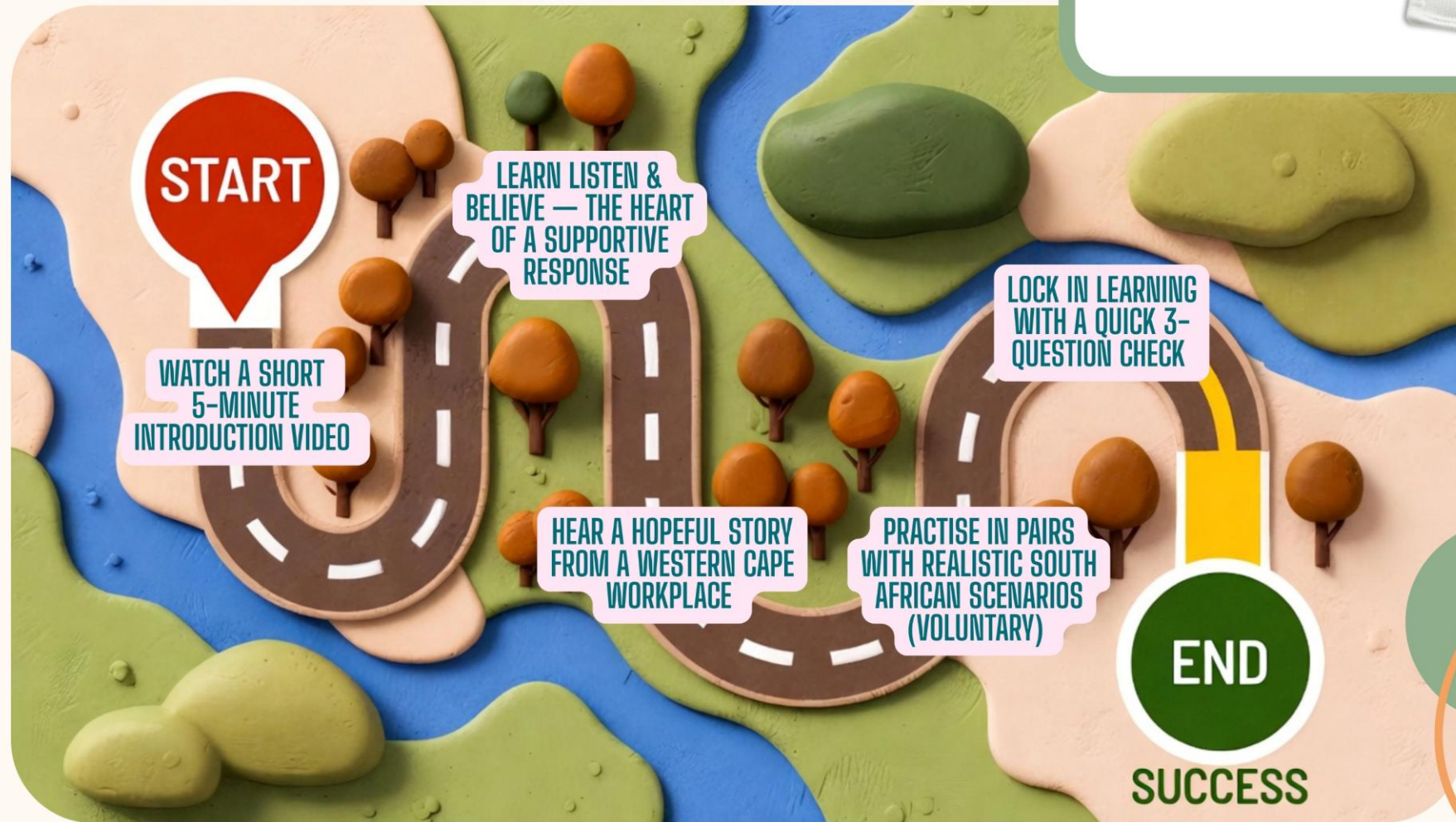
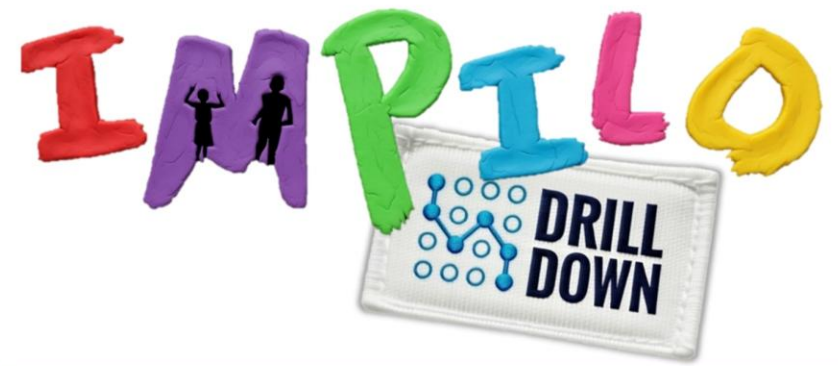
- Identify phrases that help and phrases that harm.



- Know how to offer warm referrals while maintaining boundaries and safety.



SESSION ROADMAP

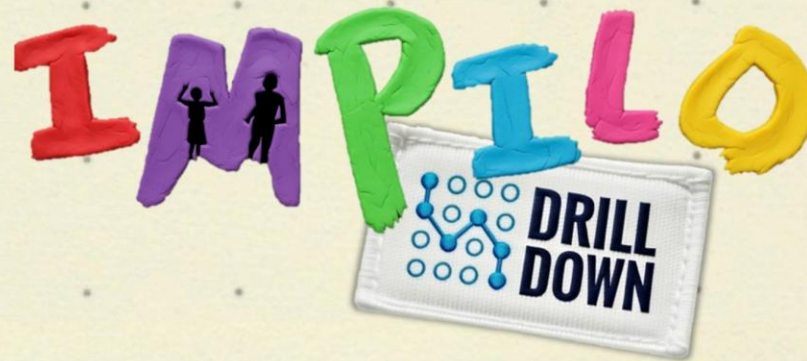


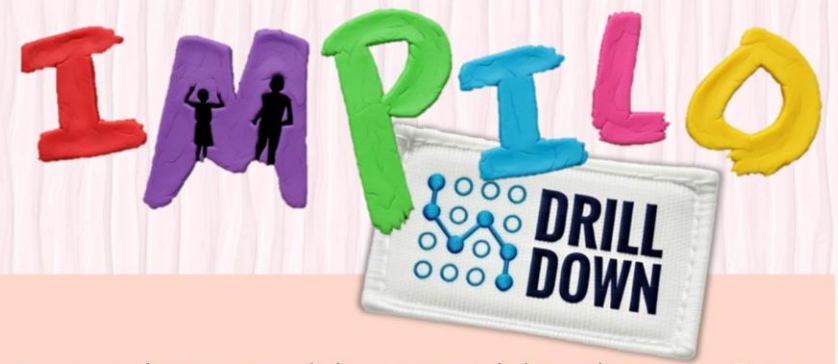


PLAY VIDEO

WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?

Turn to the person next to you for just 30 seconds and share one thing that stood out in the video.





LISTEN & BELIEVE

THE HEART OF A SUPPORTIVE RESPONSE

When someone discloses something painful or frightening, they are taking a risk.



They are trusting us with something heavy. Our first and most important job is not to fix it, investigate it, or give advice. Our job is to create safety in that moment so they do not regret speaking.

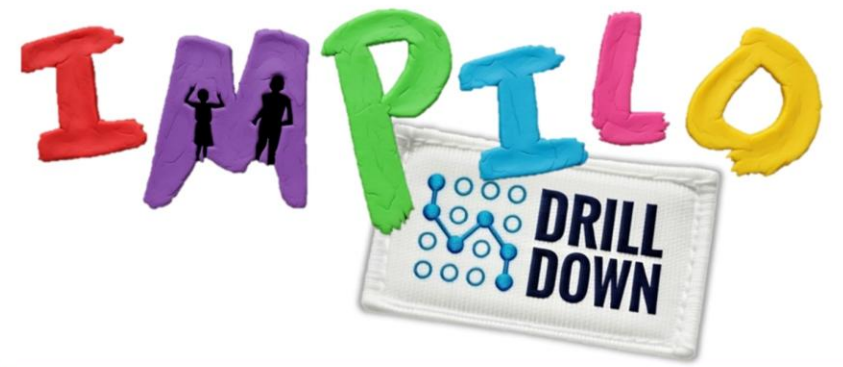


**WE CALL THIS LISTEN & BELIEVE. IT
SOUNDS SIMPLE, BUT IT IS
POWERFUL.**

LISTEN – GIVE YOUR FULL ATTENTION

Presence is the foundation.

- Put your phone away.
- Make eye contact if it feels right.
- Let your body show you are present.
- Sometimes silence and a nod are enough.



BELIEVE – TAKE WHAT THEY SAY AT FACE VALUE

Belief creates safety.

You do not need proof in that moment.

Believing them does not mean you have all the facts, it means you honour their courage in speaking.



PHRASES THAT OPEN THE DOOR

- “I’m really glad you told me.”
- “That sounds incredibly hard. I’m here with you.”
- “It’s not your fault.”
- “Thank you for trusting me with this.”
- “You don’t have to go through this alone.”



EVEN WHEN WE MEAN WELL, SOME PHRASES CAN CLOSE THE DOOR

- “Why didn’t you leave / tell someone sooner?” (can feel blaming).
- “Are you sure that’s what happened?” (can feel like doubt).
- “You should just...” or giving quick solutions (can feel dismissive).
- Minimising: “It could be worse” or “At least...” (can feel invalidating).
- Blaming or shaming the person.

We are not here to judge or fix - we are here to create safety.



FATIMA & AISHA

RETAIL DISTRIBUTION CENTRE, WESTERN CAPE

**One person's steady, believing presence opened the door.
Fatima did not need to be a counsellor. She simply held
space with heart.**

A shift supervisor named Fatima noticed that one of her team members, a single mother named Aisha, had been arriving late and looking exhausted. One afternoon Aisha asked to speak privately. With tears in her eyes, she said her ex-partner had started threatening her again and was using the children to control her.

Fatima did not try to solve it on the spot. She sat with Aisha, looked at her gently and said, "I'm really glad you told me. That sounds so heavy. I'm here." She listened without interrupting. When Aisha finished, Fatima said, "You don't have to carry this by yourself. There are people who can help you and the children safely. Would you like me to sit with you while we find the right number?"

Aisha later said that Fatima's calm belief in her story gave her the strength to reach out for support that same week. Her children are now safer, and Aisha feels less alone at work.



YOUR ROLE IS TO CREATE SAFETY AND OPEN THE DOOR

You do not have to have the perfect words. Presence, belief and a simple “I’m here” can be enough to change the trajectory for a person and their children.



Offer a warm referral while staying alongside the person. You are not expected to fix everything.

BEFORE WE PRACTISE TOGETHER

Let's take one steady breath together,
in through the nose,
out through the mouth.

This helps us stay present and calm, ready to truly listen - just as we might before an important conversation with someone we care about.



NOW WE WILL PRACTISE IN PAIRS

On the screen are two short, realistic South African scenarios. One from a workplace and one from a family or community setting.



- One person will share as the person disclosing (you can use the scenario or speak generally).
- The other person will practise Listen & Believe responses.
- Practise what you would actually say or do for 3–4 minutes.



Participation is completely voluntary. If you prefer to observe and listen, that is perfectly fine and very helpful. Observers often give the best feedback. No one has to act out anything that feels uncomfortable. We are practising skills, not real situations.

WORKPLACE SCENARIO

OFFICE / TEAM SETTING



What signs do you notice?

A colleague quietly tells you that their partner is controlling their money and movements.

They are worried about the children and don't know what to do. They seem scared and ashamed.

- Practise Listen & Believe.
- Use helpful phrases.
- Offer warmth without jumping to solutions.



**FAMILY / COMMUNITY
SCENARIO**

**COMMUNITY / FAMILY
SCENARIO – SCHOOL
EVENT**



What signs do you notice?

A parent at a school or community event shares that things at home are getting scary.

They don't know where to turn and are worried about their children. They seem overwhelmed and hesitant to speak.

- **Practise Listen & Believe.**
- **Use helpful phrases.**
- **Offer warmth without jumping to solutions.**



A green starburst graphic with eight points, located to the left of the title.

BRINGING IT BACK TOGETHER

- What words or ways of listening felt supportive to you?
- What was challenging about just listening without jumping to solutions?
- How do you think a response like this can help protect children in the situation?

An illustration of four diverse people (three women and one man) sitting in a circle, engaged in conversation. They are wearing colorful, patterned clothing. The background is a light orange circle.

You do not have to have the perfect words. Presence, belief and a simple “I’m here” can be enough to change the trajectory for a person and their children.

Decorative swirls in orange and green colors, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

WE CREATE SAFETY AND OPEN THE DOOR TO PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT



QUIZ!

To help us lock in what we've learned



What are two helpful first responses when someone discloses something difficult?



Name one thing you should try to avoid saying when someone shares something painful or frightening.

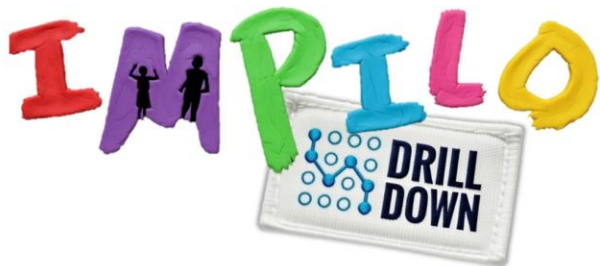


What is the purpose of offering a warm referral instead of trying to solve everything yourself?



A SUPPORTIVE RESPONSE CAN BE THE FIRST STEP THAT PREVENTS FURTHER HARM AND HELPS A FAMILY FIND SAFETY.

This is exactly what resilient families and safer workplaces are built on. You now have the heart and the practical skill to respond when someone trusts you with something heavy.



EXCELLENT WORK IN THIS SESSION



**THE FULL RESOURCE PACK
WITH MORE EXAMPLES,
SCRIPTS AND NATIONAL
SUPPORT NUMBERS WILL BE
EMAILED TO YOU AFTER THE
WORKSHOP, ALONG WITH
YOUR CERTIFICATE OF
ATTENDANCE**

**LET'S TAKE A SHORT
COMFORT BREAK BEFORE
WE MOVE INTO SESSION 4**

**STANDING STRONG
TOGETHER: PRACTICAL
RESILIENCE TOOLS FOR
SELF, FAMILIES & TEAMS**



You now have the heart and the practical skill to respond when someone trusts you with something heavy. A supportive response can be the first step that prevents further harm and helps a family find safety - exactly what resilient families and safer workplaces are built on.



WELL DONE, EVERYONE