

# A summary of research into- People not just books

*An Investigation into the Knowledge and  
Experience of Trauma Informed Practice in the  
Justice System.*

**Full thesis**

**or Summary**

**<https://www.intermediaries-for-justice.org/research-reports-and-articles>**

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# Trauma is a physiological response to threat *beyond* our conscious control

**Feeling trapped by inescapable and uncontrollable events.**

**Trauma --- Disintegration | Fragmentation of senses and self**

*The arousal continuum from vigilance through to terror.'*

Bruce Perry

***“Indeed, if one set out intentionally to design a system for provoking symptoms of posttraumatic disorder, it might look very much like a court of law.”***

(Herman, 2003, p.160).

# The effects of trauma

- Trauma is a sensory experience and involves the body and brain.
- It causes the **vagus nerve** and the **amygdala** to be activated, along with other responses .
- The 'thinking brain'/neocortex goes off -line -shut down
- Reactions -----
- Fight – fighting, being defensive, protesting
- Flight – running away, escaping
- Freeze – being unable to move or make decisions
- Fawn – trying to please, appeasing, smiling or trying to win over someone hurting you
- Flop – becoming overwhelmed and unresponsive, feeling disconnected from your body (dissociating), sometimes even fainting
  
- **Experts –Van der Kolk, Siegel, Damasio, Perry , Hughes , Porgues, Mate. ....to name but a few**

# Trauma has many faces

Anxiety

Trauma can make a person more reactive to unexpected changes or information. They may appear as shy or withdrawn, or overly sensitive.

Trauma can cause a person to be in a state of hypervigilance. This can appear as aggression or a 'short fuse'.

Aggression

Trauma can make it difficult to connect words to experiences which can cause receptive and expressive language delays

Language  
Deficits

Executive  
Function  
Deficits

Trauma can inhibit the ability of a person to develop the skills and brain functions needed to plan, organise and solve problems

Distraction

Trauma can make it difficult to determine what information is important and what is not. This can mean a person will focus more on interpreting the speaker's mood or safety of the environment than the content of what is being said

# We can't think our way out of trauma

- *“Regardless of the level of trauma, some people with a history of trauma often cannot put into words their emotional feelings and frequently have difficulty sensing what is going on in their bodies. They can react to stress in ways which will affect their evidence. For example, a state of paralysing fear or blind rage.”*

(Van der Kolk, 2014).



Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then. It's the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people.

Van der Kolk, 2014

# Physical Impact of Trauma

## Brain Architecture

Shrinkage in prefrontal cortex, corpus callosum, and hippocampus. Enlarged and more reactive amygdala. **Resolution:** safe and stable nurturing relationships, walk in nature, touch, exercise



## Neural Pathways

Need to 'rewire' our brain from old thought patterns and habits of mind, conscious, and unconscious. **Resolution:** neurofeedback, meditation/ mindful action, positive self-talk



## Hormones

Prolonged high cortisol and ghrelin creates greater reactivity to stress. Long term damage to cells, structures of the body, and other hormone glands (thyroid). **Resolution:** oxytocin ("the love hormone")



## Toxin Elimination

Intestines and kidneys less able to eliminate toxins (slow gut or unbalanced flora). **Resolution:** salt baths, sauna



## Nervous System

Supercharged sympathetic nervous system. Parasympathetic nervous system not engaged to bring back into balance. **Resolution:** yoga, breathing, or other physical/emotional regulation



## Immune System

Resistance to cortisol or lower cortisol creates unchecked inflammation. Cause of many diseases: asthma, arthritis, etc.) **Resolution:** meditation/ mindful action, walking in nature, diet, rest



## Brain Waves

Predomination of wrong brain waves in wrong part of the brain leads to anxiety, unable to concentrate, and seizures. **Resolution:** neurofeedback



## Neurotransmitters

Vulnerable to addiction because dopamine transmitters/receptors not developed or damaged. Reduces motivation & focus, creates fatigue. Low serotonin causes depression.



## Cellular Change

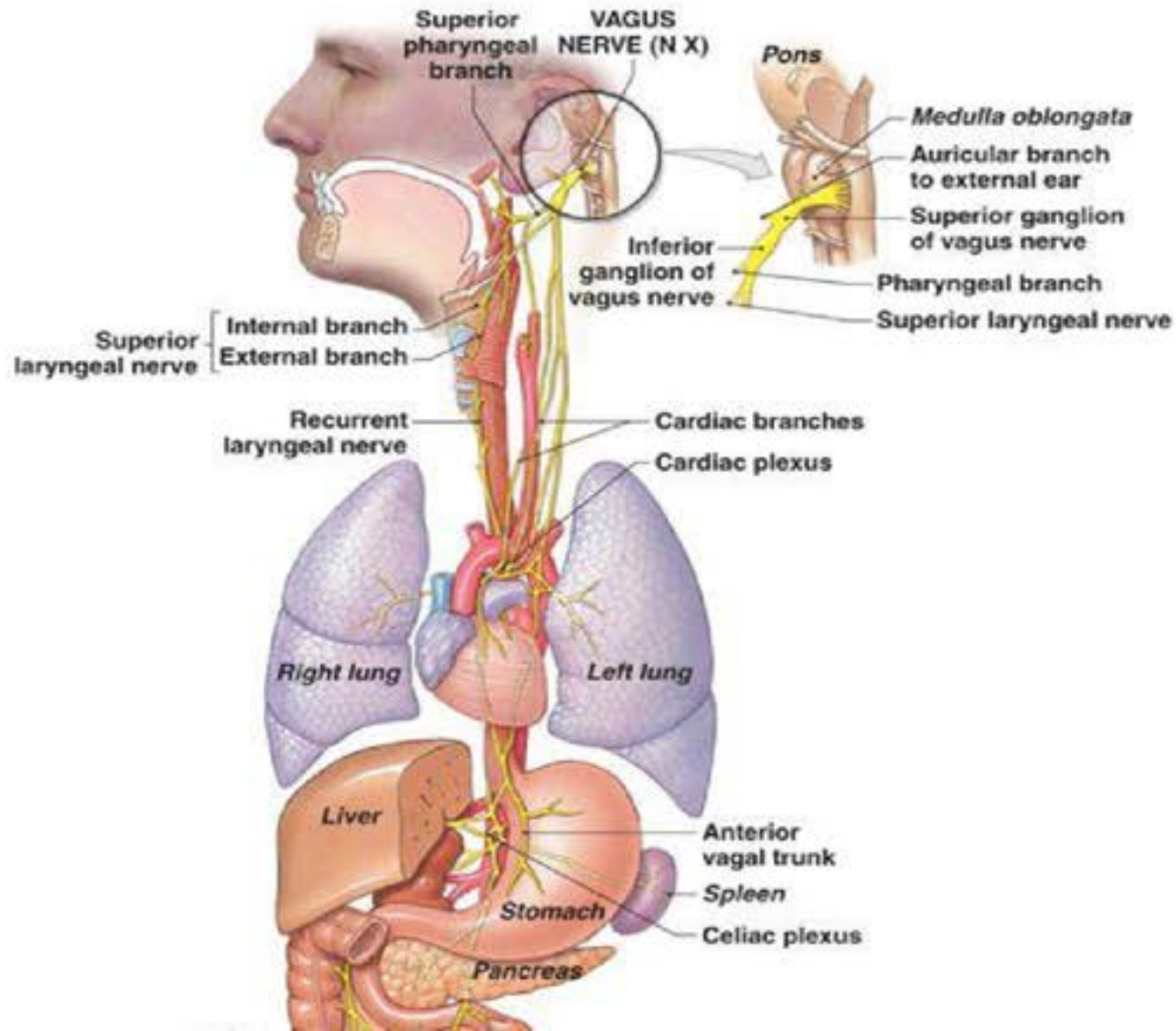
Shortens telomeres which prematurely ages and reduces reproduction of cells & can cause cancer. **Resolution:** social support

Epigenetics turns genes on or off in adaptation to dangerous environments. Effect can last generations. **Resolution:** Safer environment (perception of)



# Cranial Nerve X – Vagus

The vagus nerve is a critical nerve for supplying parasympathetic information to the visceral organs of the respiratory, digestive and urinary systems. It is important in the control of heart rate, bronchoconstriction & digestive processes.





# Filling a void in research

- This research is not intended to attack the system, but to show **a gap in research. and practice**
- Research –how T.I.P is currently experienced and included in the JS.
- Aim to gather information -Do the people at ground level suggest there is a need for T.i.P
- Strong need to collect information about well-being of legal professionals
- General move to **raise trauma awareness emerging in other professions outside the JS.**
- Good position to investigate perceived notions as they share attributes with the participants of the study.
- A researcher is considered an 'outsider' when they do not belong to the group to which the participants belong (Braun & Clarke, 2015).
- The concept of an insider researcher fits well with this research and the wish to explore from every angle.  
I am an **insider** – I am a **Registered Intermediary** | CAI
- As an '**insider**' – **it allows for a unique understanding of issues discussed.** This contributed to the development of the research interest in the first place, and the research questions.

# Justice....? ....and the System

- This 'broken system' has been found to harbour sexism, misogynistic, discrimination, and racism (Casey, 2023; Monteith et al., 2022; Scottish Police Review, 2023).
- Bar Council, Fenhalls (2022) states: "Justice is a **vital public service that has been starved of funding and political support over the last decade**. The results are clear for anyone working in the sector – a system stripped of experience and expertise, systems and buildings that aren't fit for purpose, and a tired and cynical workforce increasingly looking for a way out
- College of Policing The Wellbeing Survey 2020 'These demands require police officers and staff to take on what in **the past would have been regarded as a social welfare role**, while still being expected to deliver their traditional policing functions and activities.' (College of Policing, 2023)
- The research into UK Judicial Attitudes (Thomas, 2022 UCL ) indicates that Judges have strong personal attachments to being part of The Judiciary but feel less respected by society now than 2 years ago. Also, there is an increase in the proportion of Judges saying they are considering leaving The Judiciary early. They also indicate a concern about the time for training having decreased.

# Important Research Papers

- **Racial Bias of the Bench (Monteith et al., 2022)**. They found that black defendants, particularly, were treated differently from white defendants. This research was created in response to the Judicial Strategy for Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to increase ethnic diversity in The Judiciary. 119 advocates and legal professionals were surveyed. Their qualitative and quantitative findings found evidence of racism in the JS. Their findings show concern about privileged backgrounds and power imbalance as factors that restrict the system from becoming diverse. This resonates with some responses already stated in this thesis.
- Currently (2023), the Judicial Executive Board has declined to publish a report it commissioned into judicial bullying (**Monteith, 2023**)
- **Leslie Thomas KC (2023)**, suggests in his work on the adversarial system that the JS is focused on :

*“winning or losing rather than promoting the search for truth. It also relies heavily on oral evidence , which has significant implications for traumatised and vulnerable people due to the need to recall their experiences out loud. There is also an insidious and, arguably, immoral aspect where a person's resources determine whether they can or cannot hire good representation. It can be highly traumatic to witness this not happening, particularly in cases where vulnerable witnesses, defendants, and appellants are treated with hostility in a confrontational manner”*



# A call to further training for Judges

In 2022, Lord Brunett called for training for Judges to avoid corrosive and inappropriate behaviour.

*'Research shows this is present in our profession with 38% personally experiencing and/or observing bullying, harassment /discrimination at work, either in person or while working online'*

(Williams & Pike, 2021).



# Research Questions

- What level of knowledge do professionals have of T.I.P?
- What does T.I.P training look like in the Justice System/JS ?
- How do professionals approach working with traumatised individuals?
- Do JS professionals feel equipped to deal with the demands of working with traumatised people ?
- What are the JS professionals' perceptions of vicarious trauma ?
- What does Supervision and Reflective Practice look like in the JS?

## Initial findings :

- Research questions uncovered T.I.P to be a relatively new concept
- T.I.P concept is beginning to penetrate JS but it is inconsistent ,
- Not mandatory.
- Little systemic literature.

# Chapters in full thesis .

- **The Justice System** - *the effect of working in a broken system.*
- **Literature Review** - *what is trauma?*
- **The Practitioner's Voice** - *reflections regarding experiences as an intermediary*
- **Methodology** - *Phenomena pragmatic approach.*
- **Working with trauma | Results of mixed method survey** - *trauma of those coming into JS and working in the system.*
- **The JS and the effects of trauma on those working in it** - *vicarious trauma*
- **Narratives analysis** - *semi structure interviews*
- **Practitioner's reflection in light of finding** - *analysis of a trial in relation to the research findings*
- **Discussion and recommendations**
- **Conclusion**

Mixed Method Approach  
- Qualitative &  
Quantitative

35 questions via Surveys

In-depth Interviews +  
Multiple Case Studies



## Research questions.

Knowledge of T.I.P.

–i.e. Somatic responses

window of  
tolerance/grounding  
tech/de-escalation/  
regulation /effect on  
communication/special  
measures/

Training in TIP

Vicarious trauma.

Supervision/reflective  
practice



- 53 Police
- 46 Solicitors/Barristers
- 56 Intermediaries
- Judges - **prohibited by Judicial Office.**
- 5 Retired Judges
- Total sample =160

# Research Approach

- The research journey was to make sense of and interpret phenomena  
**‘the meanings people bring to phenomena’** ( Denzin and Lincoln 2011)
- Collection of data – allows for analysis of how the system is adapting to emerging knowledge of physical and psychological effects of trauma.
- Not aiming to find a universal truth ...But dependent on the **perspectives of professionals** --PRAGMATIC APPROACH (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2012)
- Pragmatism allows for a realistic outlook at practice and can use multiple methods.
- Pragmatism –**understands real life phenomena**
- **Enables creation of recommendations to address them.**



# Pragmatic Phenomenological Approach

- **Pragmatics** recognises there are many different ways of interpreting the world .
- MULTIPLE REALITIES EXIST-helpful approach to explain different phenomena in the world .
- No single point of view can give the entire picture
- Seeks to understand the nature of a **phenomena** - common factors explores the views and experiences of a mixture of people witnessing the same process or system but from different perspectives. Lived experience
- It allows for **qualitative –thematic analysis** --- emerging **topics /themes/codes** and **quantitative analysis** of perspectives **Mixed Method Design approach used.**
- Together - offer Validity and reliability . Non- probability convenience sampling
- Ideal for **gathering** descriptions and understanding of knowledge and experience of T.I.P-
- A sequential approach - first survey then interviews.



# Gaps in Literature

**Topics - those working with people coming from outside the system(clients)**

- Do you work with traumatised people?
- Do you know about the impact of trauma on an individual's ability to communicate ?
- Which adaptations may assist a child or vulnerable person to best communicate their evidence and participate effectively?
- Have you attended any formal training on T.I.P.?

**Topics -Those working inside the system (professionals)**

- Do you know what vicarious trauma is?
- Have you experienced vicarious trauma yourself ?
- Wellbeing at work .do you have regular supervision ?
- Do you have reflective practice?

# Semi Structured Interviews

- Interviewees – self selected
- Aim to provide further context and greater insight into the survey findings. ( Smith 2015)
- Narrative Analysis - of the phenomenon through lived experience.
- Questions formed bases of semi structured interview ...emerged directly from surveys topics. As follows:
- **Topics ;**
- The System
- Training
- Vicarious trauma
- Supervision and Reflective Practice
- Analysis used SPSS, JISC and Nvivo –reading- transcripts ..coding themes

# Semi Structured Interviews

- During the surveys and interviews, all four groups of legal professionals showed highly emotional reactions to the discussed topic, including emotions of **anger, disgust, fear, and helpless resignation**.
- Working with this amount of distressing data was the substance of **accumulative traumatisation**. It is well-researched that researchers can suffer from **secondary Vicarious Trauma** from listening to multiple traumatic accounts of despair. Regular supervision was therefore important --the impact of these interviews will live with me for a long time .
- My own reflective images/drawings are used to introduce relevant chapters. The use of such images allows for more social interaction, urging deeper and more meaningful understanding of issues (Martikainen, Hujala & Laulainen, 2022). This retained the thread of reflection throughout. Visual presentations of data (i.e., the use of charts, tables and figures) have been included in the interest of inclusivity and accessibility.



# Reflective Images –drawn during practice as an intermediary



*-‘All those faces and eyes’*



*“I didn’t know what they were talking about in court..  
.. what have I got? ‘ Is this Fair Access to Justice?*



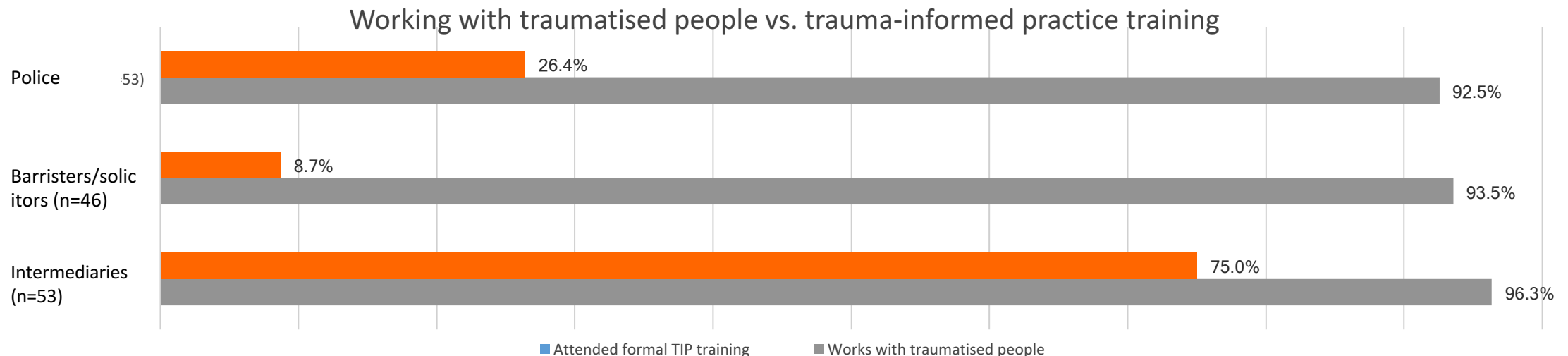
*Triggers*



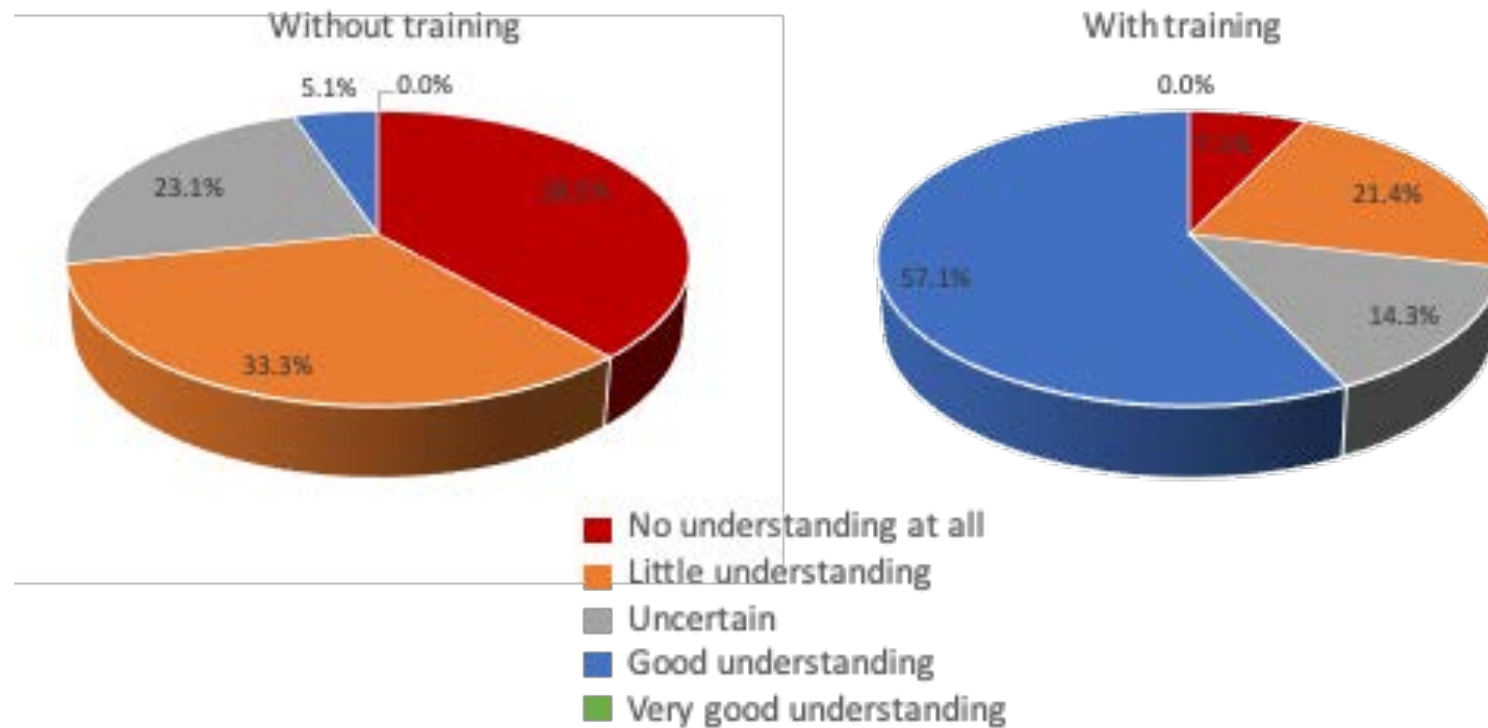
*Please sit down at the  
child’s level”.*

# Working with Trauma vs TIP training

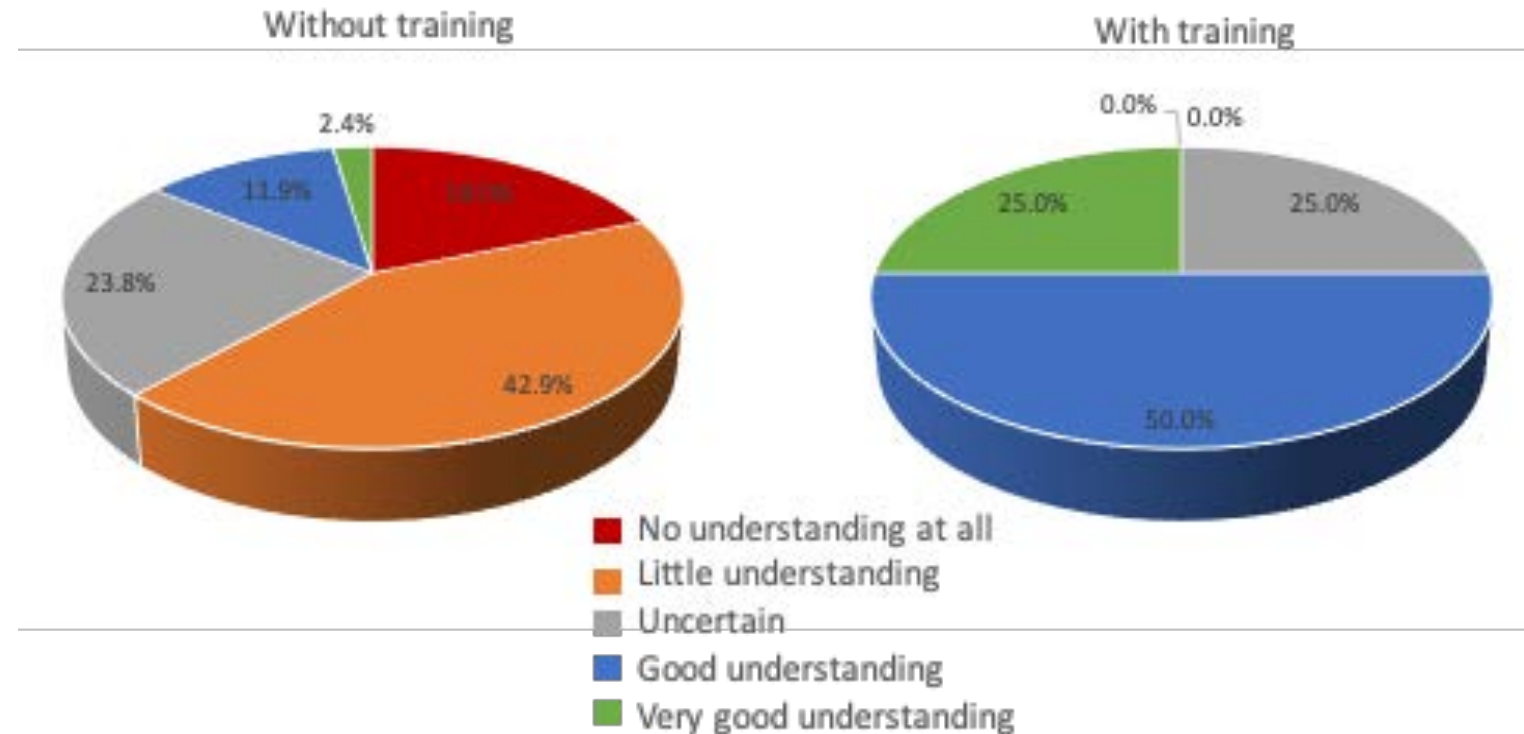
- 73.6% Police had **not** attended any **formal training** on Trauma Informed Practice.
- 91.3% Solicitors/barristers stated that they had **not** attended any **formal training** on Trauma Informed Practice. Majority of Intermediaries (75%) had. But **self-funded**.
- **Worrying** trend as **all** professions were highly aware that they work with traumatised people: police = 92.5%, barristers = 93.5% and Intermediaries = 96.3%



# Police Understanding of TIP

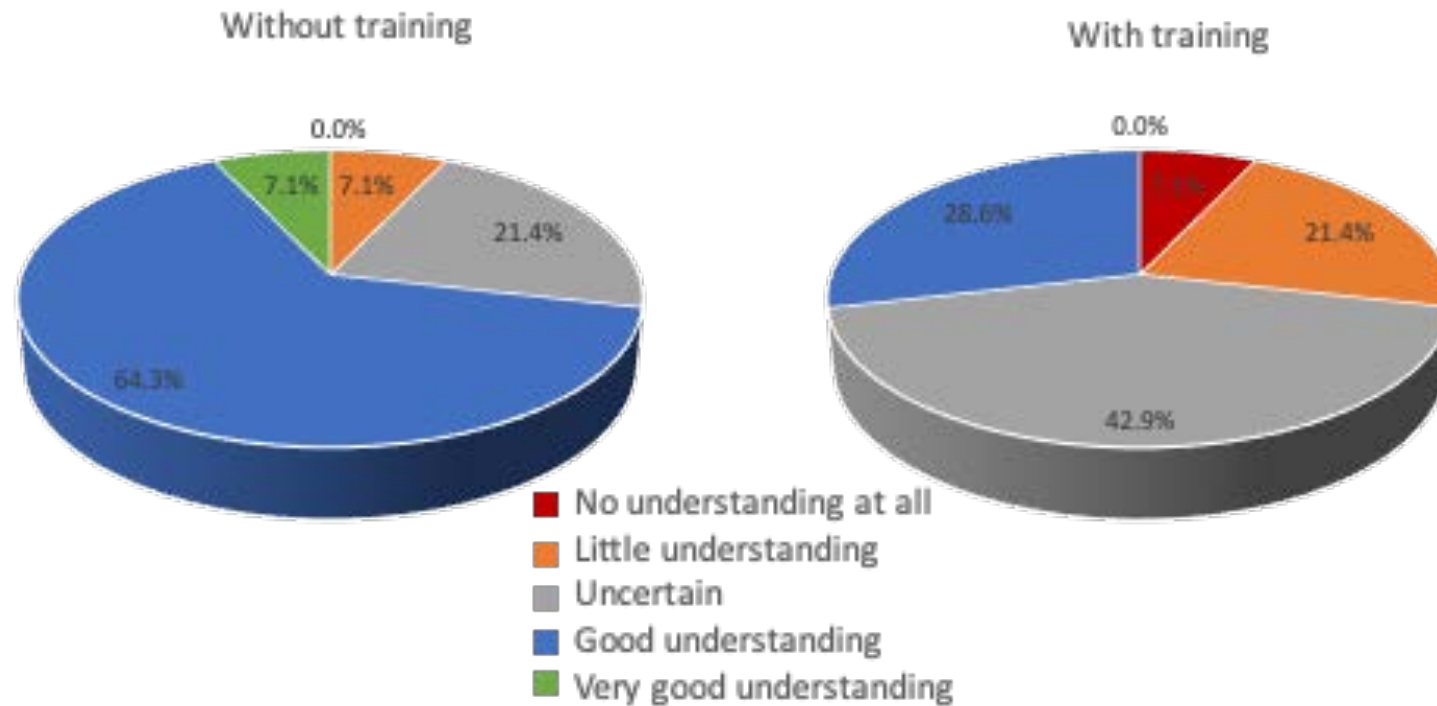


# Barrister/Solicitors Understanding of TIP





# Intermediary Understanding of TIP



# Qualitative responses

(pol=police sb= solicitors /barristers

Int =Intermediaries )

- POL207 *“Unsure why trauma-training isn’t provided as this is a very important training that in my opinion people should be offered.”*
- POL130 questioned the length of training and staffing issues, for example: *“Training available is very limited and due to staff shortages, we are rarely released”*. This was also noted by POL380: *“I haven’t been on any trainings due to operational demand of role and availability of learning material.”*
- *“The problem is that everyone involved has to be trauma informed. If not, it doesn't work. For example, in many schools, if ask about this subject, you will be told about the specific person who is responsible for it and this will be the only trauma informed person in the whole school. In my practice, I have yet to come across any trauma informed Judges or housing officers”*.
- SB494 wrote about the housing law and immigration sector: *“Legal professionals need to be able to identify trauma and deal with it head on. I work in housing law cases and immigration cases. Despite dealing with significantly more trauma inflicted court users, the immigration tribunal is woefully inadequate in its practices and cannot be relied upon to identify or accommodate vulnerability unless it is positively centred at the case. In my opinion, the Immigration Tribunal is significantly "case hardened" to trauma”*.

# Qualitative responses

- INT273 noted:
- *“I didn't get training on trauma in my initial RI training and I believe this made it hard for me to make sense of my reaction to complex case experiences, which I believe left me with Vicarious Trauma. If I'd have had the IfJ training as part of my foundation training, I would've understood how to assist vulnerable witnesses better and also how to take better care of myself”.*
- Int 12 *“Yes, I've had trauma-training but I needed to attend more. It should be part of the initial Intermediary training run by MOJ pre-registration qualification.”*
- Also with Solicitors/Barristers, the need for training across sectors was also noted:
- *“More legal professionals should be made aware of T.I.P and the Intermediary role. Even people who have done the ICCA training can harbour misconceptions about vulnerable people and their ability to participate in The Justice System.”* (INT291).

***”The more you know the less you feel you know?”***

***And what you don’t know, you don’t know.”***

## **Arrogance, defensiveness or fear**

- It is important to explore why, despite having training, not a single police respondent claimed to have a very good understanding of T.I.P.
- Likewise, only a small percentage of both Barristers and Intermediaries claimed to have a good understanding of T.I.P.
- It is reasonable to assume that the **type (length, aims, depth )** of training impacted on the results.
- N.B -the variables in the training have not been fully captured in this research,
- The phenomenon of the more you know the less you feel you know could be at play.
- Also, **what you don’t know you, you don’t know, or an established institutional/organisation belief that they do know** , may give people **false confidence**.
- Many factors still to be explored.

***"Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge."***

Darwin

## Imposter syndrome ...and finding it difficult to admit uncertainty

- The Dunning -Kruger Effect (Dunning, 2011) -when a person overestimates their level of knowledge through their confidence alone.
- It is a type of cognitive bias that causes people to overestimate their knowledge or ability, particularly in areas with which they have little to no experience

# People not just books

- Perhaps the existing lack of training is due to :
- Cultural and organisational arrogance, ignorance
- An inability to keep up with developments in neuroscience and psychology.

There needs to be a shift from focusing on **books and laws**, to a **realisation that we are working in a system where human beings are fundamental to the process.**

- Another possible factor maybe, that when people have attended training, they then realise the enormity and complexity of the subject of trauma and its effects , causing them to feel less confident.
- This may produce feelings of 'imposter' syndrome. This could be the reason 21.4% of Intermediaries following training rate themselves as 'uncertain' in their knowledge of T.I.P despite having attended training. This was explored in interviews.

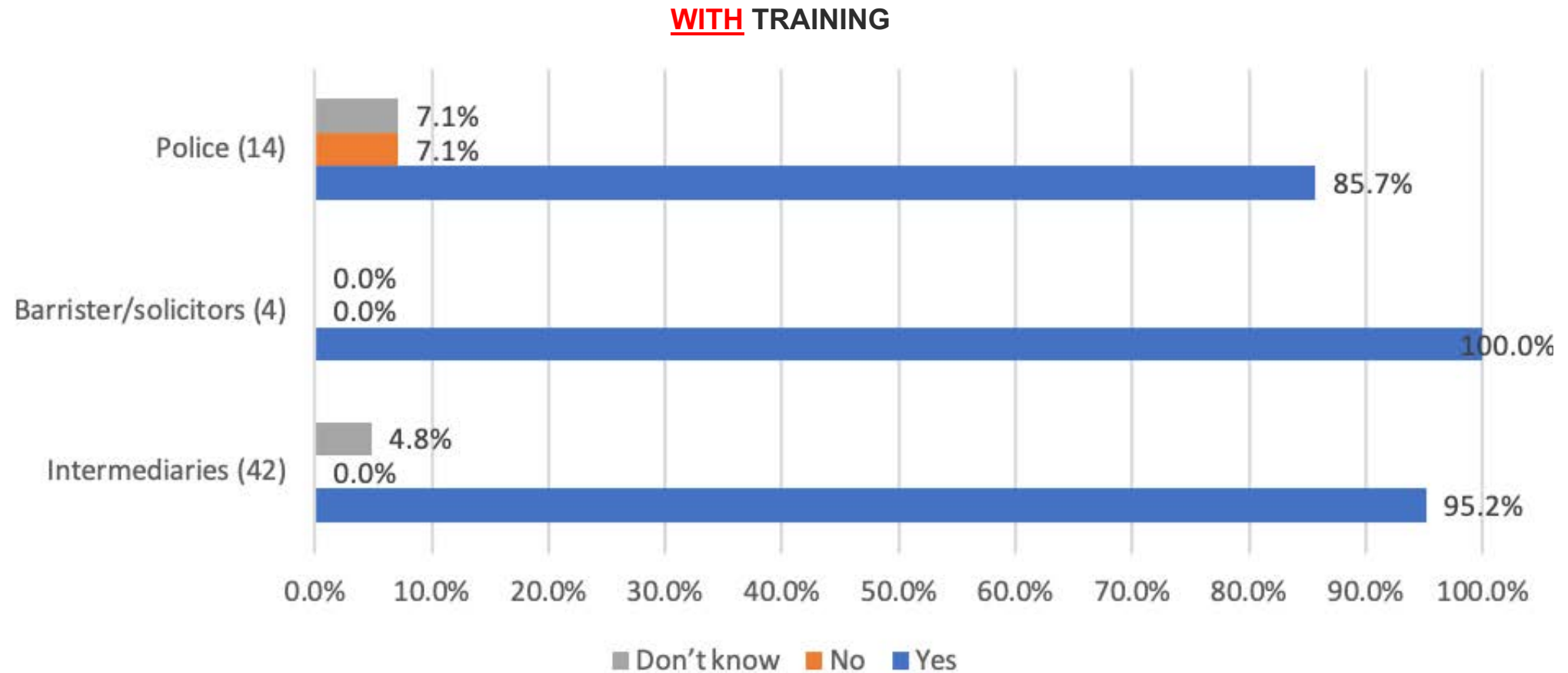


# Topics explored

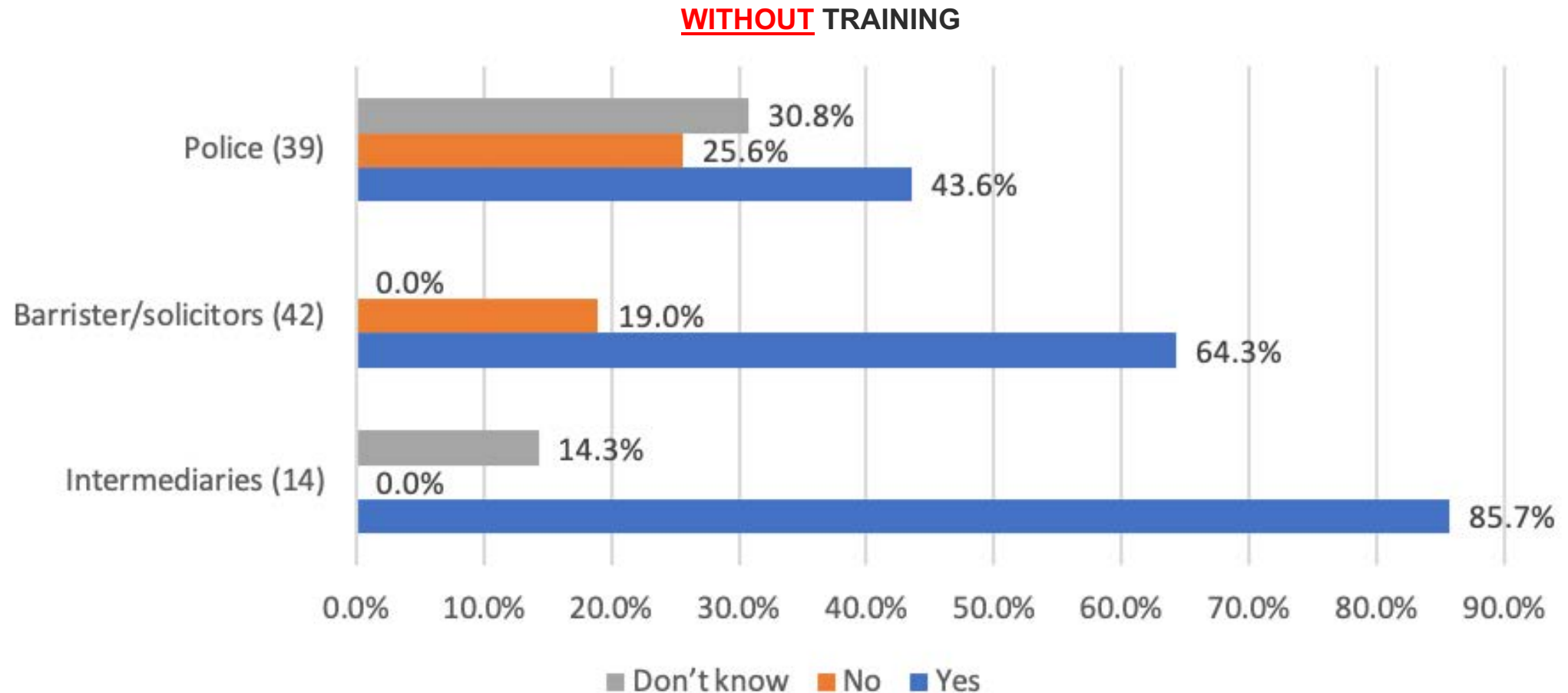
**Topics** were selected to learn about the level of the participants' knowledge of T.I.P. ----

- The physiological /behavioural effects of trauma
- The impact of trauma on communication
- The impact of trauma on quality of evidence and participation
- Management when working with traumatised people
- The window of tolerance
- De-escalation knowledge
- Knowledge of Grounding techniques
- This yielded the following **findings**:

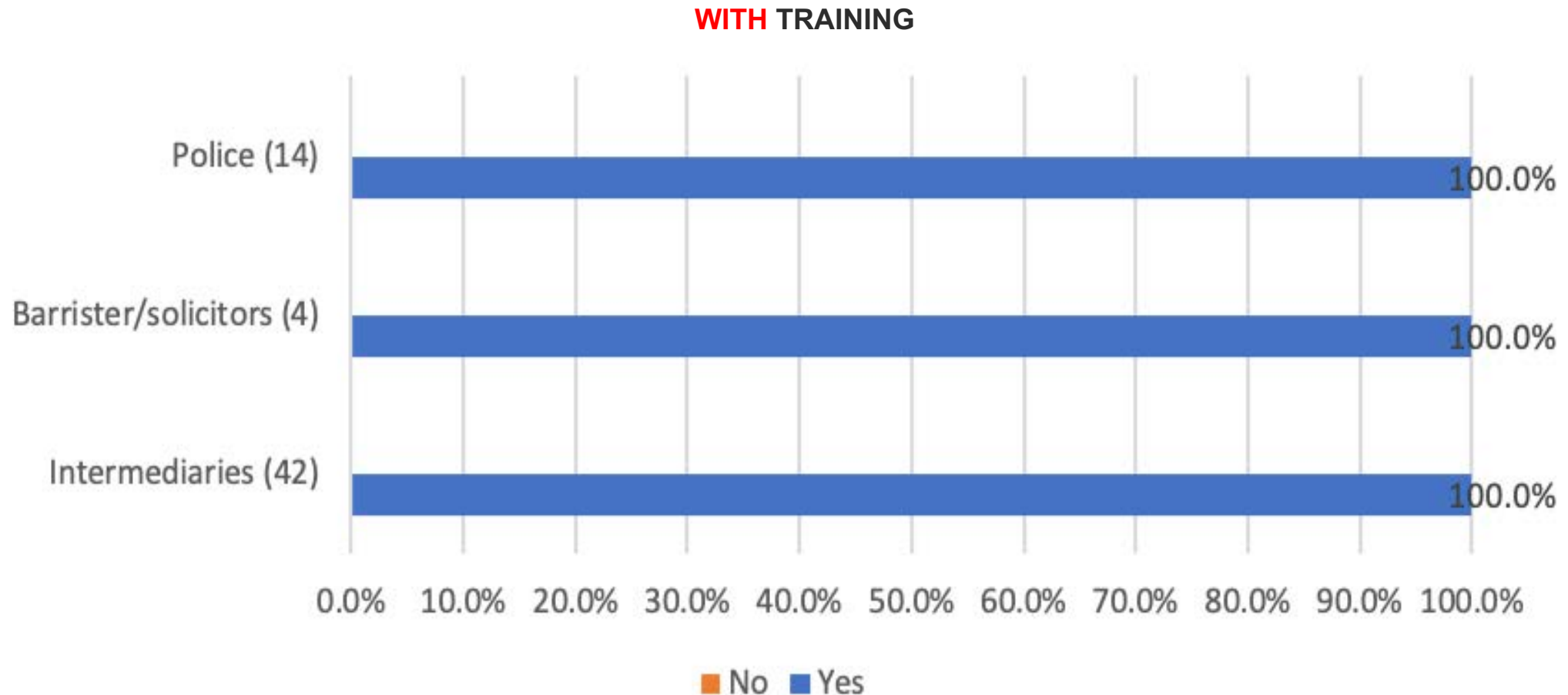
# Do you know about the physical effects of trauma?



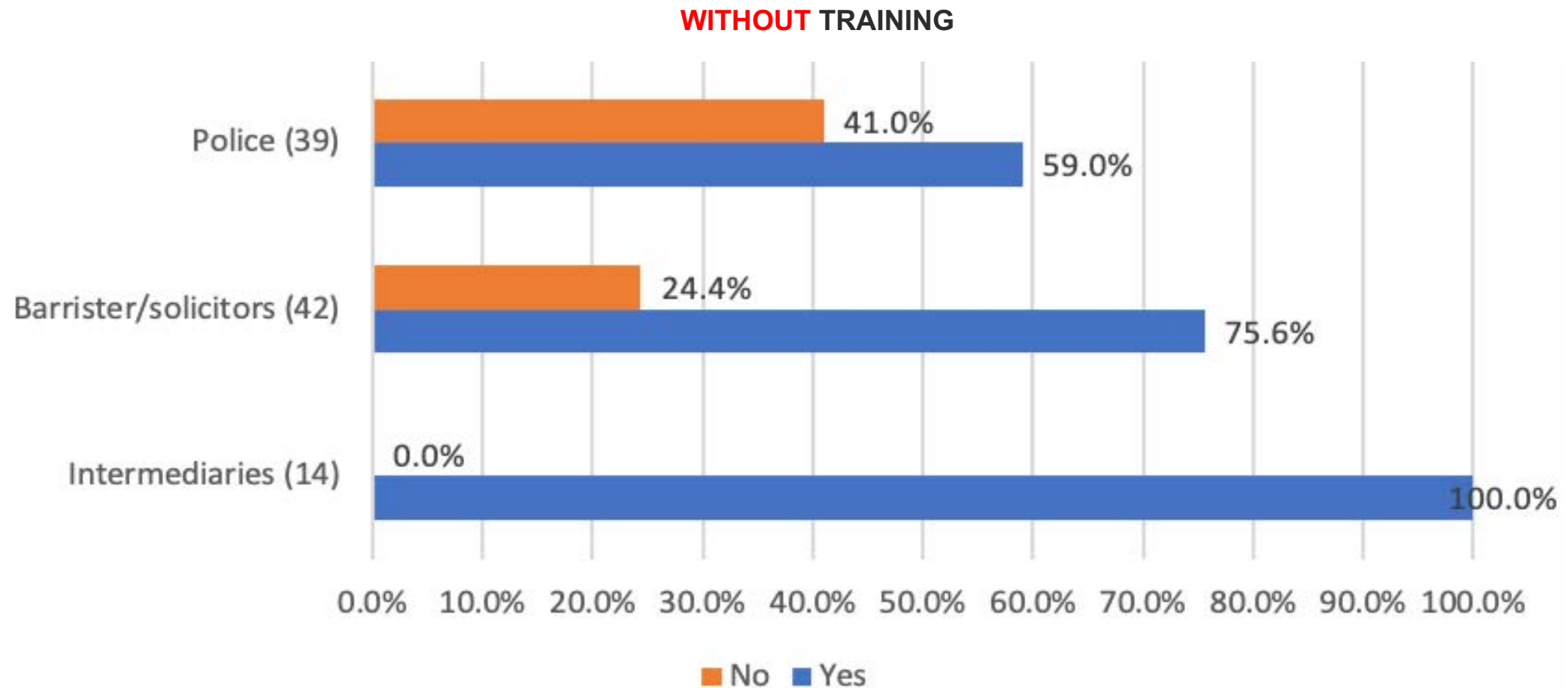
# Do you know about the physical effects of trauma?



# Do you know about the impact of trauma on an individual's ability to communicate?



# Do you know about the impact of trauma on an individual's ability to communicate?



# Interesting Responses Emerged

- The 'need' for a chronological response when recalling an incident was noted by POL188:

*“The Justice System ideally wants an account which follows a timeline, with no gaps. A traumatised person may not be able to give that”.*

- Perhaps even more worryingly, mistaking a trauma response for lying was also visible in responses:

*“Not enough is known about the effects trauma can have therefore it is perceived as lying by Judges/juries/police and evidence is not believed.” (POL188).*

- Themes emerged such as:
- time pressure versus the need to go at the witness' or defendant's pace;
- fragmentation due to trauma therefore giving a lineal account impossible;
- Trauma symptoms being misinterpreted by legal professionals or jurors and physical reactions.



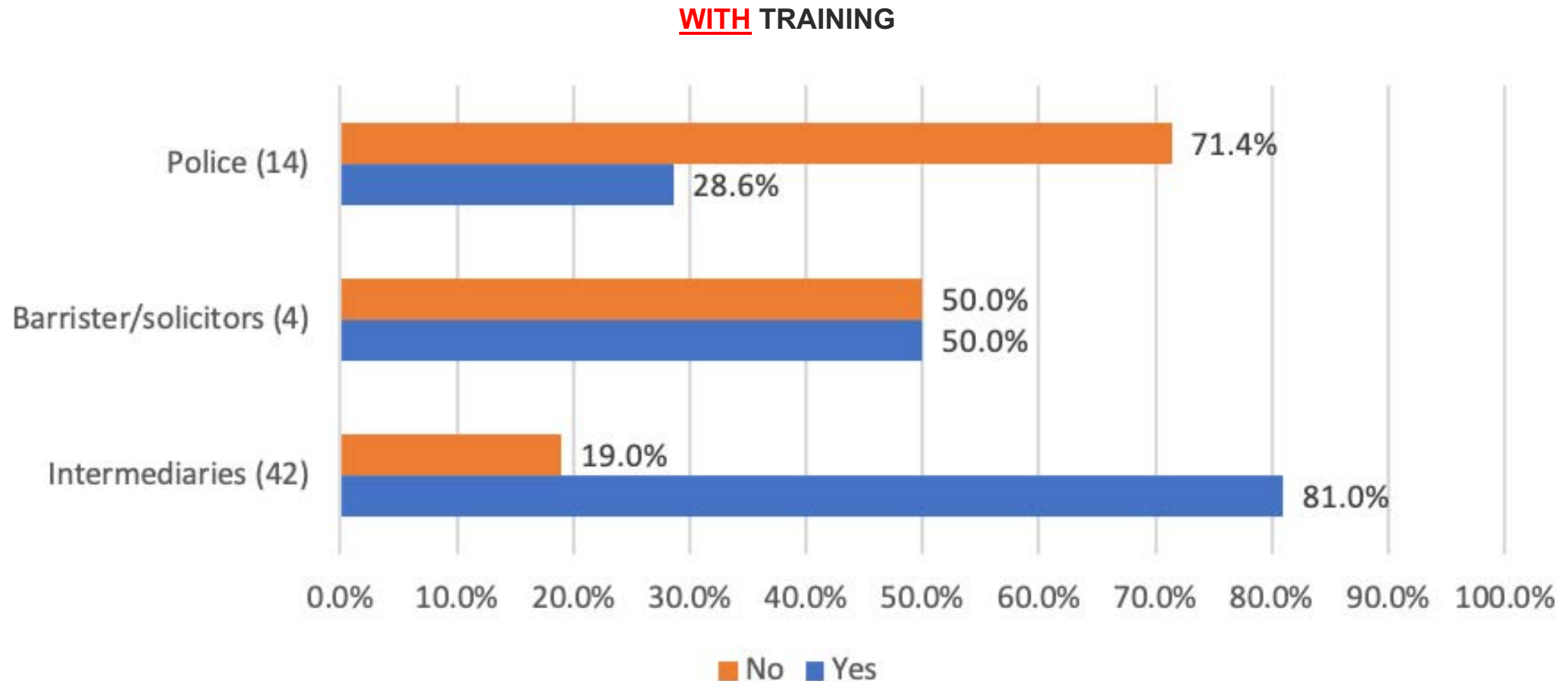
# Concerning Responses Emerged

- POL395 responded that they do not think that trauma should be a consideration in the first place despite right away providing an example which could be considered as a trauma response. This shows a level of confusion about the subject:

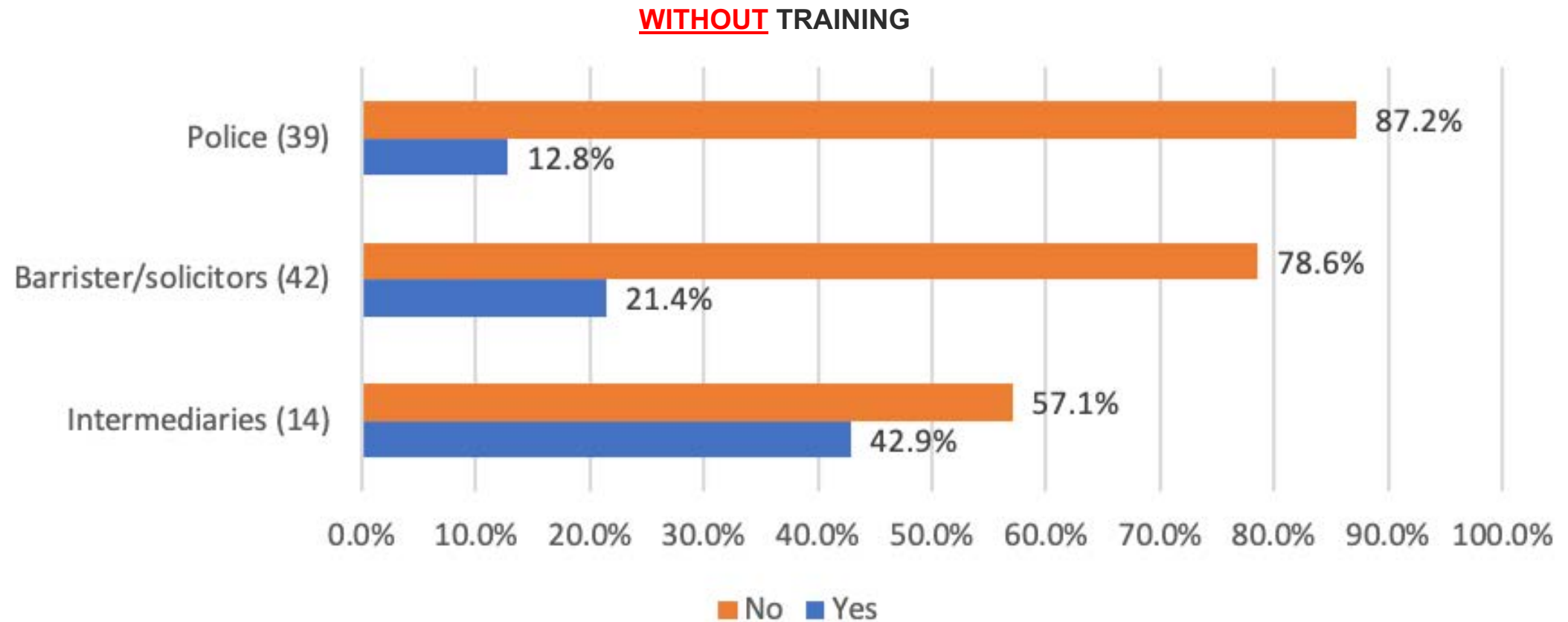
*“Personally, I don’t think trauma does have an impact on evidence but it’s not always possible for a person to continue to be questioned or cross examined due to the emotional and psychological response it causes and the fear which can be used to undermine the evidence - which it shouldn’t do.”*

*“Even if the police and barristers improve their practice, we are still left with a jury who isn’t trained on the complexities of trauma and who misinterpret cues.”*

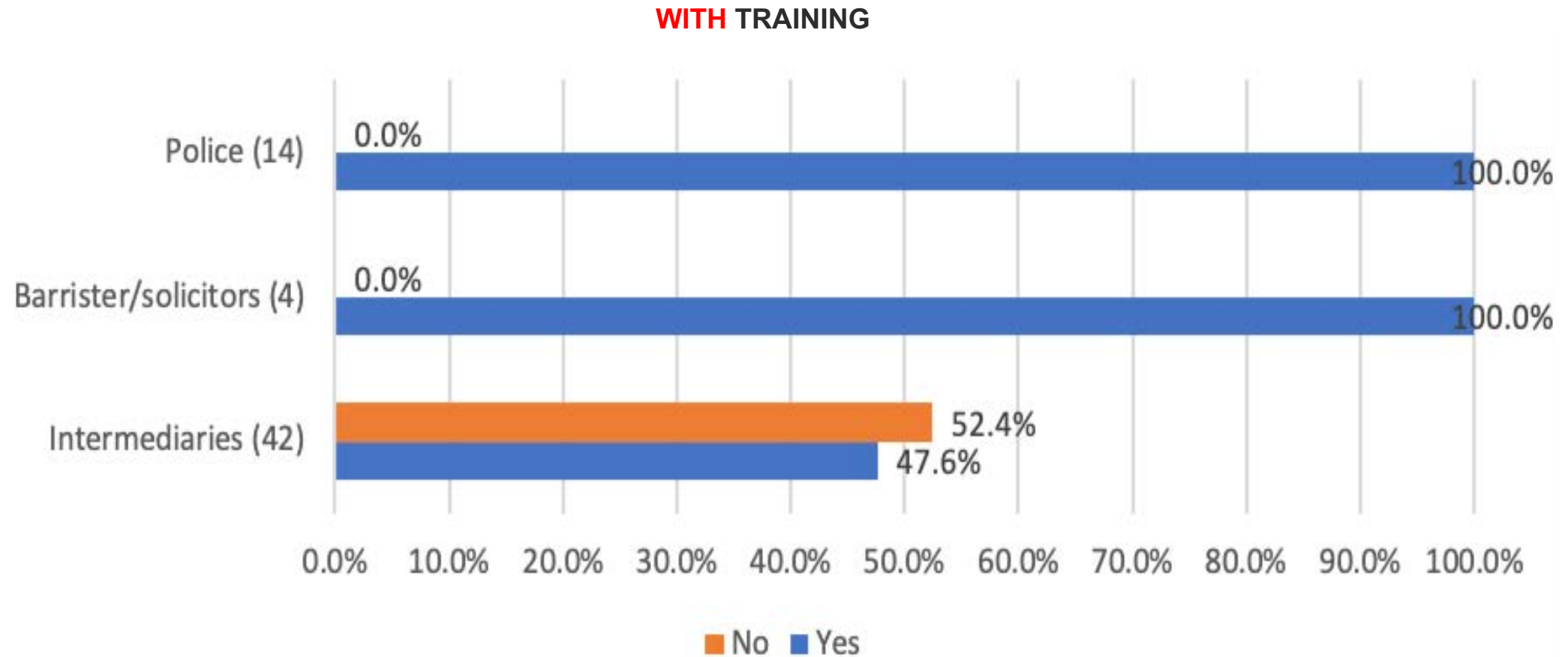
# Do you know what is meant by the 'window of tolerance'?



# Do you know what is meant by the ‘window of tolerance’?



# Do you think it is important to be trained in de-escalation techniques?

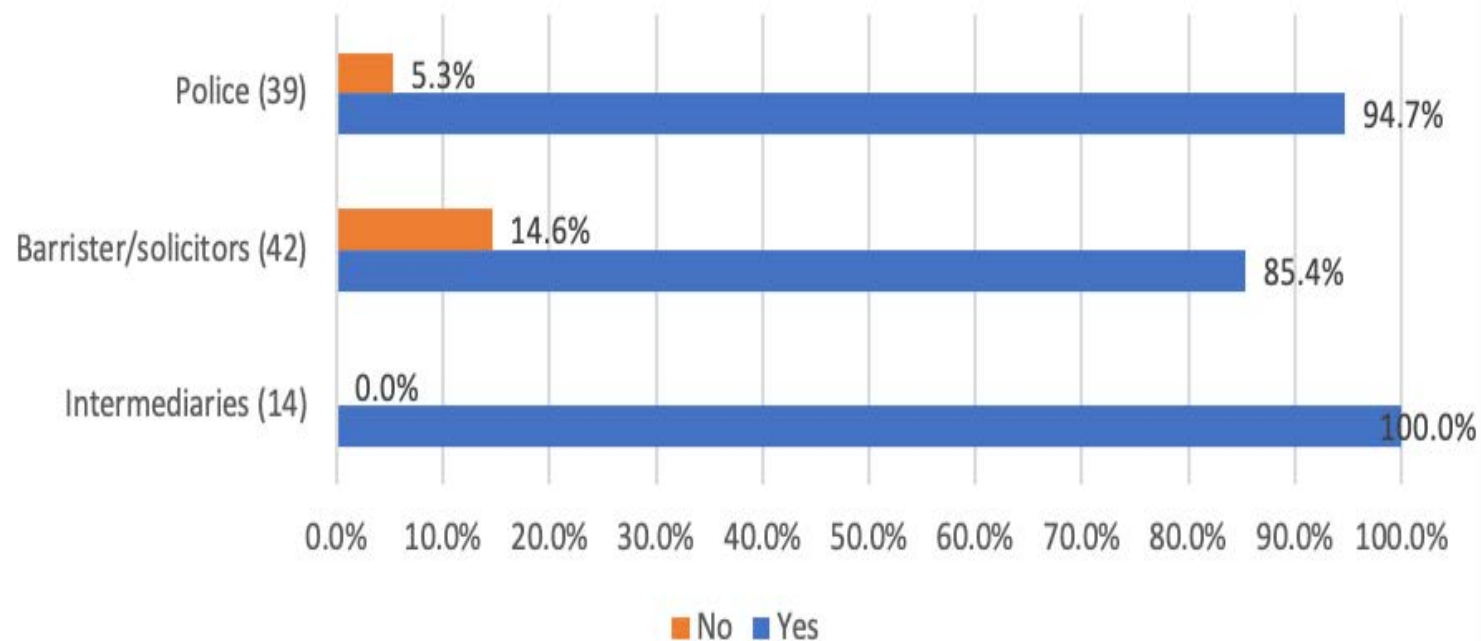


# Do you think it is important to be trained in de-escalation techniques?



Figure 28: Do you think it is important to be trained in de-escalation techniques?

Respondents without training



All 4 groups indicated highly that they have not had any training in de-escalation techniques. 81.0% of police, 93% of Solicitors and Barristers, and 57.1% of Intermediaries. indicated strongly that they thought it was important to be trained in de-escalation techniques with 86.7% of Police, 87% of Solicitors/Barristers and 96.4% of Intermediaries stating its importance (figure 28).



# More Training Needed

- The overarching theme was the need for more training in de-escalation .Perhaps the terms grounding and escalation overlap.
- POL190: *“It’s important to be trained in de-escalation techniques, I wouldn’t know where to start or what it involves but I know my whole team, and probably the whole command, need it”.*
- INT190 clearly articulated why knowing about de-escalation techniques is important in the JS:
- *“We should be able to recognise when people are 'overloading' or escalating and have some 'tools' in our belt for managing this - at the very least as a 'first responder' when needed. This is important also to taking the 'fear' out of being in the presence of someone who is in fight/flight/freeze ... or panic mode.”*

# ***Vicarious trauma** -- 'We asked for workers, and they sent us Humans' Grove & O'Connor ( 2020)*

## **'Police (n=52)**

61.5% experienced secondary/vicarious trauma

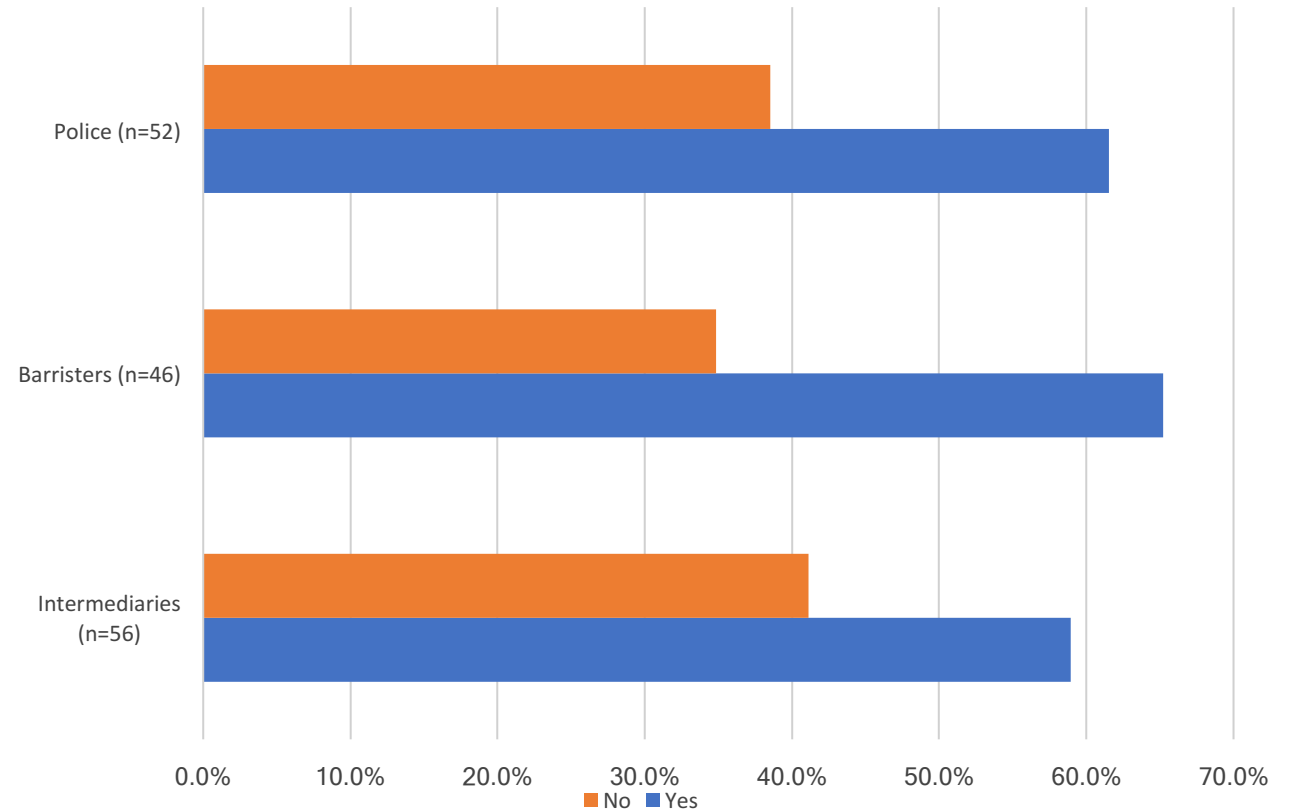
## **Barristers (n=46)**

65.2% have experienced secondary/vicarious trauma

## **Intermediaries (n=56)**

58.9% have experienced secondary/vicarious trauma

Figure 27: Experience of vicarious trauma by profession



# Vicarious Trauma

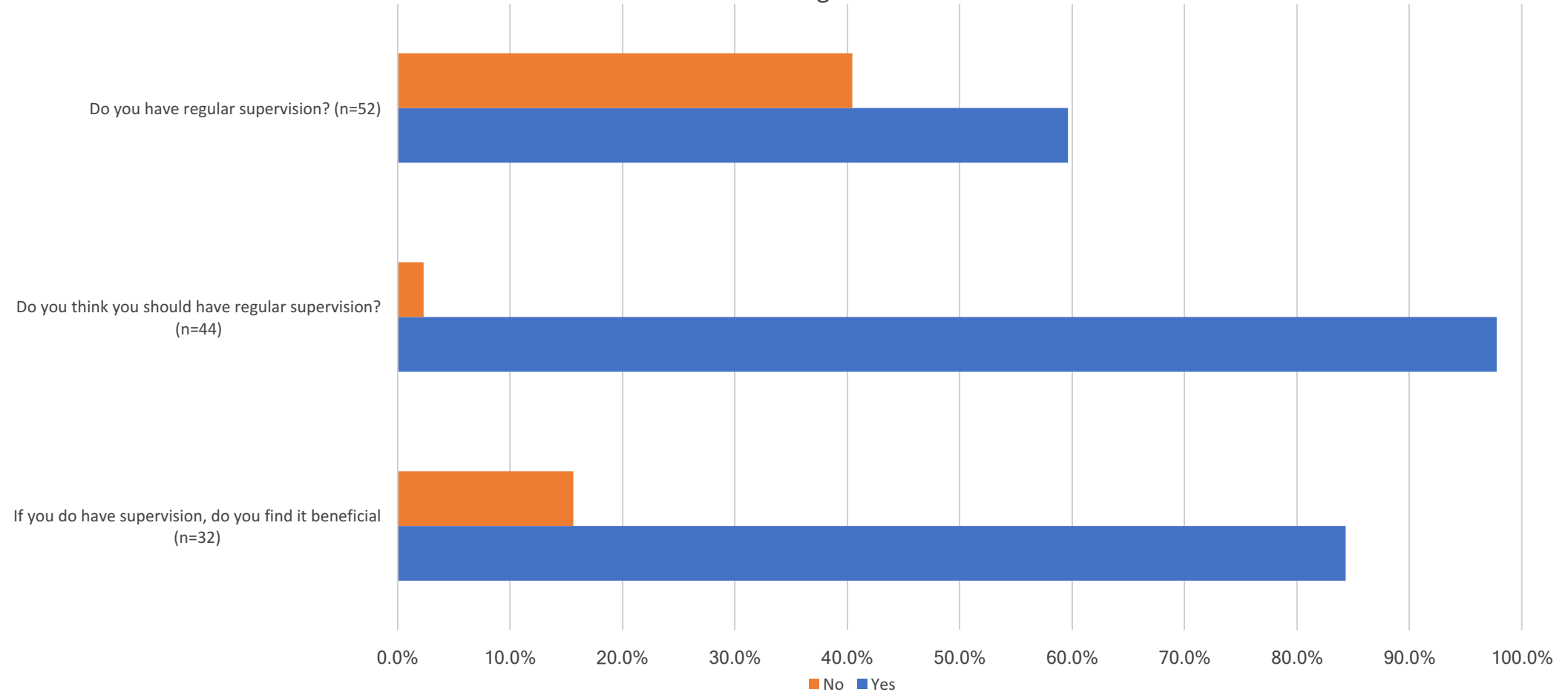
- *'I worry about my response to hearing about sexual trauma. I have found myself shutting down any intimacy at all with my partner ..... when working with child sexual abuse .. I also find myself being cold / unsympathetic for days, Ages to come back to my usual self . I've had to absorb a lot of secondary trauma.'* - **Barrister**
- *'I have experienced severe trauma as a result of my work but it is due to the poor management which I am subjected to, not the people to whom I speak or what I hear.'* - **Police**
- *'I've experienced secondary trauma through hearing personal accounts or seeing photos, transcripts, watching recorded interviews. I'm aware that information about another person's trauma, affects my own body.'* - **Intermediary**
- All three groups reported **bullying** and **poor behavior** in court:
- *'What I find upsetting is the way that court users/judges treat advocates/defendants. This is a working environment, and one with unique pressures. Some understanding that the work can be difficult would be appreciated, and judges shouldn't pile on the pressure by shouting at/belittling people working in the system.'*

# Supervision

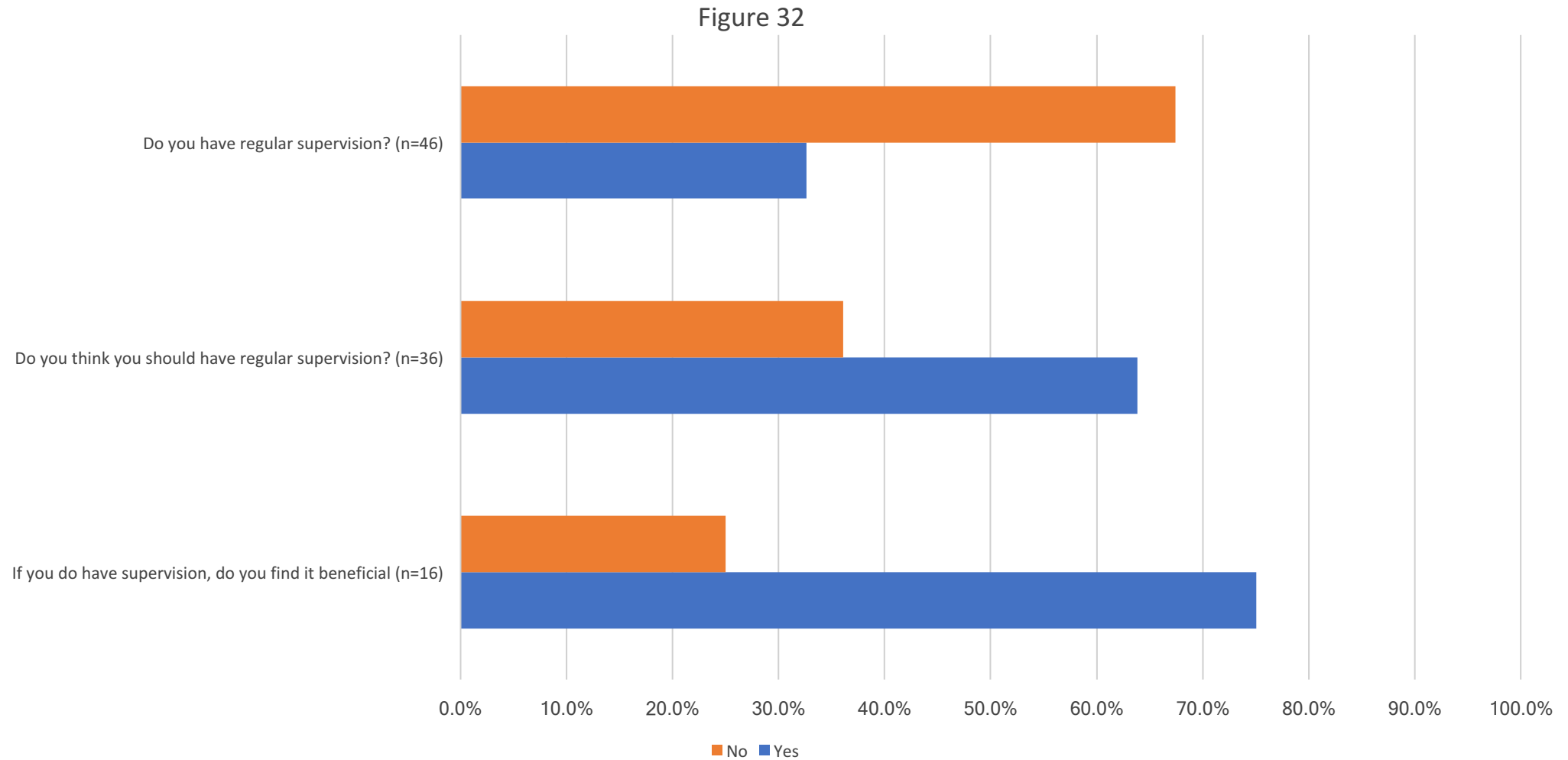
- *59.6% of police said they had regular supervision.*
- *32.2% of solicitors/barrister (n=46) said they had regular supervision*
- *41.1 % (n=56) of intermediaries (n=56) said they had regular supervision*
- *97.7% of police (n=32) said should be regular supervision*
- *63.8% of solicitors/barristers (n=32)said should be regular supervision*
- *96.4% of Intermediaries (n=32) said should be regular supervision*

# Police and Supervision

Figure 31



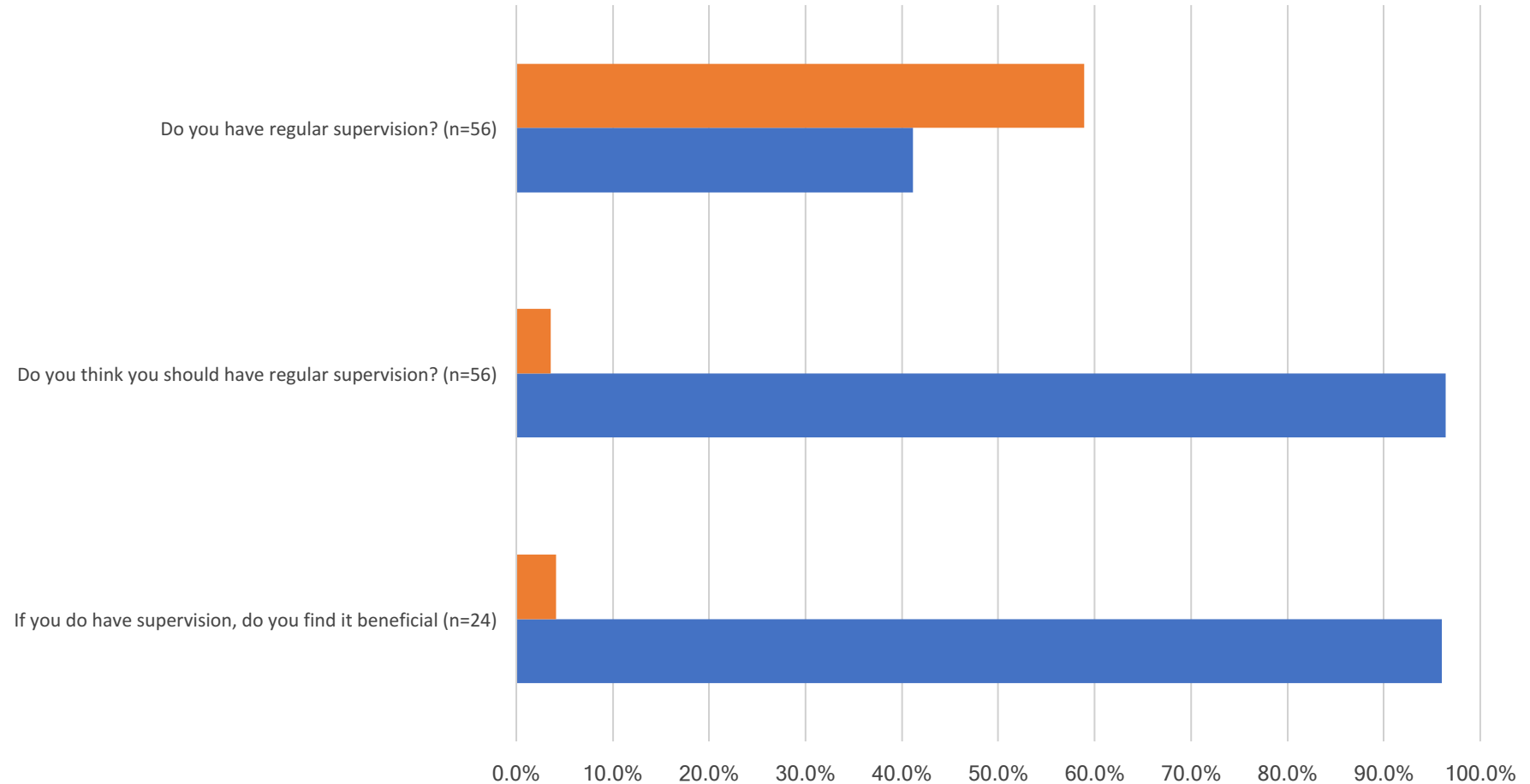
# Solicitors/Barristers and Supervision





# Intermediaries and Supervision

Figure 33



# Supervision and Reflective Practice

- *Supervisors are not trained in TIP and therefore do not have an understanding. Staffing levels are at an all-time low and putting pressure on the teams.'* - **Police**
- *'It would challenge my independence ' 'Completely pointless - what I do is unique - I can only supervise myself.'* *It's beneficial to my case work, but isn't trauma informed.'* – **Barristers**
- *'This is vital for mental wellbeing.... this is an isolated role which is little understood.. Sometimes we are the most hated person in the court , other times everyone works together well. It is important to off load, debrief and be recharged to continue with this difficult work. We need a system where supervision and reflective practice is respected.'* - **Intermediary**

# Retired Judges Sharing

- *‘ It’s mechanical...there is a technical side in order to produce a fair trial. I feel I am an enabler ...to allow best evidence. Emotions have to be put to one side.... ‘*
- *‘I don’t know this term vicarious trauma. But having read the explanation I have been concerned about my work affecting me in this way.’*
- *‘I had a break down when I first became a Judge. I just couldn’t go near the place...I missed the comradery of Chambers.’*
- *‘It’s an isolated job....Sometimes I think of it at night or come away thinking- I didn’t want to do that re conviction. Sentencing a winner of a fight is too frequent. But I am an officer of the court, I have to do it. It is a burden but one that I chose.’*
- **Outcome... Need for training , supervision and overhaul of system requested by majority**



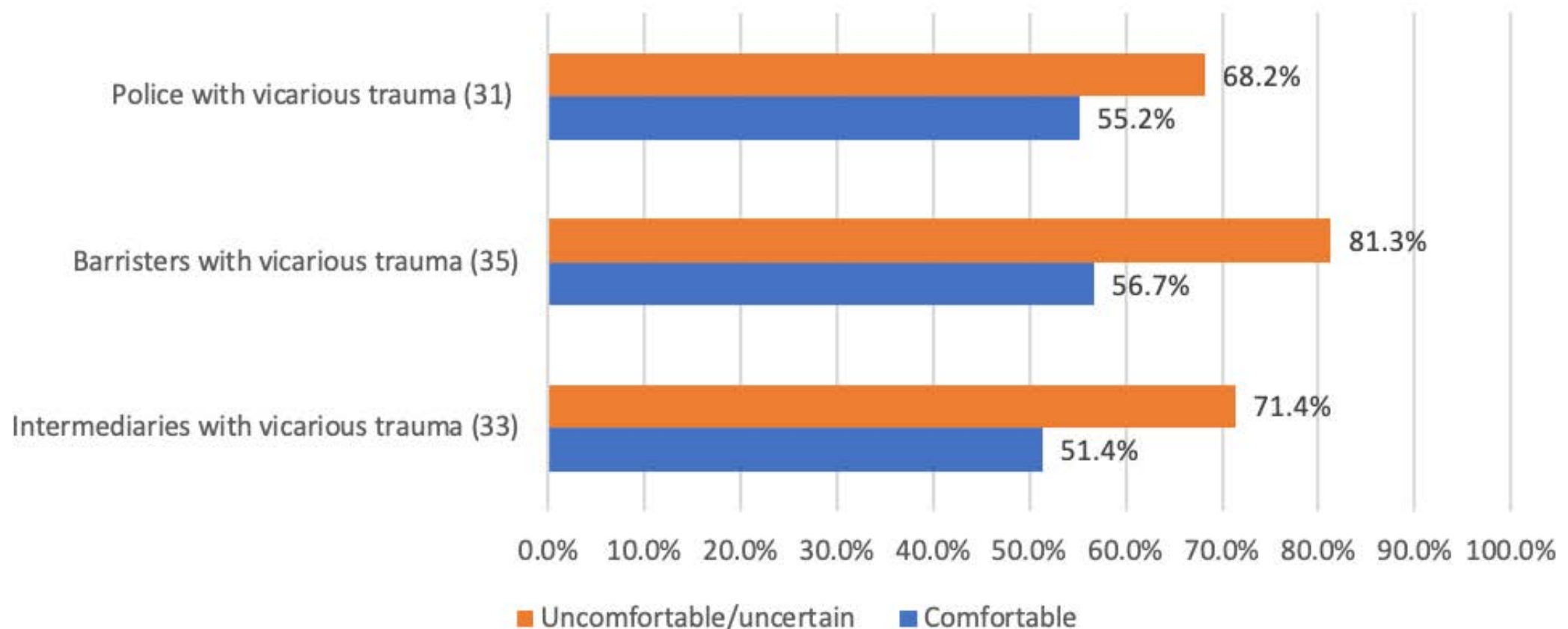
# What we are dealing with!!

One immigration barrister SB 350 listed the following as their experience of their regular working life:

- Judicial bullying.
- Reading scarring medical reports.
- Clients giving harrowing evidence in court.
- Witnessing people have mental health breakdowns.
- Clients self-harming / ending their life.
- Vital need for supervision !!!!!!!

**Time to connect the missing piece.**

## Reported comfortability discussing wellbeing at work for respondents who claim they have experience vicarious trauma



# Qualitative responses

- **Police** . *“The organisation is getting better and we now have TRIM practitioners that you can speak to if you go to a traumatic incident”.*
- *“I feel in the organisation as a whole I would only disclose my true feelings and experiences to people I trust. We are a small force and doesn’t take much for everyone to be talking about what has happened to you”.*
- **Solicitors/Barrister** *”..It has a stiff upper lip type of culture which people tend to sustain. People tend to 'get on' with things and grin and bear hardships. I know some people do struggle, particularly in the early years when adapting to the realities of the Criminal Bar”.*
- *“However, we may pride ourselves in being supportive, this is a competitive environment. People compete for the same work. One never knows when something said may leak” (SB474).*
- *"All criminal Barristers talk about their cases to each other incessantly - they rarely talk about how they are affected by the tough parts of human misery they are exposed to.” (SB562).*

# Qualitative responses from Intermediaries

- A key theme running through the reflections on formal and informal support, related to a general lack of understanding of trauma in the system.
- Intermediaries - 75.9% (n=56) said they did not have someone in the organisation they could talk to at work.
- The overwhelming responses indicate that the MOJ were not available to the Intermediaries for support:
- INT189: *"Unfortunately, I don't feel that the MOJ relationship is on that level and would not feel comfortable disclosing feelings or experiences as I would anticipate responses of apathy, disinterest or disregard. Certainly not of empathy or skilled listening".*



# Qualitative responses

- **Intermediaries** .There is no formal wellbeing structure available was also reflected in results - 75.9% (n=56) said they did not have someone in the organisation they could talk to at work.
- INT189: *“Unfortunately, I don’t feel that the MOJ relationship is on that level and would not feel comfortable disclosing feelings or experiences as I would anticipate responses of apathy, disinterest or disregard. Certainly not of empathy or skilled listening”.*
- INT166 *“Whilst brilliant the NCA/Wit team are busy , and I do not see it as their role to listen or advise”.*
- INT273 *“MOJ are not interested, and they don't understand trauma. If they did, we would have formal supervision and mentoring offered, access to legal support when needed and they would have known the importance of ifj courses being offered to all trainee RIs”.*
- INT553: *“I went through a very traumatic complaints process, followed by a summons to the family court and in both instances the MoJ were aware of what I was experiencing, and no support was offered”.*

# Self care

- POL932 also noted that reflective practice is positive, but it is dependent on the way other practitioners perceive it:
- *“Reflective practice would be very useful- My DS is very open and you can be very honest with him without the fear of being judged. I know however some aren’t and this can affect how beneficial they are”.*
- SB702 *“I would like to see self-care and well-being and self-reflection built into the fabric of Barristers' working lives. There is a lot of very unhealthy behaviour out there which is unquestioned and even encouraged.”* INT697 explained that :*“It's all too weird if it's not shared”.*

# Feeling protected

- INT205 *"I think we need and should be entitled to regular supervision to prevent burnout and people leaving the scheme. I think the MoJ have a fundamental duty of care to us which they are choosing to ignore."*
- INT P8 *'It's all stick and no carrot' "QAB just doesn't understand our role. It's a closed process for them to be recruited. They are distant. They use a big stick approach. The fear from QAB is just unbelievable, people are really frightened of the impact of what could happen by people who wield such power and such little knowledge about what we do. I'm almost speechless, so frustrated and so angry at QAB and how Intermediaries have been treated. I want a robust, fair, transparent QAB that I feel as a professional, I can respect and trust to protect both vulnerable witnesses and RIs. And we just don't have that" ... "I don't feel the MOJ is particularly interested. They dictate to us. And now currently, there's a lot of movement to change that, but we shouldn't be having to push as hard as we have been having to push for so long" (P8).*

# Important -supervisors need to be T.I.P trained

- Debriefing, does need to be done by someone appropriate and who is trauma informed; otherwise, any debrief might not be effective or counter productive (Skowronski & Kerridge, 2022),
- It may impact on PTSD symptoms. (Vagnaud et al., 2022).
- Skowronski and Kerridge (2022) suggest that it is a **potentially psychologically harmful process if people are required to recount what they have seen and experienced to an inexperienced person.**

# Discussion and Recommendations

- **Systemic Change** -An overarching theme -criticised the system as sustaining a 'suppressed and suppressive culture, continuing with the status quo despite an unspoken (or spoken) acknowledgment of the harm this is doing to all.
- **Training** -Research exposed that while the T.I.P concept is beginning to penetrate -it is .... Inconsistent , not mandatory, erratic
- **Supervision and reflective practice vital** .- Needs to be carried out by Trauma Informed Supervisor –researched in disaster management
- **Vital for Judiciary to engage more with researchers. Disappointing that Judicial Office refused to allow judges to participate in this research.**

# Hope. Hope. Hope.

- Scotland is leading the way with their attitude towards T.I.P. New legislation is currently (Sept 23) going through Parliament in the form of Part 2 (sections 24 to 29) of the Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill 2023). If accepted, it will amend the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act, 2014. Section 69 actually includes a definition of T.I.P. **But SCOTLAND STILL DOES NOT RUN AN INTERMEDIARY SCHEME.**
- Claiming Space in-person and online training for lawyers working with traumatic material and clients who have experienced Trauma. Rachel Francis and Joanna Fleck are both from a position of experiencing Trauma in the system. Vicarious Trauma in the Legal Profession: a practical guide to Trauma, burnout and Collective Care (2021) 'Essential reading for all lawyers as well as those in charge of the regulation of the legal professions ... accessible, readable and practical.
- The Bar Council and Law Society are also beginning to respond to the urgent need to address the lack of trauma awareness following the findings in their Wellbeing at the Bar report (Bar Council, 2021b).

*"The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily, and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet."*

(Rachel Remen, 1996)

# Main findings –organisational change needed re supervision and training

- Supervision/reflective practice is vital for underpinning training.
- No matter how much training is available, if supervision is not adequate, the skills and knowledge gained from training will be diminished or maybe employed incorrectly.
- Opportunity to discuss and reflect on our own practice keeps a person fresh and supported.
- These findings suggest that it is necessary for a model of training and supervision to be the underpinning of the framework throughout the JS for all, including for Judges.
- Models such as The Missouri-Model of T.I.P demonstrate :(Carter & Blanch, 2019)
- Aim to enlighten organisations to move along a path of knowledge and understanding. Carter and Blanch (2019) Paradigm shift as a “continuum”.



# Arrogance, defensiveness or fear

????? **What's going on ?**

*And what you  
don't know,  
you don't  
know.*

*The more you  
know the less  
you feel you  
know?*

*The Dunning -Kruger Effect  
(Dunning, 2011) -when a person  
overestimates their level of  
knowledge through their  
confidence alone.*

*Cognitive bias that causes people  
to overestimate their knowledge  
or ability, particularly in areas with  
which they have little to no  
experience*

*Imposter syndrome  
...and finding it difficult  
to admit uncertainty*

*An established  
institutional/organisati  
on belief that they do  
know , may give  
people false  
confidence.*

# Organisational change

- Encourage Organisations to aim for -awareness , becoming sensitive, responsive, and informed. It acknowledges T.I.P as a continuous learning process. Good example is The Missouri-Model of T.I.P demonstrate :(Carter & Blanch, 2019)

Trauma Aware	Trauma Sensitive	Trauma Responsive	Trauma Informed
Trauma aware organisations have become aware of trauma and its prevalence and are considering how that may impact staff.	Trauma sensitive organisations generally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore the principles of TIP and their application in work</li><li>• Build working knowledge and consensus around the principles</li><li>• Discuss implications of adopting the principles</li><li>• Prepare for change</li></ul>	Trauma responsive organisations have begun to change their culture and operating procedures to highlight the role of trauma. This occurs throughout the organisation, with encouragement for all levels of staff to consider how the organisation may be positively changed or restructured if necessary.	Trauma responsive practices have become the norm in trauma informed organisations.  TIP working and modelling is so embedded that it no longer requires leaders to promote or sustain it.  There is continued collaboration with external experts to strengthen it.

# In the words of a participant barrister

*'If you are not traumatised by children / young people being in gangs in their teenage years and often ending up receiving life sentences before they reach the age of 18, you have a problem.'*

*'If you are not traumatised by victims of domestic violence or drug and alcohol addicts spending huge amounts of their time in prison because the court system doesn't have another way to deal with them, you have a problem.'*

*'If you are not traumatised by the number of people in prison who have mental illness, and the fact that our system offers no other way to help them, again, you have a problem.'*