



# Talking about stressful and traumatic topics in applications

## WHICH DETAILS MATTER?

### LOGISTICS VS. LESSONS LEARNED

It is helpful to be as specific as possible, however you have a choice in what you say. The specificity you provide does not have to involve discussing sensitive personal information or “trauma-dumping” if you do not want to. Logistics are details or circumstances surrounding individual events. Instead, you could focus on the details related to **how you approached the issues** you faced, and any **lessons you may have learned**.

## DON'T FORGET YOU CONTROL YOUR OWN NARRATIVE



**Remember:** the goal of an application is to provide a window into how you think and solve problems. The details you use only have to support that goal.

### FOCUS ON WHAT HAS IMPACTED WHERE YOU ARE TODAY

Connect the past to the future. Where are you going?

### DESCRIBE ANY SKILLS YOU COULD USE IN THE FUTURE TO MEET YOUR GOALS

If you don't want to describe individual events, think about mentioning themes or categories of issues such as “health problems” or “financial issues”

### TALK TO SOMEONE. IT IS VERY HARD TO MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT SUPPORT AND REFLECTION.

Free counseling services are available to students.  
Email [counsect@neiu.edu](mailto:counsect@neiu.edu) or call 773-442-6450