

Susan Dunlop

Founder, Blue Borage

Trauma-aware leadership, communication, and learning

How Susan Works

Susan Dunlop is the founder of Blue Borage, a trauma-aware practice offering facilitated conversations, coaching, mentoring, and professional development. Her work supports individuals and organisations to move beyond reactive patterns and engage with greater clarity, care, and shared responsibility.

Susan brings over 25 years of experience across leadership, facilitation, mentoring, and education, working within healthcare, community, education, and mission-led organisations. She is known for her calm presence and her ability to hold complex human dynamics with steadiness and respect.

What Susan supports

Susan's work often supports people and organisations to:

- recognise familiar communication patterns that escalate tension, undermine trust, or leave people feeling stuck;
- explore healthier alternatives to reactive ways of relating, without blame or shame;
- strengthen everyday communication skills that are often not well modelled in families, education, or workplaces;
- build shared language around responsibility, boundaries, and choice; and
- engage in difficult conversations with greater clarity and care.

Participants often recognise the patterns being explored from their own experience. The learning unfolds through reflection, dialogue, and practice rather than instruction or diagnosis.

How the work is delivered

Susan works through a range of formats, depending on context and need, including:

- professional development sessions and workshops;
- facilitated group conversations and learning spaces;
- small-group or team-based learning;
- reflective, practice-oriented sessions rather than lecture-style delivery.

Sessions are designed with attention to psychological safety, readiness, and the lived realities of participants. Delivery can be in-person, online, or hybrid.

What distinguishes this work

Susan's approach is trauma-aware without being trauma-centred. Lived experience informs her work without becoming the focus. The emphasis is on creating conditions where people can pause, reflect, and practise healthier ways of communicating and leading together over time.

Change is not rushed or imposed. It is supported through shared inquiry and thoughtful practice.

Reflections from collaborators and peers

“Susan brings a rare combination of professionalism, calm presence, and depth. She creates the kind of conversations that are genuinely needed for change.”

— Social work and child protection professional

“It is a privilege to collaborate with Susan. Her leadership, creativity, and openness to vulnerability make her work both unique and impactful.”

— Governance and leadership professional

“Susan is a gifted facilitator and leader. She holds space with wisdom, steadiness, and care.”

— Trauma-informed practitioner

Next step

Engagements begin with a conversation to explore context, fit, and readiness.