

FROM RESILIENCE TO RESISTANCE



Moving Beyond Trauma-Informed to Healing-Informed



NASEM September Workshop: Child Development & Family and Community Context

September 19, 2022



GEORGE GALVIS



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ALEX TORIS



KRISTINA FLORES



Founded in 2011

Formerly-incarcerated community activists

Ending Oakland's gang injunction

Youth Leadership Development

Policy & Advocacy

Community Healing

Training & Capacity Building



OBJECTIVES

Think more broadly about the definition and roots of and responses to trauma:

- Identify intergenerational causes of trauma
- Identify barriers to healing
- Recognize the four stages of healing
- Understand the CURYJ Way



LET ME INVITE YOU BACK TO 1492...



A CLASH OF TWO IRRECONCILABLE WORLD VIEWS

The Colonizer/Invader:

- The 3 C's: Greed, Gold, Genocide
- Manifest the capitalist mantra



An illustration of Custer's Last Stand from the Battle of Little Bighorn; lithograph, 1876. GraphicArtis/Getty Images

A CLASH OF TWO IRRECONCILABLE WORLD VIEWS

Indigenous People:

- Mitakuye Oyasin: All Are Related
- In Lak'Ech



In Lak'ech (I Am You or You Are Me)

Tú eres mi otro yo.
Si te hago daño a ti,
Me hago daño a mí
mismo.
Si te amo y respeto,
Me amo y respeto yo.
You are my other me.

If I do harm to you,
I do harm to myself.
If I love and respect
you,
I love and respect
myself.

Mayan-inspired poem, "Pensamiento Serpentino" Luis Valdez.
(1971).

GUIDING PHILOSOPHY OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

Acknowledgement of historical
intergenerational trauma

AND

Acknowledgement of historical
intergenerational wisdom & healing



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ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

Definition: Potentially traumatic events that occur from age 0-17 (such as witnessing or experiencing violence, living in an unstable environment).

A way to categorize and assess need.

Can be pathologizing.

Does not always account for intergenerational trauma.



POST-COLONIAL STRESS DISORDER

Any community that has been colonized suffers intergenerational harms. Those subjected come back and reproduce the trauma for their children and future generations.



Anglican Church Archive, Old Sun Copy



Lasting trauma of Indian Boarding Schools

POST TRAUMATIC SLAVE SYNDROME (PTSS)

Term coined by **Dr. Joy DeGruy** based on her extensive research.

M: Multigenerational trauma together with continued oppression;

A: Absence of opportunity to heal or access the benefits available in the society, leads to

P: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome



Gordon, also known as "Whipped Peter"
Smith Collection/Gado/Getty Images



Mamie Bradley, mother of Emmett Till, 1955. (Credit: Afro American Newspapers/Gado/Getty Images)



MP/Getty Images

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Dr. DeGruy identifies three main ways in which it manifests:

1. **Vacant Esteem:** hopelessness, depression, self-destructive outlook
2. **Anger and Violence:** against self, property, and others
3. **Racist Socialization and Internalized Racism:** distorted self-concept, learned helplessness, literacy deprivation



POLICING AND INCARCERATION

In Alameda County, **Latinx youth are 2.3x more likely** than white youth to be arrested for a felony, while **Black youth are 10.6x more likely**.

((Irvine et. al., 2017) "Dream Beyond Bars Report" - CURYJ 2019)

LGBTQ-identifying youth are also twice as likely to be arrested and detained for status offenses and other nonviolent offenses as their peers and are at higher risk for illicit drug use leading to arrest.

(Ibid)

In a Bay Area News Group review of 72 deaths at the hands of police, **two-thirds of those killed** were experiencing a mental health episode.



POLICING AND INCARCERATION

Aggressive policing has been definitively linked with **increased symptoms of trauma and anxiety**, particularly in young urban men. (*American Journal of Public Health*, 2016).

Half of all youth in the juvenile system are dealing with **mental illness** while **93%** of them have been **victims of trauma**. (*American Psychiatric Association. Mental Health Disparities: Diverse Populations*. (2017); Abram et al., 2013).



INTERGENERATIONAL WISDOM & HEALING

Every young person **is a blessing**

Every young person **has a sacred purpose**

If a young person fails to find their sacred purpose, then **we, as adults, have failed them**



FOUR STAGES OF HEALING FROM TRAUMA

1. Acknowledgement (Reconocimiento)

*Who am I? What am I?
Where am I going?*

Acknowledging everything
that has shaped us and
brought us to this place in
life.



FOUR STAGES OF HEALING FROM TRAUMA

2. Understanding (Entendimiento)

The aha moment. In order for change, a great learning must occur.

Holding up a mirror and asking the right questions. Knowledge is innate and each young person already has everything they need to heal.



FOUR STAGES OF HEALING FROM TRAUMA

3. Integration (Integración)

*We don't get better by chance,
we get better by change.*

Self-actualization. How do we
integrate this understanding
into our lives, behavior, and
practice?



FOUR STAGES OF HEALING FROM TRAUMA

4. Movement (Movimiento)

Connecting personal transformation to social transformation.

Transcendental growth and development becomes both about the self and society: it is cathartic to find voice and power in the movement for social justice.



FOUR LAWS OF CHANGE

1. Change comes from within
2. In order for development to occur, it must be preceded by a vision
3. A great learning must take place
4. You must create a healing forest

From: The Red Road to Wellbriety in the Native American Way. White Bison, Inc. Hazelden Publishing & Educational Services, 2002



BARRIERS TO HEALING

Distrust of systems: family disruption, overpolicing

Perception of weakness

Interactions with providers can be retraumatizing:

- Pain is minimized; need for medication is pathologized
- Anger, pain stemming from trauma seen as “bad behavior”
- Interventions feel bureaucratic, impersonal, and clinical
- Lack of communication leads to more mistrust



THE CURYJ WAY



HOW WE ENGAGE

La Cultura Cura

Our culture is our foundation, our strength, our healing and our recovery.



HOW WE ENGAGE

For Us, By Us

Those who have overcome these challenges are best equipped to reach young people.



HOW WE ENGAGE

Every Young Person Is A Blessing

Allowing young people the permission to be their full selves.

Unresolved pain and trauma becomes anger.

Anger becomes rage.

Rage becomes violence.



MISSION

Unlock the leadership of young people to dream beyond bars.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE AT CURYJ

We **elevate the voice and power** of young people to dream beyond bars.

Move **beyond resilience and into resistance**: we have power over our lives, bodies, families, communities, and destinies.

Improve conditions for generations to come.



THE OSCAR GRANT YOUTH POWER ZONE



CREATE A BELOVED COMMUNITY

A positive community connection improves life outcomes for young people. ***The more contact with systems (ANY and all systems), the worse their outcomes become.***

Metric for success: Does a young person feel loved?



CREATE A BELOVED COMMUNITY

Readiness to treat trauma: it has to be in your heart.



CREATE A BELOVED COMMUNITY



BEST PRACTICES FOR FIELD

Let young people see themselves in the
physical environment

- Art, color, culture, language, representation
- Interrogate the idea of political neutrality in systems of care

Opportunities for **Conocimiento**

- Engage in the waiting area
- Quick check-ins
- Presentations, games, get-to-know-yous



BEST PRACTICES FOR THE FIELD

Opportunities for **Conocimiento**

- Guerilla theater skits
- Health trivia and games

Peer Health Educators: relatable, credible messengers who can build rapport



BEST PRACTICES FOR THE FIELD

Trainings for all staff

- Restorative practices, transformative justice
- Icebreakers, check-in questions, teambuilders, energizers



Q&A

