



# Sexual Harms

Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Resilience (STAR)

A program of Eastern Mennonite University's  
Center for Justice and Peacebuilding

Authors: Carolyn Stauffer, Joy Kreider, Rhoda Miller, Rachel Roth Sawatzky, Ram Bhagat

Praise the bridge that carried  
you over.

- George Coleman

## Acknowledgments

To the many accompaniers in this journey, we want to say thank you. Thank you for carrying us over this bridge with wise instruction and grace for our learning process. We know we would not be here – without you.

To our local and global colleagues who have put pause to their busy schedules in order to give us their expert feedback; you have provided us with eyes to see what we otherwise would have been blind to.

To the various organizations who have underwritten and supported this work: JustPax Fund, STAR program, Collins Center, Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, and Eastern Mennonite University – thank you for being this project’s cheerleaders and launching pad.

Finally, we want to express our gratitude to the many survivors who have gone before us, leading the way with their earth-shattering humility and dignity. We are grateful to you, our ancestral “cloud of witnesses.”

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**Dr. Carolyn Stauffer**

Project Coordinator and Lead Author

Trauma and sexual harm have intersected with my own life experience at several pivotal junctures. As a child growing up amidst three Middle East wars, I learned about violence first-hand. Impactful childhood experiences motivated my desire to learn more about how trauma influences our views and relationship to the world. Later I spent 15 years working as a sexual assault first-responder and HIV counselor in Johannesburg, South Africa. As a White, educated, female in that context, I longed to flip the privilege-script that housed my world. This impulse is what drew me back to the U.S. to research how privilege and identity configures sexual harm. My recent research focuses on how identity shapes survivors' risks, resistance, and resilience strategies. As Co-director of Eastern Mennonite University's Biomedicine program and then Associate Professor of Applied Social Sciences, I have conducted training on sexual harm and gender-based violence on four continents. A byproduct of 25 years working in this field is that I dance more, cry more, and have more compassion – both for myself and others.

**Dr. Joy Kreider**

Contributing Author

As a neuroscientist and trauma educator I have the great privilege of inviting others to travel with me inside the brain to understand how brain and body respond to trauma and sexual harm. As an incest survivor myself, I am also deeply aware of the weight that sexual harm can exert upon brain, body, behaviors, and belief. Naming our symptoms and understanding why they are there helps us to regain some of the power that was taken away from us. Serving incarcerated youth in California and living in a poor neighborhood in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, demonstrated to me that regardless of location, culture or creed, sexual harms are damaging but also that we as humans have a powerful ability to move towards resiliency and life even in the face of significant harm. I am honored to receive other people's stories and to share my own, and to celebrate the power of the human spirit that seeks to be whole and vibrant and free.

**Rhoda Miller**

Contributing Author, Designer, and Editor

Raised in a middle-class, predominantly White, rural area of Ohio, my story could have easily taken another path, had my parents not been intentional about exposing us to the larger world. Sexual harm was woven into my family's tapestry, where I witnessed firsthand the effects of its ripple. The true impact of my oldest sister's experiences became startling clear when she ended her life at the age of 26, profoundly shaking me to my core and shifting my worldview. I immersed myself in my art classes as I fumbled my way through the rest of undergrad. I never intended to work in the field of crisis response, but found myself interested in and volunteering for the Collins Center, the local sexual assault crisis center and child advocacy center. When an employment opportunity arose, I took a leap of faith and have found my passion within this context. In the last decade, my work has shifted from primarily victim advocacy to coordinating crisis services and serving as the lead forensic interviewer. Years of listening to survivors and observing the systems they face led me to pursue further learning in the field of restorative justice through the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. Things that bring me joy amidst this work include my family and friends, creating, and anything that takes me outside.

**Rachel Roth Sawatzky, M.A.**

Contributing Author

As a White American girl growing up in Southern Africa during apartheid, I was aware of and adjacent to significant trauma from an early age. I was also blessed to have role models who heroically modeled courage in the face of evil. These experiences have continued to inspire my work over the years, whether as a social worker in a residential center for sex offenders incorporating restorative principles and practices into daily routines or as a foster care and adoption case worker, assisting children and families that had been impacted by sexual violence. More recently, as a mid-level administrator within the American higher education arena, including serving as a Title IX coordinator, my interest has been in the creation and maintenance of campus communities in which students are thriving and fully engaged and there are fewer incidents of campus sexual violence and more effective institutional responses to sexual harm. This is all heavy but sacred work, which requires holistic attention to self care. When not spending time working or with family, I enjoy taking the time to cultivate my spirit through mindfulness practices, running, flower gardening, and a good cup of strong black tea.

**Dr. Ram Bhagat**

Contributing Author

First and foremost, I am honored to stand on the shoulders of my Ancestors, who have paved the way for my existence... I am an educator, arts innovator, and peacemaker. I worked for Richmond Public Schools and District of Columbia Public Schools for more than 30 years, as a science teacher and social activist. It was in this role as an educator that I started teaching yoga and mindfulness, peacemaking circles, and drumming to young people. I was (and still am) devoted to creating equitable and just learning environments for all students. I was blessed to meet and study with an enlightened yoga master, Dr. Janeshwar Upadhyay, during my undergraduate years at Virginia State University. I was also fortunate to learn world percussion from master drummers in the United States, Cuba, and Brazil, as well as circle processes from renowned circle keeper Kay Pranis. Currently, I am developing and implementing trauma healing, restorative justice, mindfulness, and artfulness practices for Richmond Public Schools, as Manager for School Culture and Climate Strategy. I am also the president and co-founder (with my sister) of Drums No Guns Foundation, a nonprofit organization established in memory of our brother, to inspire youth who have been traumatized by gun violence. It's amazing to engage in this work with my three daughters and two sons. I am so grateful for my wife, who totally supports my mission of healing community with rhythm!

**Lindsey Kolb**

Contributing Copy Editor and Proofreader

## Preface

### A MOVEMENT | WHAT

**Worldwide there is a growing consensus that sexual harms are quickly moving from invisible peripheries to conspicuous center stage.** Statistics from the Center for Disease Control inform us that sexual offenses are perpetrated against roughly 1 in 5 women (18.3%) and 1 in 20 men (5.3%). A vast majority of these offenses (over 85%) are committed by intimate acquaintances in home, work, or social environments.

Sexual violence is gaining widespread public attention as more incidents are reported and as individuals, communities and whole industries are urgently grappling with how to respond. **This profound “movement moment” requires leadership that steps up and into this landscape in proactive, equitable and trauma-informed ways.**

To date, the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding’s STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience) program has provided a critical service by offering justice and nonviolence informed trauma education to thousands of participants in more than 60 nations. **While these offerings have primarily focused on the work of trauma more generally, this manual expands STAR’s work through the creation of a curriculum that specifically addresses sexual trauma.**

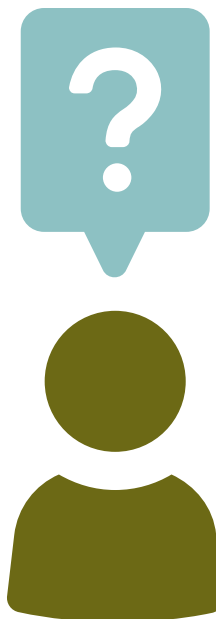
The educational format for this curriculum is participatory, embodied, and integrative. Through arts-based exercises, circle processes, case studies, collective organizing, media sharing and guided reflection, we will examine how to proactively break cycles of sexual violence. **Our focus is on investigating why sexual violence has become normalized in contemporary society and how we can generate change through practical actions that build more accountable and restorative environments.** In developing this manual our goal is to facilitate a norms cascade that accompanies the broader movement for change.

### A MANDATE | WHY

When sexual violence occurs, it is not only individuals who are impacted; whole communities are shattered. The fact that the sexual violence movement is gaining such widespread global attention at this time is significant. **However, in order to keep this movement fully representative, we must also acknowledge how systems of oppression create environments conducive of sexual harm in the first place.**

Experiences of sexual violence vary not only because of individual differences, but also because victims/survivors from underrepresented communities may face unique conditions and challenges not experienced by other groups. **This is why multi-sector advocacy, education, and accountability (at all levels of society) are so important.**

Coupled with the need for work on the individual level, is the mandate for far-reaching system-wide alterations within institutions and the “deep structures” of society. Addressing entrenched forms of structural violence necessitates more than just awareness-raising and the dispensing of information; it will require a cultural shift and far-reaching structural change. **This “system transformation” mandate occupies a central place in this training curriculum.**



## A MOTIVATION | WHO

After decades of hiding in the shadows, sexual harms are finally being addressed and persons from all walks of life are finding the courage to speak out, seek justice, and find healing. **The “it can’t happen here” bubble is quickly evaporating.** The problem, however, is that many organizations do not know how to handle these disclosures. Most organizations do not have processes in place to support individuals in a trauma-sensitive manner nor the impetus to push for proactive or preventative policies.

**Daily we hear of “sexual misconduct” that gains notoriety precisely because institutions are doing damage control after the fact.** Such gaps compound the harms done, and also put the integrity, legality and legitimacy of organizations at risk. Gone are the days when leaders and the institutions they represent can hide behind the excuse of ignorance.

The STAR program has a long tradition of attracting and equipping leaders. **Leaders in all sectors are key actors in the sexual harms arena as they frequently mentor others and regularly engage in sensitive interpersonal interactions.** This is especially the case for faith-based leaders who are often positioned as the moral barometers of community life. Civil society leaders as well as business entrepreneurs are also key to the creation of workspaces that honor the safety and dignity of patrons and organizational members.

Without knowledge about how systems of oppression and organizational hierarchies shape sexual power dynamics, it is virtually impossible to create environments that promote long-term member safety and allegiance. Institutions that want to be on the cutting edge of best practices should therefore commit to equipping their thought and practice leaders with skills and tools that are trauma-informed and that also address structural harms. **This manual directly engages this call for action by creating an educational platform that targets both personal and collective transformation.**

## A METHOD | HOW

**Literature in the field reveals that in the same way public education campaigns have significantly shifted attitudes towards drunk driving and the hazards of tobacco use, so too education regarding sexual violence can and does shift public mores.** This hopeful message frames the paradigm-shift opportunity offered through this educational gateway.

This manual fills a particular niche in the larger landscape of resources available for sexual harms education. In developing this resource, we began this journey with the following goals in mind:

1. **To discover the unique signature of sexual trauma** in comparison to other forms of trauma, in order to grow our capacity to effectively address the specific needs of all affected parties.
2. **To explore how identity impacts sexual trauma;** namely how historical harms, marginalization, and systems of oppression intersect with and contribute to sexualized forms of violence.
3. **To identify what institutions, organizations, and communities can do** to raise awareness and work towards prevention, post-traumatic growth, and structural change.

This curriculum is a mechanism for participants to chart out the upcoming terrain that leaders in all sectors will face. **Our goal is to create a space where community leaders can proactively look forward as well as own the past in ways that accountably engage all affected parties - individuals, households, communities and institutions.**

## Chapter Overviews

The first three segments of this manual – **Preface, Introduction, and Core Concepts** sections – supply an overarching conceptual framework for the manual. The Introduction provides some baseline definitions and motivates the purpose, uses, structure, and limitations of this educational tool. We follow this in the Core Concepts section with information that helps us understand sexual trauma: its distinctives, the needs that emerge in its aftermath, and its larger social system dynamics.

**Chapter 1** focuses on understanding how trauma operates more generally and how sexual harms specifically impact us physically and socially. This is done by exploring the cascading effects of sexual harm on body, brain, beliefs, and behavior. Learning about these impacts helps explain what we may experience before, during, and after situations of sexual violence. Naming and understanding these dynamics help affected parties feel safer in their own bodies, as they navigate the way forward.

**Chapter 2** discusses the importance of identity and power. Here we examine how privilege, power, positionality, and patriarchy shape social environments. We consider how various forms of structural violence may intersect and disproportionately impact on communities that are marginalized. We also probe the ways sexual violence becomes embedded within historical legacies of harm. Because sexual traumas involve dignity violations, this chapter situates sexual violence within a larger discussion of gender, equity, and just power relations.

**Chapter 3** centers on the role of healthy relational attachments. The presence of strong and supportive relationships is key to sexual harms prevention as well as post-traumatic growth in the aftermath of sexual violence. Support networks are critical for the resilience of persons who have been harmed, and also play a vital accountability role for persons who have caused harms. Levels of risk, as well as possibilities for resilience, are all predicated on the presence of these networks. Sexual violence ruptures trust in relationships, and thus providing opportunity for recreating community is imperative.

**Chapter 4** gives attention to the role that institutions can play in prevention, advocacy, and/or post-harm restoration. Here we examine the institutional dynamics of either betrayal or fidelity to the needs of harmed parties. We explore what organizational accountability and trauma-informed practices can look like and provide models that identify key policy considerations. We assess organizational protocols, evaluating their outcomes in relation to the harm or healing of all affected persons/communities.

**Chapter 5** concludes with the challenge and promise of change. Our mandate in this chapter is to learn about community-based justice and massive resilience approaches. These approaches challenge traditional assumptions of state-sanctioned safety/corrections with the recognition that grassroots mobilizations are critical to addressing the need for broader structural and cultural transformation.



## Introduction



### Voice

It's called "Soundwave Art." Visual artists from around the world are creating artistic representations of spoken words. These renditions capture the unique vibration waves of a person's voice and generate an expressive visual for what those patterns look like. **Such renditions ensure that the reach of a voice is amplified; that it is not only heard, but also seen.**

Voice is important. Voice is about the art of communication, storytelling, and the space to produce narratives. **At its heart, giving voice is a generative process.** Voice is also political. It is about legitimacy, power and what messages (or messengers) do or don't get airtime.

In writing this manual we realize that as the primary message-makers, we its authors, are privileged. Not only do we carry various embedded forms of privilege in our own personal lives and experiences, but our role(s) in the storytelling process grant(s) us other forms of power too. **In being bearers of these privileges, we want to be reflexive about the biases we carry and judicious about how our own life experiences shape what is or isn't visible to us.**

In this pilgrimage we also suggest that the best stories are the ones that keep us as authors (literally and figuratively) at the edge – of our comfort zones, of our imaginations, and of defining what is possible. The best stories are the ones that we remember precisely because their impacts resonate so deeply with aspects of who we are. **Without denying the influential midwifery role that we as writers carry, we would assert that this manual's stories will be profoundly better if you are positioned to find some element of yourself in them.**

In light of this, we see this manual as an inherently iterative process. We welcome your inputs and critiques for its betterment and maximal use in the contexts you know best. Moreover, we invite you to join us; not in the creation of a fixed destination point, but rather in the **generation of a means towards a broader shared journey.**



### Place

Along the journey, you will wonder what your contributions to this story-making process are. **Like all of us, you will wrestle with your role and place in the various narratives described.** Our hope is that somewhere in this journey, whether at the end of the manual or towards its start, you will recognize some parts of yourself in these pages.

While we do not naively suggest that we can equally represents all stories, we hope to touch on a variety of issues and contexts. **Perhaps even more importantly, our desire is to learn not only to tell our own stories, but also to see ourselves in other people's stories whose contexts are very different than our own.** Here we will need to listen especially closely to those who have already learned these skills by necessity: because their contexts and histories have been left underrepresented or too frequently silenced or unnamed.

The naming of context is invariably a significant part of every narration. In creating stories, we don't just jump into the middle of a vignette but instead describe the conditions against which characters live their lives. This lived experience backdrop is often as much the foreground of the story, as it is its background. **This is especially true in the arena**

of sexual violence where who, how, and what stories are told has been a very contentious space.

Explicitly naming this background is important. **It also illuminates the tendency to render narratives as stark binaries: stories of victims and offenders, villains and (s)heroes, perpetrators, and casualties.** These polemics, while understandable from a justice and/or recidivism perspective, are otherwise simplistic and often inaccurate. Similarly, the tendency to indefinitely freeze frame individuals in a single role across time, can be ethically damaging – both to others and ourselves. This penchant towards stock caricatures is something that this manual has worked hard to amend. Our starting point for that is in how stories are told – through the language of words.



## Language

Words hold definitional power; they have the power to shape both boundaries and connections. **In language we find both the meaning and the message, the “root and the route” as Cornel West so aptly reminds us.** That is why language is so important – it frames as well as creates reality.

In this manual we have chosen specific language to identify persons who inhabit key roles in situations of sexual violence. We do this with intentionality and with the knowledge that this naming process should (and will) change across time as new insights and meanings are added. **Our purposefulness in this process is also a product of our**

**desire to create space for transformation and change, within individuals as well as systems.**

With the above aims in mind, in this manual we will use the following terminology:

**Victim/Survivor** – Here we are referring to a person who has experienced sexual trauma (harm or violence) at the hands of individuals, or through the complicity of groups/institutions. We use both terms (victim and survivor) in the interests of allowing these persons to self-identify where they are at in their journey.

**Harm-Doer** – This refers to individuals (or systems) who have enacted or been complicit with sexual harm or violence. While we realize that verbiage such as “perpetrator” or “offender” is used within state systems, we intentionally choose the term harm-doer to allow for naming damage that may be outside of legal definitions.

**Affected Persons/Parties** – This includes victims/survivors and harm-doers, as well as other surrounding family or community members who have been impacted by the sexual harm/violence that has taken place. These supporters, advocates, and accountability partners are key players and indispensable to the sustainability of longer-term personal and institutional change.

**Sexual Harm/Violence/Trauma** - We use the terms sexual harm (SH), sexual violence (SV), and sexual trauma (ST) interchangeably in this manual. We do this with the recognition that not all forms of sexual harm are the same. We give this subject – how to safely discuss and engage with a spectrum of sexual harms – more attention next.



## Safety

Irish professor of psychiatry Ivor Browne uses the metaphor of the “frozen present” to describe the ways that trauma is carried in our minds and bodies across time. Memories of sexual harm can revisit affected parties through flashbacks and somatic re-sensitization in often unbidden and unexpected ways. **Because of this, it is important to consider how we can be trauma-informed in how we communicate about sexual trauma.**

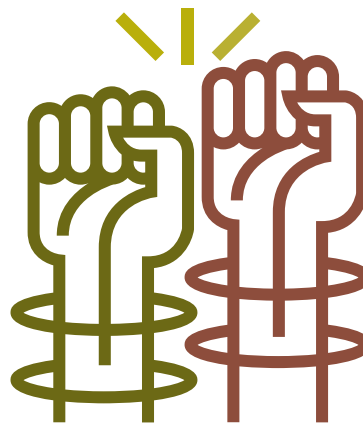
**In this manual we have chosen to use the verbiage of “content forecasting” in order to explain how we will introduce potentially triggering information or activities.** While it is virtually impossible to conduct education about SH without including some content that may be potentially triggering, it is still crucial to sensitize ourselves. This is because activating a flashback within an unprepared person’s psyche/body can precipitate them into re-living their trauma. In light of this, throughout this manual we will include the following text insertion before any content that we feel may be especially trigger-prone:

### **\*\* Content Forecast \*\***

We also recognize that in order to facilitate personal and structural change, we need to be willing to engage in often challenging conversations. **In their 2013 book *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators*, Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens introduce the concept of “brave spaces.”** These authors complement the need for safe spaces with the addition of the courage/bravery needed for difficult discussions.

Arao and Clemens highlight a number of essential practices that foster brave spaces, namely: (a) controversy with civility, (b) owning intentions and impacts, (c) challenge by

choice, (d) respect, and (e) no attack. **Arao and Clemens additionally note the importance of understanding historical context and the ways that conversations around “safe and brave spaces” are often riskier for persons with less privilege.** Next, we discuss the important question of how (and who) has the power to define sexual harm.



## Definitional Power

Few spaces invite victims/survivors to explain how they define sexual harm. Predominately the medical, academic, and legal fields have appropriated this space, projecting their definitions into this arena as if it were a vacuum. And while we in no way deny the value of formal disciplines or their scholarship, we would suggest that more definitional power should be given to the voices of those who are closest to the experience of sexual trauma. **In this vein we welcome the input of those most affected by sexual harm and invite those of us who are survivors to lead in this journey.**

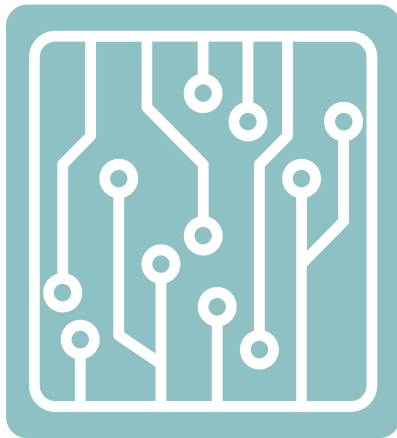
**We also acknowledge that definitions are simultaneously vital and complex terrain.** Victims/survivors and harm-doers may define sexual harm very differently. For instance, some victims may not name their experience as rape or assault because of their familiarity with the harm-doer, dependence on the system that is perpetrating the harm, or lack of use of overt force.

Definitions of sexual harm are also influenced by one’s social and geographic location(s). **Certainly the #MeToo movement has demonstrated how shifts in public**

discourse are altering the SV definitional landscape across time as well as space. So too, experiences of sexual violence are shaped by one’s identity and social location. Patricia Hill Collins’ metaphor of the “outsider within” recognizes intersectionality and the pivotal place of material and historical conditions. Moreover, experiences of sexual violence are complex because they are invariably contextually situated.

Definitions of sexual violence are nonetheless vital. They are vital because they function in creating standards of accountability to common frames of reference. Both factors, the importance as well as the complexity of defining SV, are equally valid. Holding these tensions in place, on the following two pages we portray the sexual violence landscape through two Harm Circuit figures. In these diagrams we identify:

- A Harm Spectrum
- Trauma Impact Factors



### Harm Circuits

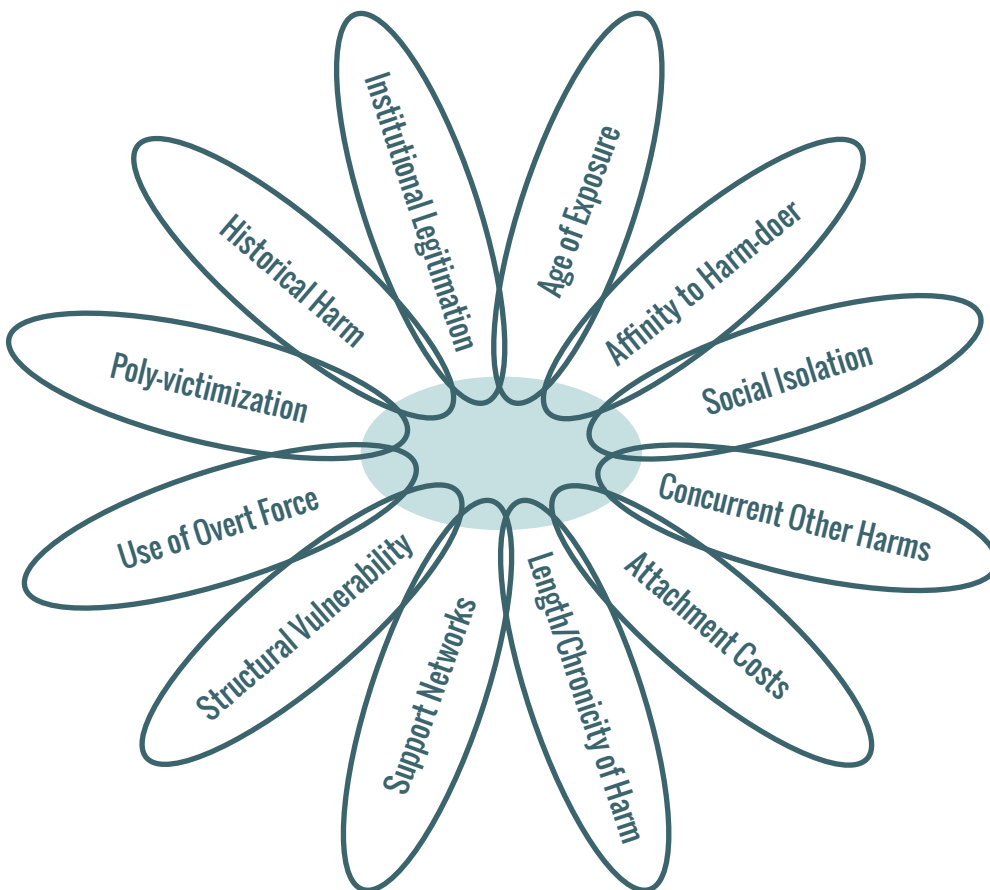
While sexual harms often follow a distinct pattern or circuitry, they can also take many forms enroute to their destination. Some of these forms are easily recognizable, while others are less visible because of their normalization. Many forms of sexual harm may have legal or medical definitions attached to them, while others are so pervasive that they have gained de facto legitimization. **In light of these visibility/invisibility optics we depict sexual violence as a spectrum that exists under these three broad categories: (1) explicit, (2) implicit, and (3) complicit.**

### Harm Spectrum



In addition to the various forms that sexual harm can take, it is also important to identify factors that exacerbate the traumatic impacts of sexual harm. **These factors are significant because they can influence both the likelihood of occurrence and degree of harm that is caused.** Below is a second graphic which outlines some of these influential factors, highlighting their singularity as well as potential intersections.

### Sexual Harm Trauma Impact Factors



Having discussed factors associated with the pervasiveness of multiple forms of sexual harm, in the next section we turn our attention to trauma and sexual trauma more specifically.

# DAY 1

## Chapter 1: Safety | Proposed Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS
8:00	Set-up	Computer and Projector Tables and Chairs Talking Pieces Centerpiece Fidgets Mandalas Colored Pencils and Pens
8:30	Welcome Ritual and Icebreaker	
8:45	<i>Dignity Tree</i>	Wall Space Flip Chart Paper Variously Shaped Colored Paper Scotch Tape Scissors Markers
10:15	BREAK	
10:30	<b>Course Overview</b> <i>Understanding Trauma and Chain Reactions</i>	Common Responses Worksheet Pens
12:00	LUNCH	
1:15	<b>Physical &amp; Psychological Responses</b> <i>Breathing Exercise</i> <i>Embracing Positive Sensory Experiences</i>	Group Taste and Smell Items
3:15	BREAK	
3:30	<i>Acting In and Acting Out Activities</i>	Writing Paper Flip Chart Markers
4:30	Check In and Closing Ritual	
5:00	END	

# DAY 2

## Chapter 2: Dignity | Proposed Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS
8:00	<b>Set-up</b>	Computer and Projector Tables and Chairs Talking Pieces Centerpiece Fidgets Mandalas Colored Pencils and Pens
8:30	<b>Opening Circle</b>	
8:45	<i>Power of Collective Voices</i>	Wall Space Flip Chart Paper Markers Writing Paper and/or Sticky Notes
10:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:30	<b>Day Overview</b> <i>Understanding Trauma and Chain Reactions</i> <i>The Power of Choices</i>	Bracket Pennies Chairs in a Circle Formation 4 Flip Chart Mural Sheets
12:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1:15	<i>Social Location and Sexual Violence Exercise</i> <b>Cultural Betrayal Trauma Discussion</b>	Social Location and Sexual Violence Worksheets
3:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
3:30	<b>Bodies and Battlefields Discussion</b> <i>Invisibility – Gaps and Omissions Exercise</i> <i>Naming and Framing Body Sculptures</i>	Writing Paper Flip Chart and Markers for Debrief Group Access to Internet Space for Group Sculptures
4:30	<b>Check In and Closing Ritual</b>	
5:00	<b>END</b>	

# DAY 3

## Chapter 3: Attachment | Proposed Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS
8:00	<b>Set-up</b>	Computer and Projector Tables and Chairs Talking Pieces Centerpiece Fidgets Mandalas Colored Pencils and Pens
8:30	<b>Opening Circle</b>	
8:45	<i>Connection Stories and Symbols</i>	Symbols of Connection Art Materials
10:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:30	<b>Day Overview</b> <b>Attachment and Moral Injury Discussions</b> <i>Breathing Exercise and Meditation</i>	Meditation Audio
12:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1:15	<i>Safety Integration Exercise</i> <i>Trauma Exposure Continuum Exercise</i>	Wall Space Flip Chart Sheets (8) Scotch Tape Post-Its Basket of Many Small Stones
3:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
3:30	<i>Looking Inward Inventory</i> <i>Self-Care Themes Exercise</i> <i>RJ Case Study</i>	PROQOL Inventory Copies Phones with 'Poll Everywhere' RJ Articles or Online Videos
4:30	<i>Empty and Refill Wind-Down</i>	Clear Containers Colored Sand Labels Adhesive Stars
5:00	<b>END</b>	



# DAY 4

## Chapter 4: Structure | Proposed Daily Schedule

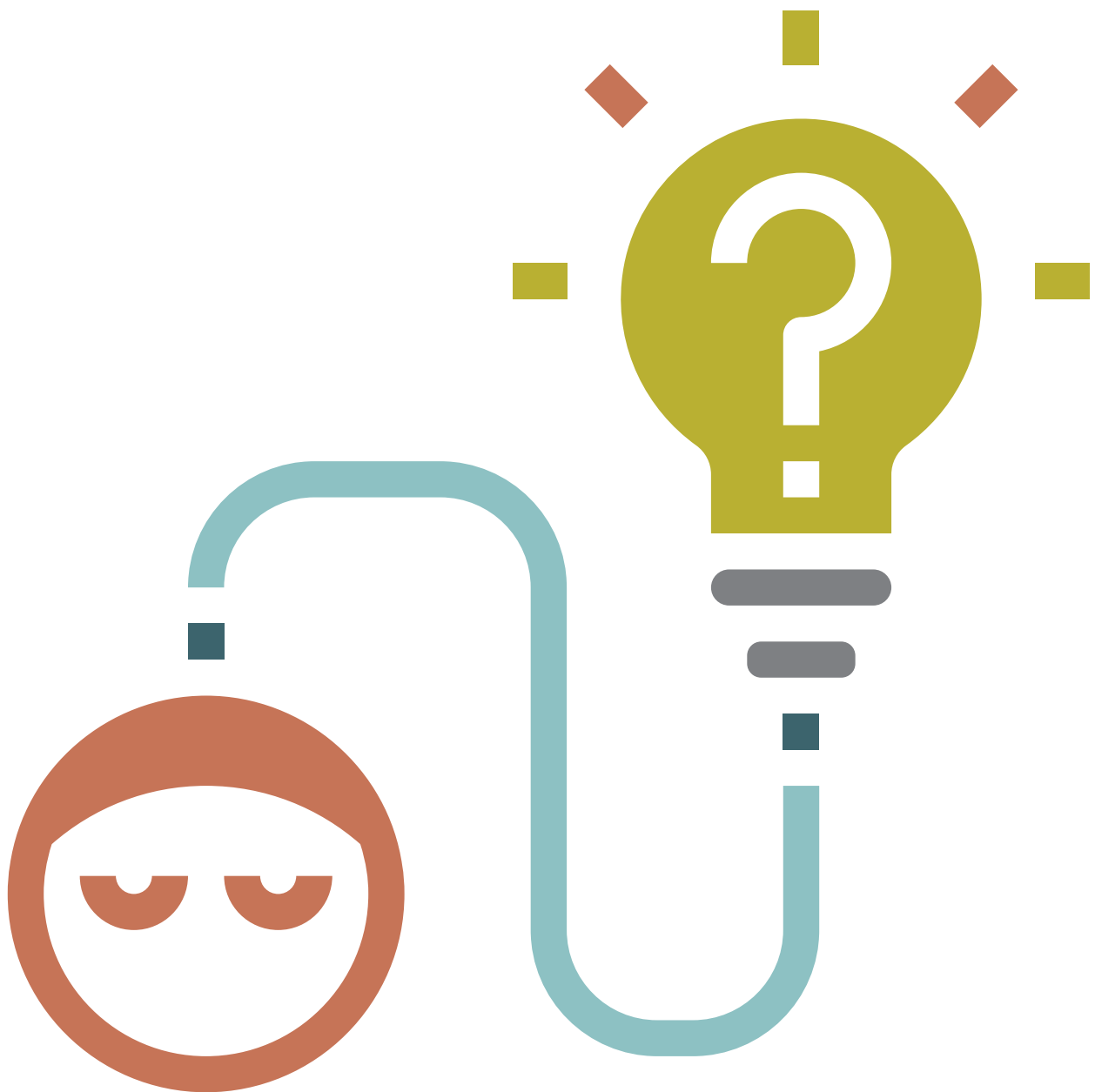
TIME	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS
8:00	<b>Set-up</b>	Computer and Projector Tables and Chairs Talking Pieces Centerpiece Fidgets Mandalas Colored Pencils and Pens
8:30	<b>Opening Check In</b>	
8:45	<i>Tears of the Universe</i>	Wall Space Sticky Notes Cut into Tears Scotch Tape
10:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:30	<b>Day Overview</b> <b>Institutional Betrayal Discussion</b> <i>Organizational Perfidy – Case Study</i>	Linked or Hard Copy of Article Paper and Pens
12:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1:15	<b>Just Principles Discussion</b> <i>Case Studies – Safe Church, Higher Education, Calisto, CoSA</i> <i>Institutional Courage Scorecard</i>	Institutional Courage Scorecard
3:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
3:30	<b>Models of Promise Discussion</b>	
4:30	<i>Guiding Voices Debrief Exercise</i>	Sticky Notes Cut into Tears
5:00	<b>END</b>	

# DAY 5

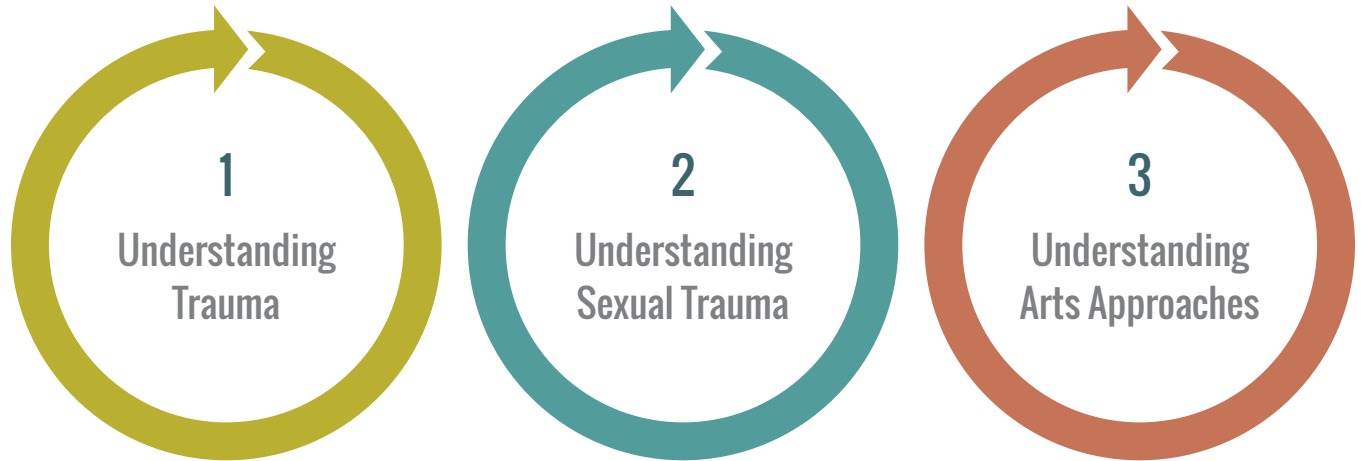
## Chapter 5: Justice | Proposed Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS
8:00	Set-up	Computer and Projector Tables and Chairs Diffuser (optional)
8:30	Reflections and Ruminations	
8:45	<i>MeFirst</i>	Centerpiece Talking Piece Plant Candle Fidgets
10:15	BREAK	
10:30	Day Overview Mindfulness for Self-Justice	Chimes Percussion Instruments
12:00	LUNCH	
1:15	<i>I Am the Work</i> Transforming Historical Harms Through <u>Sawubona</u> , Drumming, and Self-Healing	5 Gallon Plastic Buckets Drum Sticks Frying Pan and/or Cowbell
3:15	BREAK	
3:30	<i>The 7 Keys</i>	T-Shirts Backpacks
4:30	Closing	Post-Surveys and Evaluations Certificates
5:00	END	

# CORE CONCEPTS



This segment of the manual is organized around three key topics. These core concepts provide the foundation for the approach this manual uses. We begin with a discussion around **Trauma** in a broad sense and provide some framing metaphors and definitions. This is followed by several models that undergird how we specifically understand **Sexual Trauma**. We conclude with content that motivates our use of an **Arts-based Approach**. This framing is illustrated in the graphic below.



## ① Understanding Trauma

**At its core, trauma is about violence.** It is about experiences of personal violence, systemic violence, and being a witness to violence. It is about levels of violence that overwhelm our coping capacities during event-specific overloads. It is also about prolonged forms of carnage that eek the very life out of us through slow, insidious, and life-threatening conditions of harm. Trauma is a product of exploitation, genocide, war, oppression, and discrimination.

**Trauma is also about unmet needs.** It is an outgrowth of individual injuries, indignities, and personal losses that hazard our survival. Core human needs for secure attachment can be jeopardized through very personal incidents of harm, or through larger events or natural disasters. Whether individual or collective, acute or chronic, mental or material, trauma occurs when we experience violations or losses that critically injure our most primal drives for existence, attachment, and meaning.

A variety of lenses have been used to explain trauma. **Many indigenous practitioners conceive of traumatic histories as embedded within material and ideological matrices of oppression.**<sup>1</sup> These voices critique the limitations of trauma conceptions that depoliticize, dehistoricize, and pathologize traumatic responses. Without minimizing the brutality of trauma, the decolonial school of thought

additionally frames trauma as a location for emergent resistance, collective activism, and resilience.<sup>2</sup>

**Coming from another viewpoint, many clinical trauma studies since the early 1990s have been dominated by approaches that privilege an individual and event-specific orientation.** This perspective derives from a psychoanalytic and Freudian frame. Its bias is based on a modernist medical model that leans heavily on trauma metrics as described in the DSM (the psychiatric Diagnostic & Statistical Manual).<sup>3</sup>

The differences between these various approaches have important implications in terms of how we define trauma, its origins, outcomes, as well as tactics for redress and recovery. **The approach that we take in this manual suggests that it is imperative to provide cultural and historical specificity to traumatic events (and conditions) precisely because overlooking these features denies the culpability of systems of oppression.** Moreover, ignoring unjust power relations silences the call to critical and ethical engagement with structural violence.

At the same time, trauma is also perceived and experienced on the individual level, a factor which accounts for differential levels of impact between people. **Perhaps most importantly, precisely because trauma is both a deeply personal as well as profoundly structural issue, its effects on marginalized community members is**

amplified by the dual burdens of simultaneous micro and macro-level violations.

Revised models of trauma practice and theory must address these intersectional dynamics and challenge us to more globalized and power-sensitive perspectives. Likewise, we should not ignore the deeply personalized elements of trauma, these factors being key to how trauma is perceived and internalized. **In this manual we aim to use a series of broad lenses that embrace both the complexity as well as specificity of trauma; acknowledging trauma's function in cycles of harm production as well as its role as a potential platform for constructive agency.**

## Metaphors for Trauma and Resilience

How would you define trauma? What figures of speech do you think best characterize resilience? Metaphors are often used as helpful mechanisms for understanding concepts in practical ways that reference people's lived realities. Featured next are three metaphors that have been used by people from around the globe to explain trauma and/or resilience. As you read through these descriptions, consider which metaphor(s) most closely resonate with you.

### Metaphor #1: *Unwrapping the Bandages*

Patricia Grace, a multiple prize-winning Māori short story novelist, won an honorary doctorate from the World Indigenous Nations University in 2016. In her moving novel *Baby No-Eyes*, Grace chronicles vignettes of Maori life in the aftermath of colonization, regulatory discrimination and land dispossession. Through the prism of her novel, Grace portrays the impacts of these forms of violence as factors that forcibly enshackled the "mauri" (essential life force) of her people. **One of Grace's central narrators, Gran Kura, explains this trauma as similar to the metaphor of untethering "bandages wrapped around a central core."**<sup>4</sup> From your perspective, what elements of trauma and/or resilience can be best understood through this metaphor?



### Metaphor #2: *Dying to Forget*

In the introduction to her seminal book *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman explains that "the ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness."<sup>5</sup> Herman explains that for those

who have perpetrated harm, as well as those who have been victimized, there is an immediate survival instinct that motivates repression/dissociation from pain. **This perspective builds on the analogy of trauma as an injury that induces profound hurt, fear and/or terror.** Bessel van der Kolk's book *The Body Keeps the Score*, picks up on this theme, suggesting that the "imprints" of trauma are markedly persistent, often being rediscovered and revisited in our psyches and bodies across time.<sup>6</sup> What is it about these observations that does or doesn't ring true for you?

### Metaphor #3: *Dancing in the Dust*

Kagiso Molope's novel *Dancing in the Dust* portrays the lives of a household of women struggling against the brutalizing effects of Apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s. Amidst the trauma of bloody school boycotts and murderous police crackdowns, a pair of sisters and their mother practice the arts of everyday resistance.<sup>7</sup> Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* and Roxane Gay's *An Untamed State*, echo similar themes of intergenerational pain and responses of agency. **All of these scripts render sites of trauma as locations of struggle and activism.** What does this third metaphor mean to you?



## Trauma and Resilience Definitions

Much has been written about the relationships between trauma and stress, dis-stress and dis-ease, and resilience and recovery. These dynamics have been explored on the individual and systemic levels through psycho-dynamic, interpersonal, and structural strain theories. Many of these topics are developed more fully in the STAR 1 Training Manual<sup>8</sup> which provides us with renditions of these ideas.

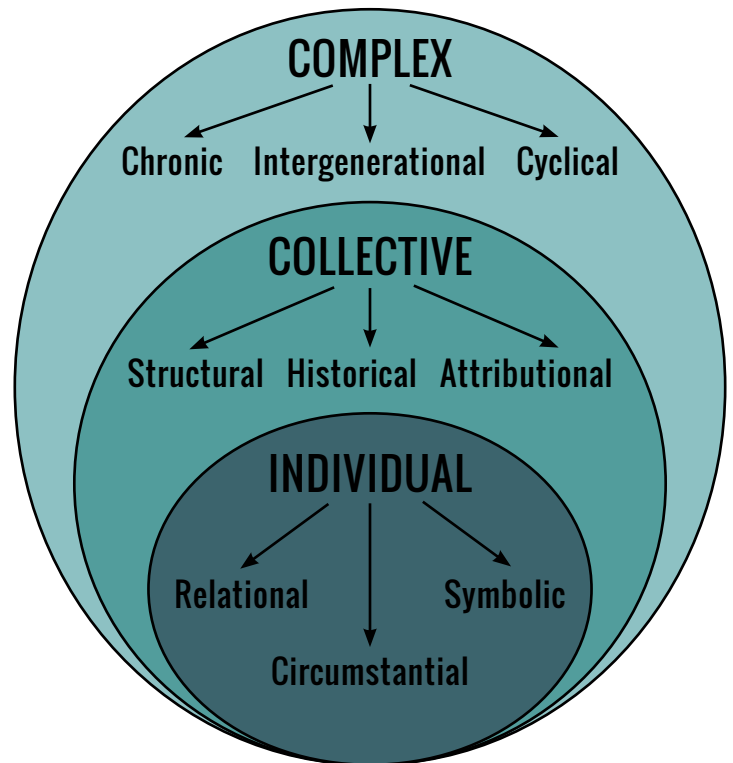
**STRESS:** At its simplest, stress can be produced by any force or event that has an impact on the body, mind, emotions, or spirit. Stress is our automatic physical, mental, or instinctual response to these events. Stress activates neurochemicals and hormones that energize us for action. Stress is a natural part of life and can be neutral, positive, or negative. A certain level of stress can energize and motivate us to be productive and creative. However, prolonged exposure to stress, especially stress over which we have little or no control, may accumulate and impact us negatively. Eventually this leads to exhaustion, depression, and burnout. **Too much stress results in distress and this can lead to frustration, anxiety, and disease.**<sup>9</sup>

**TRAUMATIC STRESS:** Traumatic Stress can occur when we face difficult events that are threatening and feel out of our control. In some instances, this occurs in a single event but it can also happen through experiences of protracted loss and violation that result from structural violence. Dr. Peter Levine’s definition in *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma* (1997), is helpful in differentiating between stress and traumatic stress. **Levine suggests that traumatic stress occurs when “our ability to respond to threat is overwhelmed.”**<sup>10</sup> While trauma can occur through natural events like hurricanes or tornadoes that sweep away someone’s home and livelihood, many forms of trauma can be cumulative and come at the hands of other human beings – war, the impact of terrible working conditions, and sexual trauma occur because of someone else’s damaging behavior.<sup>11</sup>

**RESILIENCE:** At its fullest, resilience is the outcome of maximizing two factors – coping and change. While coping has frequently been described as a form of adaptation, we define it here as the ability to respond constructively to violence and loss. This distinction is important because coping should never be portrayed as adaptation to people or environments that are damaging. Rather, we see coping as an act of survival, sometimes subversion, and always agency. In keeping with this perspective, the second factor - change - should be framed not only as a personal metamorphosis but also as the activation of structural transformation. Persons who precipitate change at both of these levels model for us the most holistic versions of resilience.

## Types of Trauma

Review the Types of Trauma diagram below and make revisions as you see fit. Keep in mind that trauma can be experienced in embodied, vicarious, and/or participatory formats.



## Glossary

### INDIVIDUAL

**Relational** – Based on attachment disconnections (betrayal, violence, or absence).

**Circumstantial** – Based on material deprivations or losses (incidents, events, or protracted conditions).

**Symbolic** – Based on dignity violations (individual identity erasure, exclusion, or disruption).

### COLLECTIVE

**Structural** – Violence and harms caused by unjust systems, policies, or ideologies.

**Historical** – Current legacies and aftermaths of violence/harms enacted against previous generations.

**Attributional** – Rupture of communal identity caused by wrongful group representation and/or stigma.

### COMPLEX

**Chronic** – Residual effects of group violence that create ongoing conditions of uncertainty.

**Intergenerational** – Structural violence that causes changes to a group's social and biological structures.

**Cyclical** – Decimation of a group's aspirations so that oncoming generations have no viable future.

## ② Understanding Sexual Trauma

Having discussed the subject of trauma on a large scale, we now transition to examining our second topic: Sexual Trauma. The following section offers three models that specifically broaden our understanding of this topic. The first model, **Unique Signatures**, identifies the elements of sexual trauma that are distinctive. This model illuminates the characteristics that make sexual harm significantly different from other forms of trauma. The second model, **Key Needs**, centers on how sexual trauma re-scripts basic life assumptions and changes core elements of how we view ourselves, others, and the world around us. Lastly, the **Cascade Model** introduces us to a template for how sexual violence operates in society. This framework explains the cumulative impacts of sexual violence and challenges us to work for change across a spectrum of individual and structural domains. Fitting together sequentially, these three models create an overall composite, with each model building on content from the previous one(s).

### Model 1 - Unique Signatures

The field of trauma studies has expanded significantly over the last five decades, yet until recently less attention has been given to what specifically distinguishes sexual trauma. In creating this manual, we wanted to explore this gap by asking ourselves this central question:

#### What makes sexual violence unique from other forms of trauma?

The following model engages this inquiry, depicting salient features that are characteristic to sexual trauma.<sup>12</sup> We place this model at the front of this manual because we believe that it is central to understanding key parts of the distinct forms of trauma that sexual harm victims/survivors face.



### Unique Signatures Model



#### Sexual trauma is embodied.

- It happens in your body, to your body, and is about your or another's body.
- Its aftermaths are also calibrated, stored, and (re)experienced in your body.



#### Sexual trauma is intersectional.

- Sexual violence is a sexualized abuse of power, whether individually or structurally enforced.
- It is also a form of oppression disproportionately enacted on marginalized groups.



#### Sexual trauma is interpersonal.

- Sexual violence is about breached social relationships/norms & is therefore deeply social.
- The repair of harms done must thus address rebuilding a sense of community.



#### Sexual trauma is power-based.

- Since sexual violence is a violation of power, institutional culpability must also be addressed
- Institutions are key in modeling accountability, truth-telling, and prevention.



#### Sexual trauma is transformative.

- Sexual violence is a form of moral injury & thus repair may involve spiritual values/practices.
- Because sexual violence is so impactful/pervasive, it will require a cultural shift and system change.

## Model 2 - Key Needs

Our second model identifies key needs that surface in the aftermath of sexual harm. Sexual trauma can have profound and lasting effects on how we view the world and our place in it. This is particularly the case in terms of how sexual violence shapes our basic life assumptions. Writing as an indigenous healer and trauma practitioner, Dr. Renee Linklater sheds light on how this happens, in her book *Decolonizing Trauma Work: Indigenous Stories and Strategies*. **Linklater demonstrates how at their core, traumatic “soul wounds” are a product of disconnections from our environment, ourselves, and others.**<sup>13</sup>



**For the sexual harm victim/survivor, the soul wounds that Linklater identifies limit our capacity for life-giving human connection because of distrust, fear, institutional betrayal, and thus a lack of feeling safe in the world.** For harm-doers (individuals or systems), causing harm and normalizing injurious actions perpetuates wrong assumptions about the use of force, coercion, and predatory consumption. These harmful assumptions undergird a disconnection from healthy human relationships as well as sustainable engagement with other living systems.



In her book *Shattered Assumptions*, Ronnie Janoff-Bulman points to the aftermath of being disembedded from primal connections. **She identifies the shattering effects of sexual trauma, suggesting that sexual violence fragments not only social embeddedness, but also reorganizes our basic beliefs about the world.**

Janoff-Bulman argues that sexual trauma causes individuals to question several central human notions<sup>14</sup>, namely:

- The world is benevolent.
- The world is meaningful.
- The self is worthy.

**Service providers desiring to accompany victims/survivors as well as harm-doers need to be aware of how a shift in the above assumptions may influence affected persons’ trust in people and organizations.** Moreover, support persons should specifically target the creation of policies that are sensitized to these altered assumptions and their implications.



Identifying the unique needs that emerge post-sexual violence helps us in the work of prevention, in collective transparency, and in formulating effective victim/survivor-centered responses to harms done. **In light of this, we advocate for institutions to prioritize developing protocols that are specifically tailored to the needs framework identified next.** This framework builds on Linklater and Janoff-Bulman’s important work, additionally augmenting it with the insights of other practitioners in the field.



**Key Needs Model**

Sexual Violence can change a person's <b>assumptions</b> regarding:	Affected <b>individuals</b> thus require accompaniment that directly addresses these needs:	A mandate for accompanying <b>groups</b> affected by sexual violence should therefore ask these questions:
<b>SECURITY</b>	<b>Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <b>protection</b> (physical/emotional/psychological).</li> <li>• Ensure desired <b>advocacy</b> (personal/systemic).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How is the protection of victim/survivor groups being ensured?</i></li> <li>• <i>How are harm-doing persons/systems being held accountable, and their needs being met?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are other affected parties/groups and what are our responsibilities for their safety?</i></li> </ul>
<b>DIGNITY</b>	<b>Worth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honor <b>identity/ies</b> (individual/structural).</li> <li>• Support <b>voice and choice</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Have identity needs of victims/survivors been met as per their own definition of wellbeing?</i></li> <li>• <i>What identity factors are shielding harm-doing persons/systems, and/or can alternatively be used to work towards their rehabilitation?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are other affected parties/groups and what are our responsibilities to ensure their dignity?</i></li> </ul>
<b>ATTACHMENT<sup>15</sup></b>	<b>Connection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out <b>accompaniment options</b>.</li> <li>• Secure <b>supportive relationships</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>By whom and how do victims/survivors want to be accompanied?</i></li> <li>• <i>How are harm-doing persons/systems having their support and obligation mandates met?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are other affected parties/groups and what are our responsibilities to accompany them?</i></li> </ul>
<b>STRUCTURE</b>	<b>Power</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <b>transparent and accessible processes</b>.</li> <li>• Demonstrate <b>accountability and dependability</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do victims/survivors experience institutional systems as transparent and accessible?</i></li> <li>• <i>How are harm-doing persons/systems being held accountable across locations?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are other affected parties/groups and what is our mandate to educate/interface with them?</i></li> </ul>
<b>JUSTICE<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>Meaning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give proof of <b>responsiveness to feedback and dissent</b>.</li> <li>• Ensure visibility of <b>system transformation agenda</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are system responses victim/survivor driven?</i></li> <li>• <i>How can harm-doing persons, systems, and reputational risks/stigmas be dealt with effectively?</i></li> <li>• <i>By whom and how is the mandate for system-wide change being monitored and evaluated?</i></li> </ul>

### Model 3 - Cascade Model

We now turn our attention from Key Needs to the Cascade Model. **Here we examine how the metaphor of a series of cascading waves explains significant features of (1) why sexual harm is so prevalent, (2) how it impacts us, and (3) what we can do about it.**

**In creating this manual, we sought to find an image that would best express how sexual violence operates in society.** We also wanted to create a visual representation that resonates with the experience(s) of a majority of affected parties. We believe that the cascade metaphor and ensuing model effectively captures that space.

We intentionally chose a cascade visual that did not operate vertically from top to bottom. **We felt that a top-down image would solely represent victims/survivors as being acted upon; this seemed like it would take away from the agency that many survivors express. Instead we chose a model portraying waves that move horizontally.** This visual communicates agency and the interaction between the layers of the experience of sexual harm as well as the snowball effects frequently caused by sexual harm. We also chose the wave visual because it speaks to the potential for hope and change; the growing call for a cascade – indeed a movement – for personal and structural transformation.

In using the image of cascading waves, it is important to highlight key dynamics of how wave cascades operate in order to grasp their relevance to the sexual harms arena. We explore these connections next.

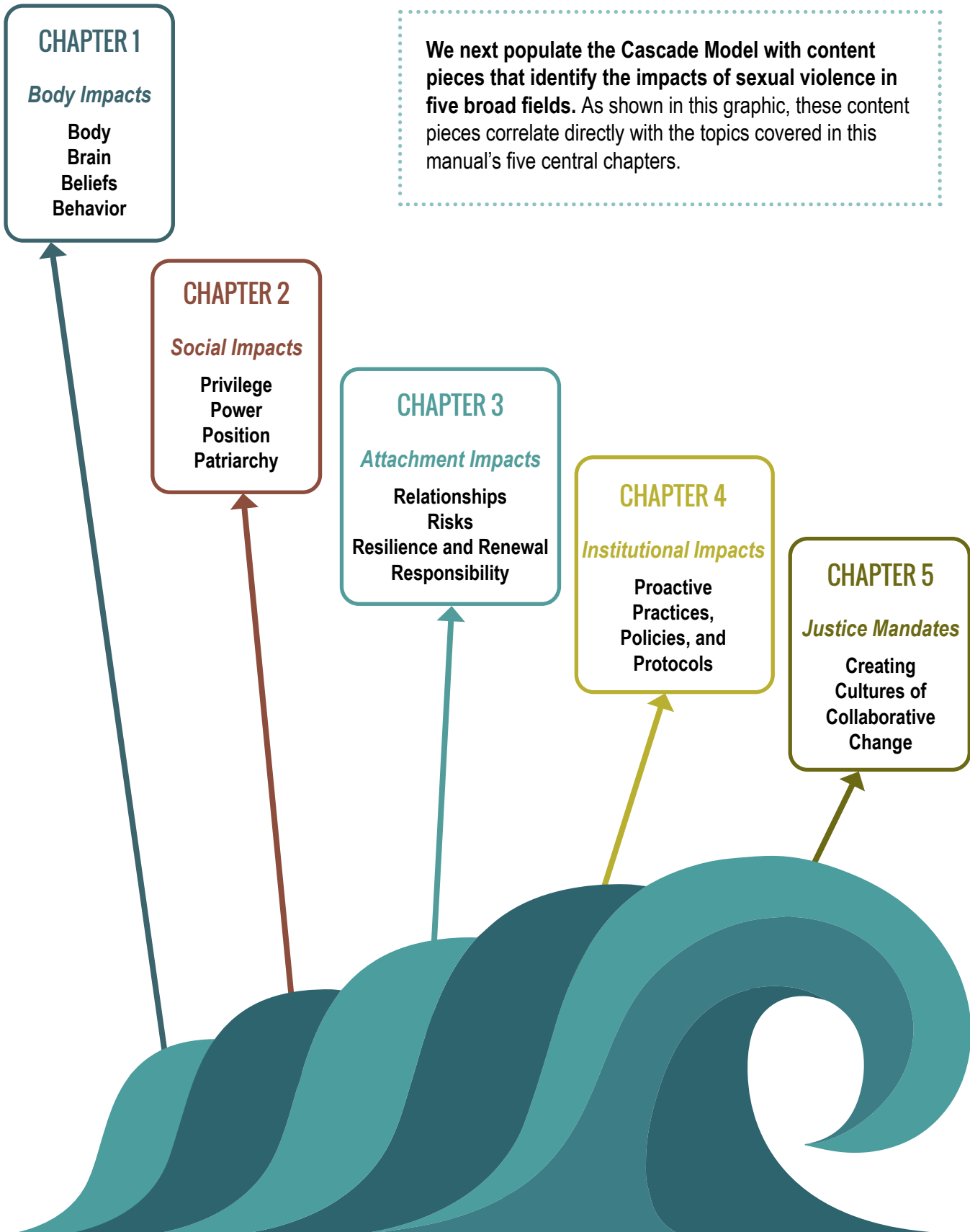
#### What is a Wave Cascade?

**Definition: A wave cascade is a repetitive process whereby a series of factors act on each other to unleash a larger outcome than the sum of each individual part. This process can propel structural changes and unanticipated individual or system-wide outcomes.**



Primary Attributes	Key Dynamics
CHAPTER 1 Chain Reactions	<i>Diffusion impacts can manifest in <u>non-localized and non-linear effects</u> across the whole system.</i>
CHAPTER 2 Multifactorial Structural Causes	<i>Interaction of multiple <u>complex system factors combine</u> to create the phenomenon and its turbulent impacts.</i>
CHAPTER 3 Amplified Interdependencies	<i><u>Risk and resilience</u> levels correlate to heightened levels of interaction across system components.</i>
CHAPTER 4 Progressive Effects	<i>Causes and impacts must be monitored, evaluated, and proactively managed <u>across time and location.</u></i>
CHAPTER 5 System Transformation	<i>Network flow, capacity alterations and other response factors are apt to collectively <u>precipitate system-wide changes.</u></i>

**Cascade Model**



FULL CASCADE MODEL				
Sexual Violence Signatures	Key Needs	Chapter Topics	Chapter Content	Cascade Attributes
<b>Embodied</b>	<b>Safety &amp; Security</b>	<b>Chapter 1</b> Impacts of SV on body, brain, beliefs, & behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biological/social harms diffusion</li> <li>• Traumagenic experiences &amp; environments</li> <li>• Epigenetic transmission</li> </ul>	<b>Chain reactions</b>
<b>Intersectional</b>	<b>Dignity &amp; Empowerment</b>	<b>Chapter 2</b> Understanding privilege, power, positionality, & patriarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural violence</li> <li>• Intersectionality</li> <li>• Historical harms</li> </ul>	<b>Multifactorial structural causes</b>
<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Attachment &amp; Community</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b> Assessing relationships, risks, resilience & renewal, & responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruptured attachments</li> <li>• Exposure &amp; care risks</li> <li>• Restorative opportunities</li> </ul>	<b>Amplified interdependencies</b>
<b>Power-based</b>	<b>Structure &amp; Collaboration</b>	<b>Chapter 4</b> Producing just practices, policies, & protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional harm &amp; healing</li> <li>• Advocacy policies</li> <li>• Leading Practice Models</li> </ul>	<b>Progressive effects</b>
<b>Transformative</b>	<b>Justice &amp; System Change</b>	<b>Chapter 5</b> Creating cultures of collaboration & collective change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice &amp; massive resilience</li> <li>• Cultures of dignity &amp; care</li> <li>• Decolonizing representation</li> </ul>	<b>System transformation</b>

### 3 Understanding Arts Approaches

In this last introductory section, we discuss several reasons for why this manual integrates an arts-based approach into its curriculum. The first reason hinges on how sexual trauma is stored in the brain and its implications for the most effective ways to process harmful experiences.<sup>17</sup> **The second reason is based on research that establishes a cathartic link between positive kinesthetic activities and healing/wellness.**<sup>18</sup>

**Beginning with our first reason, our educational process recognizes that sexual trauma is primarily characterized by the encoding of visual and sensory memory in the brain.** Traumatic events tend to flood neural networks simultaneously instead of sequentially and this results in sensory overloads to the brain's reasoning capacities. This overload causes the brain's reasoning engine, the prefrontal cortex, to temporarily go "off-line" due to the overwhelming number of traumatic stimuli that it is encountering. You may have experienced this yourself in traumatic situations where sights, sounds, smells, or tactile sensations are the memories that stand out the most in your recollections.

**In light of the fact that trauma is encoded through sensory messaging, trauma-informed sexual harm education should include the use of processing techniques that recode and neutralize feelings of overload.** You will notice that all the exercises used in this manual include in-text instructions for each activity. Many training platforms include exercise/activity instructions in a separate facilitators' manual; we include all instructions here because this provides the victim/survivor with the opportunity to prepare for any activities that they may be invited to participate in. This approach helps all affected persons to process potentially triggering subjects sequentially and without a feeling of cognitive or emotional overload.

Our second reason for using arts-based activities and exercises (where possible), relates to their generative, integrative, and healing powers. Our earliest life experiences remind us that images predate words; our most primal memories are inscribed as instinctual impressions.<sup>19</sup> In her book on art therapy, Cathy Malchiodi describes arts-based exercises as a form of "visual thinking" that helps us organize our feelings, thoughts, and perceptions through images.<sup>20</sup> **Art therapy pioneer Edith Kramer additionally emphasizes the healing potential of arts-based activi-**

**ties and points to the way they integrate bodily experiences with positive health and wellness outcomes.**<sup>21</sup>



While this manual's goal is educational (we do not claim to provide a clinical or therapy context), we do hope that these training materials will have a positive and transformative outcome in the lives of participants. **Our assumption is that sexual harm education is most effective when it respects participants' expressive needs through the creation of positive meaning-making sensory experiences.** To that end we invite participants to join us in developing a learning environment that honors the agency and creativity of all its members.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Linklater, R. (2014). Decolonizing trauma work: Indigenous stories and strategies. Winnipeg, CA: Fernwood Publishing, pp.101-131.
- <sup>2</sup> Visser, I. (2015). Decolonizing trauma theory: Retrospect and prospects. *Humanities*(4), 250-265.
- <sup>3</sup> van der Kolk, B. (2007). The history of trauma in psychiatry. In M. J. Friedman, T. M. Keane, & P. A. Resick (Eds.), *Handbook of PTSD: Science and practice* (pp.19–36), New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- <sup>4</sup> Visser, I. (2012). The trauma of goodness in Patricia Grace's fiction, *The Contemporary Pacific*, 24(2), 297–321. University of Hawaii Press, pp.314.
- <sup>5</sup> Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and recovery*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.
- <sup>6</sup> van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- <sup>7</sup> Molohe, K. (2002). *Dancing in the dust*. Toronto, CA: TSAR Publications.
- <sup>8</sup> Eastern Mennonite University (2002). *STAR – Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience: Level I Participant Manual*. Harrisonburg, VA: EMU, pp.11-13.
- <sup>9</sup> EMU STAR Level 1 (2002), pp.11-13.
- <sup>10</sup> Levine, P. (1997) *Waking the tiger: Healing trauma*. Berkley, CA: North Atlantic Books, pp.49.
- <sup>11</sup> EMU STAR Level 1 (2002), pp.11-13.
- <sup>12</sup> *For course facilitators, examples of other traumatic experiences that do not exhibit these unique signatures:*
- *Embodied - Other forms of trauma, for example a business failure is not enacted on/in the space of your body in the same way as sexual assault is.*
  - *Intersectional - A car accident for instance, may not be as easily or solely attributable to marginal status.*
  - *Interpersonal – Trauma from experiencing an earthquake is not necessarily caused by interpersonal violence.*
  - *Power-Based – For example trauma caused by a genetic disability, would not necessarily be solely attributable to abuses of social power.*
  - *Transformative - For example a death in the family, while individually impactful, would not necessarily involve system-wide societal change.*
- <sup>13</sup> Linklater (2014), pp.132-138.
- <sup>14</sup> Janoff-Bulman, R. (1992). *Shattered assumptions: Towards a psychology of trauma*. New York: The Free Press, pp.6.
- <sup>15</sup> *Gratitude and acknowledgment to Matthew Tibbles and his work on organizational trauma for the idea of the addition of 'Attachment' as this framework's fourth element.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Special thanks to several members of my 2018 Summer Peacebuilding Institute course, including Oscar Siwali, Leda Werner, Johonna Turner, and Renata Loberg, for highlighting the need to add 'Justice' as a fifth element to this model.*

<sup>17</sup> For more on post-trauma 'Paths to Recovery', see the fifth section (pp. 205-258) of this text: van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

<sup>18</sup> Malchiodi, C. (2007). *The art therapy sourcebook*. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 8-9.

<sup>19</sup> Adeniyi, L. (2014). *Group art therapy for adult female victims of sexual violence*, (Unpublished M.A. dissertation). Herron School of Art Design: Indiana University.

<sup>20</sup> Malchiodi (2007), pp.9.

<sup>21</sup> Adeniyi (2014), pp.23.





# CHAPTER 1

# SAFETY



Trauma is a fact of life. It does not, however, have to be a life sentence.

- Peter A. Levine

## Chapter Overview

**The first wave of the Sexual Harms Cascade Model explores the impact that sexual trauma exerts on body, brain, behavior and beliefs.** We start here because we want to overtly acknowledge that for victims/survivors, all of these parts of life can be profoundly changed. And though victims/survivors may bear some scars for the rest of their lives, unraveling the biology and psychology of sexual harms points the way toward recovery and resilience.

**Chapter 1 begins by establishing the importance of creating a safe learning environment.** We do so in recognition of the ways that sexual harm breaches a sense of personal and relational safety. We therefore start with various exercises that focus on creating a learning community that feels secure and welcoming for all participants. This involves activities that help participants get to know each other,<sup>1</sup> as well as engaging in a community-building exercise that shapes agreements for how the group will function optimally.<sup>2</sup>

**Next, we define trauma and then review its psychology and traumatic responses.** We explore how trauma-genic experiences exert influence over our physiology and actions. We follow this with a review of the biology of stress responses. We synthesize these different parts into a working whole by considering the possibility of resilience as victims/survivors make their way on the path toward reintegration and wholeness. Together these various pieces are combined into the following four chapter sections that address the impacts of sexual harm on:

1. Body
2. Brain
3. Behavior
4. Beliefs

## Chapter Objectives

The aim of this first chapter is to have participants develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between sexual harm and trauma. In order to do this, participants will:

- Generate their own working definition of trauma.
- Explore body, belief, and behavioral responses to traumatic events.
- Discover the impact that sexual harm can have on body, brain, and emotional regulation by examining the “Window of Tolerance.”
- Be introduced to body-centered exercises that can aid in regaining control over responses.

## Opening Exercise<sup>3</sup> The Dignity Tree

Building a safe learning community supports transformative education. **Classroom agreements are a constructive way to create safety, extend dignity, and show compassion to each other no matter what experiences we each bring to the learning environment.** These commitments provide accountability and transparency to guide our journey, where all are welcome and have intrinsic worth and dignity.

Dignity has been defined as “the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect”.<sup>4</sup> Synonyms for dignity include honor, power, status, elevation, and value. These qualities suggest that dignity arises from a knowledge of self as well as shared knowledge about ourselves in relation to other people. **Donna Hicks notes that dignity is a complex term made up of multiple parts, including having a sense of being accepted for who we are, being**

**known and valued, and being able to experience physical and psychological safety.**<sup>5</sup>

Safety can be significantly threatened or dismantled when sexual harms occur. Often, both body and psyche no longer feel safe due to dreams and flashbacks. These aftermaths displace a normal sense of the here and now, replacing them with constant reminders of a painful past that still feels present. Additionally, self-knowledge for victims/survivors is often profoundly overshadowed by a deep sense of shame – even the deepest friendships may seem radically altered and unsafe.<sup>6</sup> **Restoring a sense of relational trust is thus an important element of safety; we practice that here as we begin our journey of building a secure learning community.** Together we can create brave spaces where all are welcomed as valued members who each bring their own important stories.

### Exercise Supplies:

Four sheets of flip chart paper, markers, two-sided scotch tape, one pair of scissors, three colors of construction paper

### Preparation:

1. The facilitator connects four large flip chart pieces of paper together into a square and attaches them to the wall as a large mural.
2. On this paper mural the facilitator draws the image of a large tree, inclusive of three visible layers: (a) a root system, (b) many sizable branches, and (c) higher smaller branches.
3. In advance of the exercise, the group facilitator draws and cuts out of construction paper:

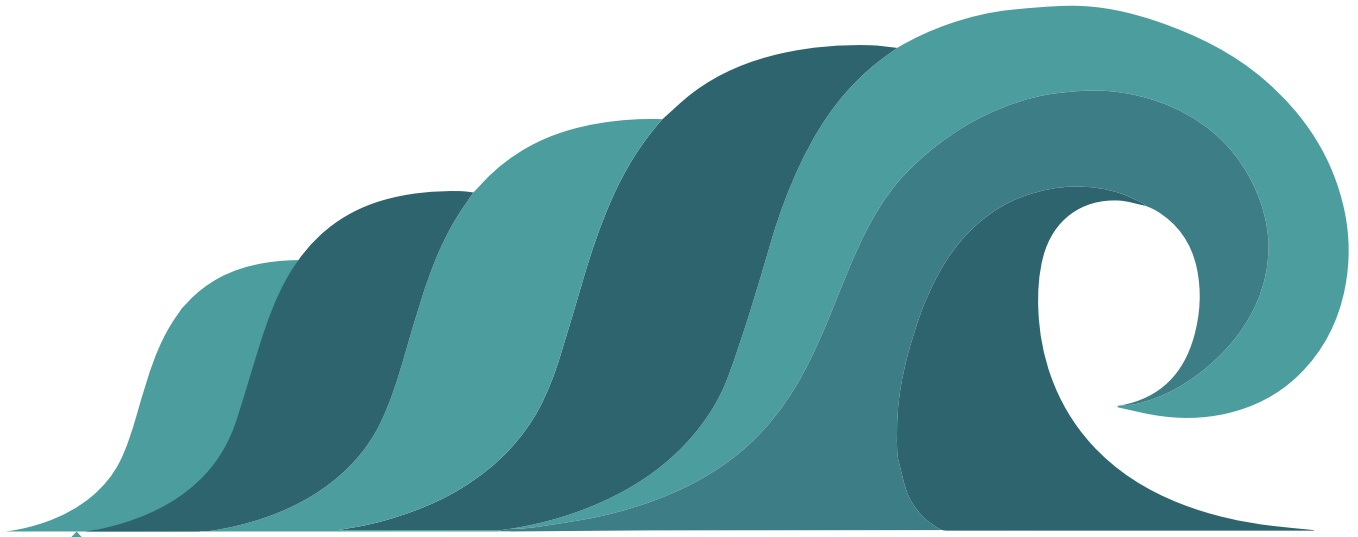
- Three light red (4-inch) apples per participant
- Three light green (4-inch) leaves per participant
- Three light brown (4-inch) root-bulbs per participant

### Instructions:

1. To introduce the exercise, the facilitator explains to group members that each person will be asked to identify some: (a) values (root-bulbs), (b) actions (leaves), and (c) outcomes (apples) that will help them feel safe in this learning environment.
2. Participants should each choose several root, leaf and apple cut-out shapes.
3. On each pre-cut root-bulb, participants write down and paste onto the bottom of the tree one value they feel will contribute to a safe learning setting.
4. On each pre-cut leaf, participants write down and paste onto the middle of the tree one action that practically exhibits the value they have identified.
5. On each pre-cut apple, participants write down one outcome they desire as the end result of their value and action and paste this apple on the top of the tree.
6. With a marker, participants draw a line connecting each one of their value (root), action (leaf), and outcome (apple) suggestions.
7. The facilitator then calls group members together around the tree mural to view their collective work and discuss/debrief their Dignity Tree group safety guidelines.

**Naming these practices explicitly builds accountability and clear expectations for how group members agree to function together as a learning community.**

## Chapter 1: Content Map



### CASCADE FEATURES

- Chain Reactions

### CHAPTER SEGMENTS

- Body
- Brain
- Behavior
- Beliefs

### KEY NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Safety
- Security

## Cascade Features Explained

The Cascade Model introduced in this manual highlights how impactful sexual trauma can be on multiple levels, both personally and corporately. **In this initial chapter we focus on the Cascade Model's first attribute – namely how sexual trauma can trigger chain reactions across many parts of our body.** We specifically investigate how trauma shows up in myriad effects across the biology of affected persons. We also take time to observe how such harms can be personally internalized in our beliefs, as well as transmitted between people through socialization and even epigenetics.

Sometimes the bodily effects of sexual harm are easily recognizable because they are linear and clearly patterned. **Other times sexual trauma can manifest in seemingly non-localized and non-linear aftereffects.** Understanding these often invisible, yet powerful chain reactions is key to learning to effectively cope with their outcomes in constructive and informed ways.

The past is alive in the form of gnawing interior discomfort.

- Bessel A. van der Kolk



## Section 1: Trauma and the Body

Defining trauma can prove to be a tall task, as trauma has many context-specific connotations. In brief, the English term for trauma is derived from a Greek word that means “wound.” As a metaphor for injury, emotional wounds like physical wounds vary in size, depth, and extent. **While most wounds have the capacity to eventually heal, deep wounds may necessitate intentional accompaniment as they require the longest healing time.**

In addition to the image of an injury, it can also be helpful to think of trauma as part of the stress continuum – as shown in figure 1.1. Similar to the principle of exertion where muscles and bones push against gravity, a normal level of life stress gets people up and moving throughout the day. **But when events leave one feeling overwhelmed, profoundly threatened, and/or markedly emotionally flooded, traumatic stress can be a significant factor.** Some people describe traumatic stress as a sort of tipping

point on this continuum.

Dr. Peter Levine writes that “traumatic stress occurs when our ability to respond to the threat is overwhelmed.”<sup>7</sup>

**Traumatic stress arises in response to experiencing or witnessing traumatic event(s) where one feels out of control, powerless, and there is a threat of injury or death.**<sup>8</sup> Though not fully understood, it is also important to note that not everyone who experiences traumatic events will respond with traumatic responses.

Trauma can be induced in response to a single acute event such as a sexual assault, or through longer-term circumstances such as sexual harassment or relational manipulation. **While sexual trauma has often been defined primarily in terms of acute events, lingering circumstances of sexual trauma can be just as impactful on the body.** Likewise, the aftermaths of sexual trauma can be protracted and residual if not addressed in constructive ways.

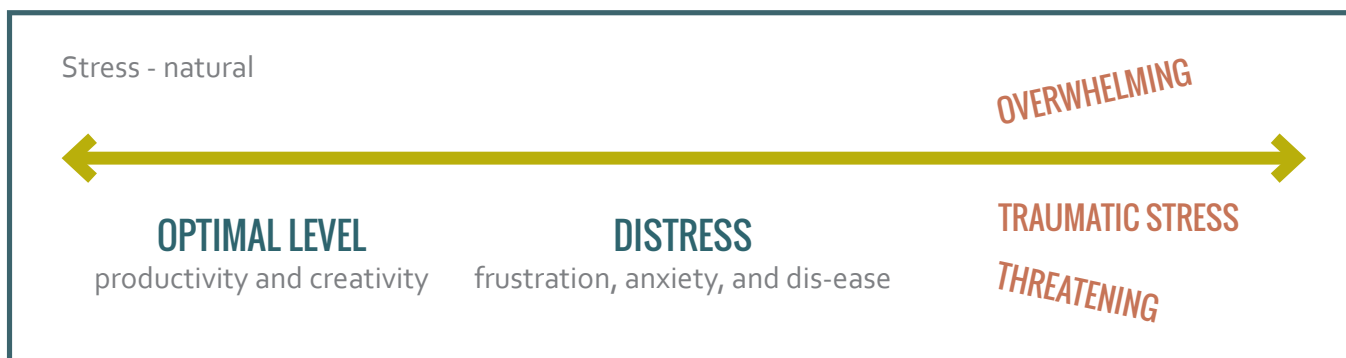


Figure 1.1: Adapted from 2018 Eastern Mennonite University. [www.emu.edu/star](http://www.emu.edu/star)

## Exercise 2 Understanding Traumatic Chain Reactions

The purpose of this activity is to elicit participants’ reflections on how trauma operates cross-sectionally and how it can trigger physiological chain reactions.

**Exercise Supplies:** A variety of colored pencils, a copy of the Common Responses to High Stress and/or Trauma figure.

### Instructions:

1. Look through and reflect on the descriptors identified in the chart below. Carefully examine each column, paying attention to how chain-reactions can be triggered in and across each of the following areas:  
**Emotional • Cognitive • Behavioral • Physical • Spiritual • Social**
2. Next, circle each of the trauma responses that you have observed occurring in instances of sexual harm.
3. Using different pencils to color code, draw lines connecting specific groups of co-occurring responses across the six domains.
4. As you feel comfortable, share some of your observations with those around you and discuss the patterns that surface.
5. Led by the facilitator, collect the group’s responses on a marker board or flip chart.

COMMON RESPONSES TO HIGH STRESS AND/OR TRAUMA

EMOTIONAL	COGNITIVE	BEHAVIORAL	PHYSICAL	SPIRITUAL	SOCIAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Terror</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Panic/Paranoia</li> <li>• Anger/Rage</li> <li>• Apprehension</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Vengefulness</li> <li>• Shame</li> <li>• Guilt</li> <li>• Sadness</li> <li>• Grief</li> <li>• Emotional shock</li> <li>• Emotional outbursts</li> <li>• Loss of emotional control</li> <li>• Helplessness</li> <li>• Numb</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• <b>COURAGE</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Nightmares</li> <li>• Hypervigilance</li> <li>• Suspiciousness</li> <li>• Flashbacks</li> <li>• Overly sensitive</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, spaciness</li> <li>• Memory problems</li> <li>• Shortened attention span</li> <li>• Overly critical</li> <li>• Blaming others</li> <li>• Poor problem solving</li> <li>• Poor abstract thinking</li> <li>• Preoccupied with the event(s)</li> <li>• Inability to recall all/ parts of the event</li> <li>• Disorientation of time, place, person</li> <li>• Heightened or lowered awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdrawal</li> <li>• Self harm</li> <li>• Antisocial acts</li> <li>• Inability to rest, pacing</li> <li>• Hyper-alertness</li> <li>• Erratic movement</li> <li>• Suspiciousness</li> <li>• Emotional outbursts</li> <li>• Change in speech patterns</li> <li>• Increased alcohol/ drug use</li> <li>• Avoiding thoughts and/or feelings related to the event</li> <li>• Difficulty writing or talking</li> <li>• Impaired sexual functioning</li> <li>• Loss or increase of appetite</li> <li>• Feeling uncoordinated</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• <b>CARING FOR OTHERS</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thirst/dry mouth</li> <li>• Twitches</li> <li>• Vomiting</li> <li>• Weakness</li> <li>• Chest pain</li> <li>• Elevated blood pressure</li> <li>• Rapid heart rate</li> <li>• Muscle tremors</li> <li>• Visual difficulties</li> <li>• Nausea/diarrhea</li> <li>• Shallow breathing</li> <li>• Dizziness or faintness</li> <li>• Chills or sweating</li> <li>• Easily startled</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Changes in appetite</li> <li>• Nightmares or sleep disturbances</li> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Grinding teeth</li> <li>• Inability to rest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emptiness</li> <li>• Loss of meaning</li> <li>• Doubt</li> <li>• Feeling unforgiven</li> <li>• Martyrdom/ punished</li> <li>• Looking for magic</li> <li>• Loss of direction</li> <li>• Cynicism</li> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Needing to “prove” self</li> <li>• Alienated</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Crisis of faith</li> <li>• <b>SPIRITUAL GROWTH</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Silence/impaired communication</li> <li>• Aggressive behavior</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Lack of empathy</li> <li>• Denial</li> <li>• Low energy/low productivity</li> <li>• Inflexibility</li> <li>• High rates of alcoholism, drug abuse</li> <li>• High rates of (untreated) mental health issues (depression, sexual dysfunction, etc)</li> <li>• High rates of stress related health issues (and medication use)</li> <li>• Intergenerational transmission of pain</li> <li>• <b>GROWTH, WISDOM</b></li> </ul>

Redesigned from Eastern Mennonite University (2016). [www.emu.edu/star](http://www.emu.edu/star)  
Adapted from the work of Jim Norman, M.Ed., C.T.S Oklahoma City, OK

## How Sexual Trauma is Embodied

In the Cascade Model, the first signature characteristic of sexual trauma is that it occurs in/on (or is about) the body. In light of this, sexual trauma is uniquely embodied. While the impact of other forms of trauma can potentially be diffused outward, the effect of sexual trauma is often internalized and can become locked into the body/ies where it occurred. **Since we live in and through our bodies, victims/survivors can find it difficult to relate to their own bodies in constructive ways as this is the place where their trauma occurred.**

Many victims/survivors note more generally that they feel cut off from their bodies.<sup>9</sup> Persons who have experienced sexual trauma may therefore unconsciously seek ways to protect themselves, distancing themselves from their own bodies through either agitation or withdrawal. Next, we explore these reaction patterns in more depth.

**Common responses to the embodied nature of sexual trauma include forms of distancing between mind and body such as:**

- **Dissociation** – the tendency to feel disconnected from sensory experiences, your own body, immediate surroundings, sense of self, or personal history.
- **Alexithymia** – the inability to identify or express your own emotions; this can also be accompanied by detachment from experiencing or resonating with the emotions of others.
- **Depersonalization** – persistently feeling like you are observing your thoughts and body from a distance, as if they are unreal or frozen/transpiring in a dream.
- **Dysregulation** – chronic problems with regulating feelings, thoughts, or behaviors in constructive ways.
- **Intrusive Thoughts/Feelings** – attempting to shut out/down the constant interference of trauma intrusions through compulsive or addictive behaviors.

Other common responses to sexual trauma include the **two polarities of hyper agitation or alternately numbness**. This pattern is discussed next through an explanation of how the **Window of Tolerance** regulates hyper and hypo trauma responses.

**The Window of Tolerance (WOT) is the biological, psychological, and behavioral space where we are alert, focused, and able to respond to challenges and threats from a place of optimum functioning.**<sup>10</sup> When people have been traumatized and then face new challenges, they tend to move quickly into one of two formats:

- hyper-arousal (anxious, angry); or
- hypo-arousal (spacey, numb).

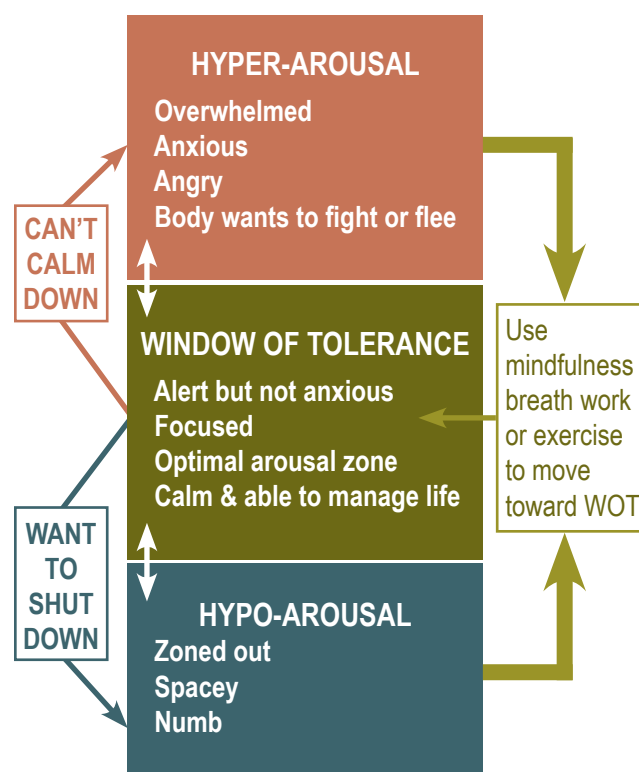


Figure 1.2: Window of Tolerance

**Hyper-arousal** includes increased heart rate, respiration, and blood pressure, accompanied with anxiety or anger and the sense that the victim/survivor cannot calm down.

**Hypo-arousal or shut down** may occur as a sense of paralysis takes over, rendering the individual numb and/or disconnected.<sup>11</sup>

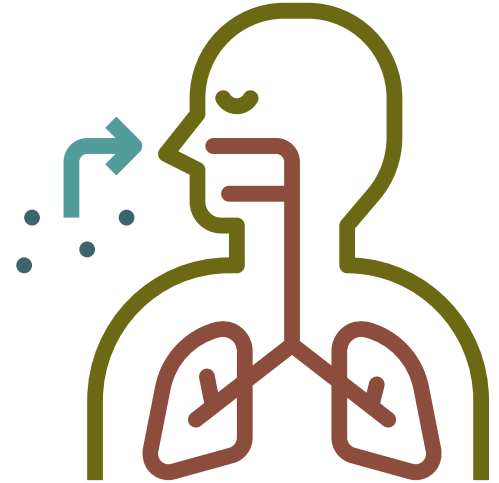
Some victims/survivors describe flip-flopping between these two extremes or having an intermixture of these bimodal feelings.

**The good news is that it is possible to push back against the effects of trauma by opening and/or extending the Window of Tolerance (WOT).** We do this so that

we are more able to respond to new threats with calm focus instead of reverting to primal fear or frozen disengagement.

Why do some experiences lead to Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) while others do not? Researchers suggest that the more circumstances feel threatening, overwhelming, or dangerous, the more likely we are to “be traumatized.”<sup>12</sup> But there is no simple formula; we are all unique, and the way our brains, bodies, and background experiences assimilate trauma is not exactly the same. **It is also helpful to note that although 90% of adults have undergone at least one traumatic experience, only 8-20% develop PTSD.**<sup>13</sup>

Exercises that help us get back in touch with both our bodies and our minds can aid in helping us to come up after numbness or down after agitation. **These practices help regulate the boundaries of the Window of Tolerance so that we gain an embodied sense of presence and also the ability to rest.**



## Exercise 3<sup>14</sup> A Three Minute Breathing Space

Research suggests that activities that promote mindfulness (becoming aware of the body, mind, self in the present moment) facilitate expansion of the Window of Tolerance. The purpose of this exercise is to help participants engage body and mind by becoming aware of their own body in supportive, respectful, and mindful ways.

### Instructions:

**AWARENESS:** Bring yourself into the present moment by deliberately adopting an upright and grounded posture. If possible, close your eyes. Then ask: What is my experience right now in thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations? Acknowledge and register your experience internally, identifying each sensation, even if it is unwanted.

**GATHERING:** Then, gently redirect full attention to your breathing. Focus on each in-breath and each out-breath as they follow, one after the other.

**EXPANDING:** Expand the field of your awareness around your breathing, so that it includes a sense of your body as a whole, your posture, and your facial expression.

**HOLDING:** Stay with your breathing and continue to sense your body as a whole for five to ten minutes. Practice being connected to and observant of your own body.



## Exercise 4<sup>15</sup>

### Embracing Positive Sensory Experiences

One of the (many) tragedies of sexual trauma is that it can rob victims of their capacity to fully trust and experience sensory stimuli. This exercise helps to address this issue by inviting participants to reengage and explore their sensory capabilities in safe ways.

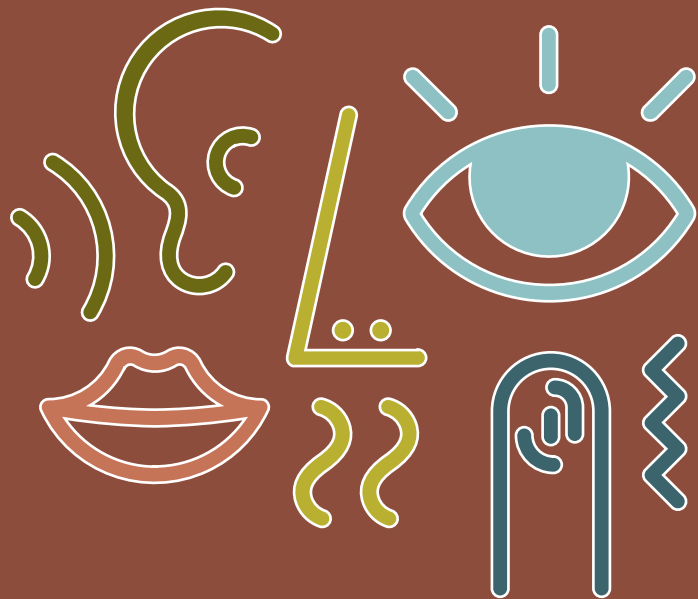
#### Preparation:

This activity requires that the facilitator bring one thing for participants to taste and another item for them to smell. (Facilitators should make these two items available to participants with the caveat that some participants may have sensitivities/allergies to strong perfumes.) The facilitator should then arrange for participants to circle up in small groups, having a taste and smell item available for each group.

#### Instructions:

Once in your circle, sit comfortably, close your eyes, and take a couple of deep breaths – in through your nose (to the count of three) and out through your nose (to the count of three). Use this breathing technique three more times. Now open your eyes and look around you. Then take turns around the circle naming out loud:

- 5 things you see (look around).
- 4 things you can feel (texture of your skin, the chair, something in front of you that you can touch).
- 3 things that you can hear (traffic noise, birds; when you are quiet and actually listening, you may find that many things in your environment are actually noisy but typically we don't hear these sounds without mindful attention to them).
- 2 things that you smell.
- 1 thing you can taste.



#### Exercise Debrief:

Take a deep breath; then pair and share. What worked for you? What did not? Have you used other exercises before to help you feel grounded and mindful of your sensations? Return to the larger group and share one thing you do to ground yourself, or an observation regarding how you experienced this or the previous exercise.

After the trauma experience, the human system of self-preservation seems to go into permanent alert, as if the danger might return at any moment.

- Judith Lewis Herman

## Section 2: Trauma and the Brain

A potentially lifesaving maneuver like gathering oneself and fighting with a bear, or choosing instead to run for safe shelter, requires many different circuits in the brain to be active. **In the brain, the stress response – the fight / flight / freeze / fawn response – is mediated by the amygdala and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis.**<sup>16</sup> Under normal working conditions the prefrontal cortex (PFC) plays many roles in shaping the expression of emotion, thought, and behavior, including aiding us in making and carrying out the plans that make up daily living.<sup>17</sup>

The PFC modulates emotion and behavior within appropriate limits and suppresses impulsive behavior. It also shapes our sense of insight into our own and others' behaviors, as well as our ability to form and retain multi-step

procedural memories. The PFC is therefore an essential tool for normal functioning and for rationally ordering our experience of the world around us.<sup>18</sup> **What happens, however, when our PFC gets stuck in trauma mode?** In his book *The Body Keeps the Score*, Dr. Bessel van der Kolk suggests that trauma can keep people stuck in a state of post-traumatic response, even after the traumatic event is chronologically long past.<sup>19</sup>

The amygdala has been called the smoke detector of the brain because it is exquisitely sensitive to danger and is also responsible for the formation of fear-related and emotion-laden memories.<sup>20</sup> When the amygdala senses danger it activates both the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) (which acts like a physiological gas pedal), and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis. **This leads to elevated heart rate and blood pressure through increased adrenalin and cortisol (stress-related hormone) production. These responses result in the circulation of sugars, fats, and protein to optimize the body's response to threat – to fight, flee, freeze, or fawn.**

We see these 4 typical threat responses active in many species on our planet. For example, the **fight instinct** is active in animals such as cats when they arch their backs and bristle their fur. Cats automatically do this when under threat in order to look bigger and more aggressive during combat. The **flee instinct** is evident in species of gazelles whose startle response immediately galvanizes their long legs into active protection through retreat. Opossums activate **freeze responses** when they “play dead” when under attack. Lastly, **fawn responses** are defined as ways of acting/appearing to be compliant in order to lessen degrees of potential harm or violence. When under duress, many animals do this by rolling over on their backs in order

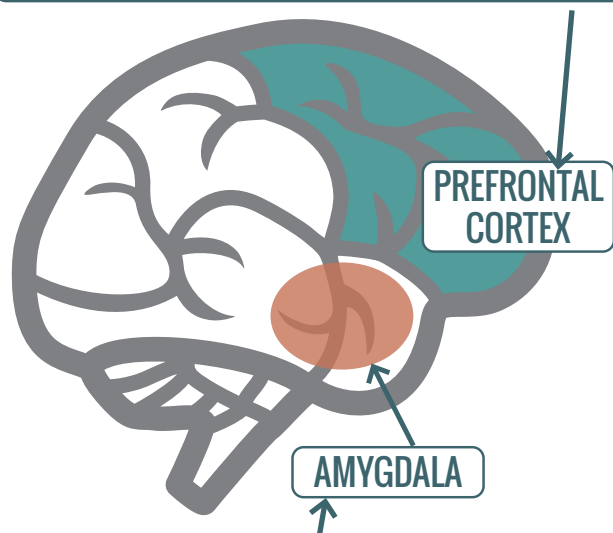


Figure 1.3: Fight, flight, freeze, fawn

to communicate a non-aggressive stance in response to threat.

In instances of sexual violence, victims frequently psychologically default to a fawning posture as a strategy of self-protection. **Particularly in instances of child sexual abuse where power differentials are large, victims' responses of compliance can be understood as defensive fawning strategies.**

Makes up the most anterior part of the cerebral cortex and exerts top-down regulation over thought, emotion, and behavior



Actually lies deep within the brain under the cortex. Its shape and general position is noted here rather than its actual position.

Figure 1.4: Brain Anatomy

In summary, victims'/survivors' experiences of sexual harm are deeply intertwined with the body-brain circuitry that gives rise to the fight / flight / freeze / fawn response.<sup>21</sup> When faced with significant threat, the first instinct is to seek safety. Adrenaline and cortisol production readies the body for this reaction. When the event is passed, adrenaline and cortisol levels fall and the body moves into a period of rest and recovery. **However, when a person is severely traumatized, emotional and behavioral responses that accompanied the initial traumatic event may be re-triggered, causing a resurging cascade of physiological effects within the body and brain.** After the threat has passed, other circumstances may again trigger the victim's/survivor's traumatic memories causing them to re-experience the harm through intrusive thoughts or flashbacks. For sexual trauma survivors, this can feel like they are perpetually in fight, flight, freeze, or fawn modes.

My past is an armor I cannot take off, no matter how many times you tell me the war is over.

- Jessica Katoff

### Section 3: Trauma and Behavior

Trauma interacts not only with a person's physiology but also with their emotions and behavior. **Trauma expert Dr. Bessel van der Kolk explains how victims'/survivors' actions can become an important platform where traumatic memories are processed.**<sup>22</sup> This processing can involve specific emotional states that drive accompanying cycles of "acting in."

#### Dynamics of "Acting In"

The circle in figure 1.5 represents the breadth of emotions and inner states that victims may continue to experience long after a traumatizing or threatening event has ended. The figure does not suggest that victims/survivors experience all these emotions at the same time. Rather, affected persons may feel aspects of what is described here, or they may move in and out of periods of "acting in."

Van der Kolk notes that following a traumatic experience "the fearful past becomes the present."<sup>23</sup> This can occur through cycles of behavioral reenactment. **Often the behaviors shaped by the traumatic experience can lead victims/survivors into cycles of "acting in" – by engaging in behaviors that mimic the messaging that was experienced during the traumatic event.** For example, to cope with numbness victims/survivors may harm themselves physically in order to feel pain. Or a sense of powerlessness might drive victims/survivors to allow others to control their lives because they feel unable to act on their own behalf. Conversely, drug or alcohol use can blunt the emotional impact of having flashbacks and feeling aroused and agitated.<sup>24</sup> These various forms of conduct are examples of post-trauma soothing and coping behaviors.

## Exercise 5 | “Acting In” – Behaviors

The aim of this activity is to help participants understand the links between trauma-induced emotions and the “acting in” behaviors that frequently accompany them.

### Instructions:

1. Facilitator asks participants to pair up with someone of their choice.
2. Partners choose three of the ten circles in the “Acting In” figure below.
3. For each chosen circle, partners **generate and record a list of accompanying behaviors** that could be associated with these emotional states.
4. Facilitator asks participants to report back to the group.
5. Then in plenary, the facilitator debriefs observations about the patterns that have surfaced.

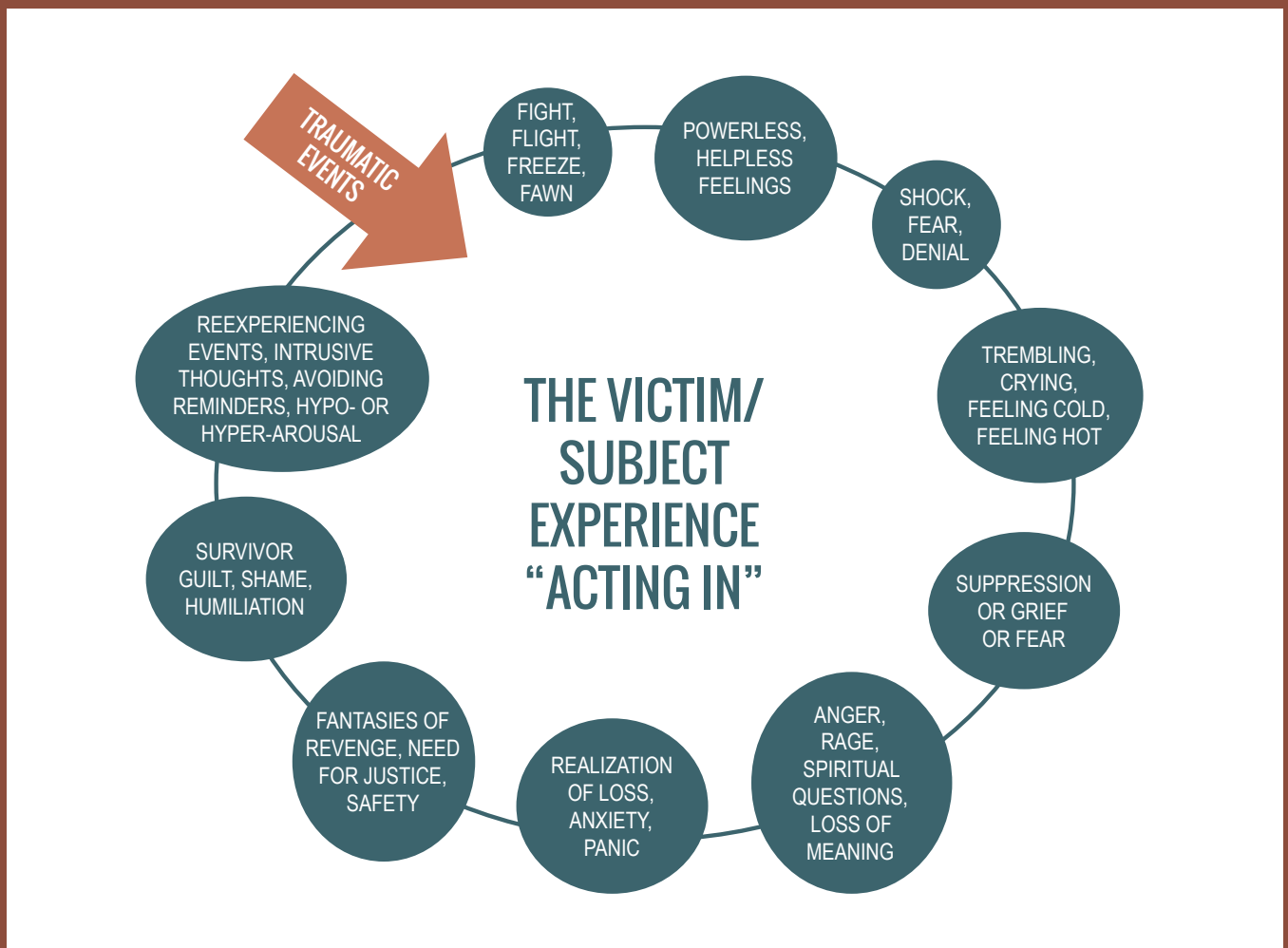


Figure 1.5: The Victim/Subject Experience “Acting In”; Adapted from Eastern Mennonite University (2018) [www.emu.edu/star](http://www.emu.edu/star)

Faith is not a belief. Faith is what is left when your beliefs have all been blown to hell.

- Ram Dass

## Section 4: Trauma and Beliefs

When people find themselves stuck in the victim/survivor experience without relief, they may also begin to externalize trauma in ways that can potentially harm others. As the well-known adage suggests, “hurt people, [often] hurt people.” This cycle of unresolved trauma is then transmitted to new people, some of which may have had

nothing to do with the original hurt that was experienced. The figure below provides information about the beliefs and mindsets that typically accompany externalized trauma.

### Dynamics of “Acting Out”

Examples of externalized trauma include: “all or nothing” thinking and over-simplified narratives of “good versus bad.” These beliefs can lead to highly negative emotions towards people (or institutions) who may in some way represent the harm-doer. For example, victims/survivors who were harmed by men may no longer feel safe being around males. When sexual harm has occurred at the hands of parents/older persons, victims may experience authority figures as threatening or unsafe. Like the “acting in” cycle, victims/survivors don’t necessarily experience all aspects of externalized trauma. Rather, many victims/survivors shift back and forth between these beliefs as they seek to process the harm that was done.

## Exercise 6 | “Acting Out” – Beliefs

The goal of this activity is for participants to understand cycles of harm, particularly how beliefs that originate in unresolved trauma often manifest in actions that continue the cycle of violence by transmitting harm to others. *(The facilitator may encourage participants to go online to glean examples of this cycle of harm from current news stories.)*

### Instructions:

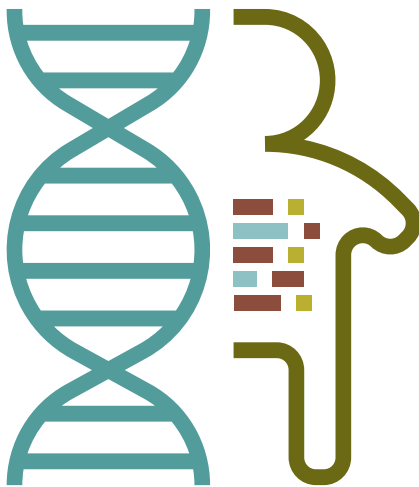
1. Facilitator asks participants to pair up with another partner of their choice.
2. Partners choose three of the seven circles in the “Acting Out” figure.
3. For each chosen circle, partners identify a current news story that exemplifies the belief/mindset associated with this particular circle.
4. Partners write down their news examples.
5. Facilitator asks participants to report back to the group and then debriefs observations and learnings.



Figure 1.6: “Acting Out”; Adapted from Eastern Mennonite University (2018) [www.emu.edu/star](http://www.emu.edu/star)

## Transgenerational Effects of Trauma

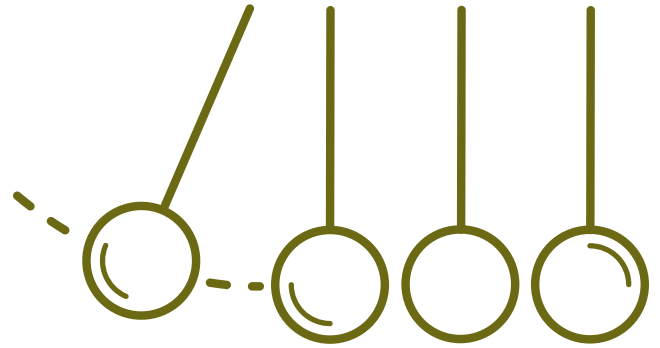
As we wrap up this chapter, we want to touch on yet one other way that trauma can become concretized in our bodies – through epigenetics. Epigenetics is a relatively new field of scientific research that explores gene expression: how, why, and when genetic material becomes either activated (switched on) or dormant (switched off) in our cells. **Its relevance to the field of trauma comes from findings that psychological states and experiences of trauma can cause chemical changes which can inadvertently affect gene expression.**



Human interaction with the environment occurs through feedback loops which involve positive or negative responses to external stimuli.<sup>25</sup> We know that what we perceive and experience produces immediate physiological responses, the type and duration of which can become a key part of our biological makeup. **In a similar vein, we are now learning more about how gene expression is influenced by the biochemistry of specific physiological states such as stress.**<sup>26</sup> This biological principle holds true across multiple arenas including the science of studies of extreme or protracted traumagenic stress.

**The assertion that high levels of stress in one generation might impact future generations' responsivity to stress, arose from studies of Holocaust survivors and their children.**<sup>27</sup> This research noted that many children of Holocaust survivors had significant psychiatric problems<sup>28</sup> such as worry, high levels of anxiety, nightmares, and hypervigilance.<sup>29</sup> Similar results have been reported in the offspring of Vietnam veterans,<sup>30</sup> as well as the survivors of

colonization, slavery, and displacement trauma specifically among the First Nation peoples of America,<sup>31</sup> African Americans,<sup>32</sup> and New Zealand's Maori groups.<sup>33</sup>



Additional research has demonstrated that many holocaust survivors as well as other adults with PTSD also exhibit changes in the functions of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA).<sup>34</sup> (Remember, the HPA axis along with the amygdala is necessary for the cortisol production which helps people to fight, flee, freeze, or fawn when threat occurs.) Other studies have demonstrated that even in the absence of their own traumatic experiences, the offspring of Holocaust survivors still exhibited<sup>35</sup> similar HPA axis changes.<sup>36</sup>

Such studies have led to questions about brain chemistry alteration mechanisms, namely what is changing within the brain that gives rise to shifts in the HPA axis. Studies are ongoing in regards to precisely identifying the biochemical alterations that precipitate heightened risk levels for the intergenerational transmission of the effects of trauma. **And while epigenetics is an emerging field (that we do not yet fully understand), there is unequivocal evidence that the embodied impacts of trauma are residual and can be intergenerational.**

Recovery unfolds in three stages...the establishment of safety...remembrance and mourning...[and] the third stage is reconnection with ordinary life.

- Judith Herman

## Chapter Summary

In this chapter we have walked a broad road. **We have journeyed from defining trauma and learning how the body and brain navigate threat to practicing exercises that help return victims/survivors to their bodies in constructive ways.** Breaking free of trauma's grip on body, brain, behavior, and beliefs is no small task. Beyond acting in and acting out is the challenging work of learning to stay present and connected with both body and mind. Staying stuck – in fight, flight, freeze, or fawn modes – won't guarantee the weary traveler a safe destination. Instead, the work of sustainable resilience requires expansions of the Window of Tolerance so that what happened then does not eclipse what is happening now.

**Mourning, grieving, naming one's fears, reflecting on root causes, advocating for justice, and finding other conversation partners that can help along the way are all key strategies for change.** It is also important for

people to play, relax, rest, and do all they can to care for themselves. As people constructively process their trauma, a new resilience can be revealed as they emerge with courage to not only face their own challenges, but also to walk with others on the same journey. Spiritual questions can lead one towards more rooted beliefs and a deeper experience of the divine. The mystery of processing harm is that in time it can grow new capacities that lead the way towards resilience. These are all part of the path of reclaiming life – body, emotions, relationships, and spirituality.

**In the next chapter we move to the second wave of the Sexual Harms Cascade Model where we zoom out to investigate macro-level structures that often go unnoticed and yet undergird much of the sexual violence that occurs in our world today.**

## Suggested Readings

1. Mansfield, K. (2017). [Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience Programme: Experiential Education Towards Resilience and Trauma Informed People and Practice](https://www.interventionjournal.com/sites/default/files/Strategies_for_Trauma_Awareness_and_Resilience.8.pdf). *Intervention*, 15(3), 264-277. Article found at: [https://www.interventionjournal.com/sites/default/files/Strategies\\_for\\_Trauma\\_Awareness\\_and\\_Resilience.8.pdf](https://www.interventionjournal.com/sites/default/files/Strategies_for_Trauma_Awareness_and_Resilience.8.pdf)
2. Graham, L. (2010). [The Neuroscience of Resilience](https://www.wisebrain.org/WBB4.6.pdf). *The Wise Brain Bulletin*, 4(6). Article found at: <https://www.wisebrain.org/WBB4.6.pdf>
3. Levine, P. (2014). [Nature's Lessons in Healing Trauma: An Introduction to Somatic Experiencing](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmJDkzDMllc). Video Link found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmJDkzDMllc>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Facilitators can choose an icebreaker activity of their choice as a way of introducing participants to each other. If participants have not already participated in the STAR-1 training, facilitators can use this Chaos Activity exercise.

### **Chaos Activity Description:**

This is an embodied, participatory exercise that requires memory and the (gentle) catching and throwing of items. There is no physical contact between individual players and the activity lasts for about 20 minutes, after which time, play is halted and the group verbally debriefs the activity.

### **Instructions:**

1. A whistle, and 4-5 soft throw-able objects are used to create throwing patterns amongst participants
2. While throwing, participants are asked to call out the name of the person who threw the ball to them, and the name of the person to whom they will throw the ball/soft object.
3. If desired, the facilitator can get multiple throwing groups going, increase their speed, and/or silently remove players from the field in order to increase levels of 'chaos' within the activity.

### **Chaos Activity Debrief Questions:**

1. What did you find yourself doing during this exercise?
2. What patterns did you see developing?
3. How might your responses to this exercise mirror what you might experience during trauma/crisis?

<sup>2</sup> The activity referred to here is the Dignity Tree exercise which is described in subsequent pages of this chapter.

<sup>3</sup> The Dignity Tree exercise was created by Carolyn Stauffer for a Sexual Harms course she taught at EMU's Summer Peace-building Institute in 2018.

<sup>4</sup> This definition sourced from: Merriam-Webster.com/dictionary

<sup>5</sup> Hicks, D. (2011). *Dignity: The essential role it plays in resolving conflict*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (pp.25-26).

<sup>6</sup> Bass, E. & Davis, L. (2008). *The courage to heal: A guide for women survivors of child sexual abuse*. The Courage to Heal Press, electronic edition. (pp.10).



- <sup>7</sup> Levine, P.A, Frederick, A. (1997). *Waking the tiger: Healing trauma*. Berkeley, CA.: North. Atlantic Books.
- <sup>8</sup> Ogden, P. (2015). *Sensorimotor Psychotherapy: Interventions for trauma and attachment*. New York, NY: Norton. (pp. 66).
- <sup>9</sup> Treleaven, D. (2018). *Trauma-sensitive mindfulness*. New York, NY: Norton. (pp. 128).
- <sup>10</sup> Sigel, D. (1999). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.
- <sup>11</sup> Ogden, P. (2015).
- <sup>12</sup> Ogden, P. (2015).
- <sup>13</sup> Treleaven, D. (2018).
- <sup>14</sup> This exercise sourced from this website: <http://www.stmichaelshospital.com/programs/mentalhealth/mast-materials.php>
- <sup>15</sup> This exercise sourced from this website: [First Aid Arts](http://www.firstaidarts.org/) <http://www.firstaidarts.org/>
- <sup>16</sup> van der Kolk, B.A. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind and body in the healing of trauma*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- <sup>17</sup> Graham, L. (2010), The neuroscience of resilience, *The Wise Brain Bulletin*, 4(6): 1-15.
- <sup>18</sup> Graham (2010).
- <sup>19</sup> van der Kolk (2014). (pp. 17).
- <sup>20</sup> van der Kolk, B.A. (2014).
- <sup>21</sup> Garcia, R. (2017). Neurobiology of fear and specific phobias, *Learning & Memory*, 24(9): 462–471.
- <sup>22</sup> van der Kolk, B.A. (2014). (pp. 173).
- <sup>23</sup> van der Kolk, B.A. (2014).
- <sup>24</sup> Bass, E. & Davis, L. (2008).
- <sup>25</sup> For more on positive and negative feedback loops in biology, see this helpful website: <https://www.albert.io/blog/positive-negative-feedback-loops-biology/>
- <sup>26</sup> The science behind premature cellular aging provides evidence-based verification for how stress impacts on changes at the cellular level.
- <sup>27</sup> Yehuda, R. & Lehrner, A. (2018). Intergenerational transmission of trauma effects. *World Psychiatry*, 17(3): 243-257.
- <sup>28</sup> Rakoff, V.A. (1966). A longterm effect of the concentration camp experience. *Viewpoints* 1, 17-22.
- <sup>29</sup> Yehuda, R. & Lehrner, A. (2018).
- <sup>30</sup> Ancharoff, M.R.M., Munroe, J., & Fisher, I. (1998). The legacy of combat trauma: clinical implications for intergenerational

- transmission. In: Danieli, Y. (editor), *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*. Boston: Springer, 1998: 257-76.
- <sup>31</sup> Gone, J.P. (2013). Redressing First Nations historical trauma: Theorizing mechanisms for indigenous culture as mental health treatment. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 50, 683-706.
- <sup>32</sup> Eyerman, R. (2001). *Cultural trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- <sup>33</sup> Raphael, B., Swan, P, & Martinek, N. (1998). Intergenerational aspects of trauma for Australian Aboriginal people. *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*. Boston MA: Springer. 327-339.
- <sup>34</sup> Yehuda, R., Kahana, B. (1995). Low urinary cortisol excretion in Holocaust survivors with posttraumatic stress disorder. *American J Psychiatry*, 152: 982-986.
- <sup>35</sup> Yehuda, R., Halligan, S.L., (2002). Cortisol levels in adult offspring of Holocaust survivors: relation to PTSD severity in the parent and the child. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 27:171-80.
- <sup>36</sup> Yehuda R, Teicher MH, & Seckl J.R. et al. Parental posttraumatic stress disorder as a vulnerability factor for low cortisol trait in offspring of holocaust survivors. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 2007(64): 1040-8

# CHAPTER 2

# DIGNITY



We have to talk about liberating minds as well as liberating society.

- Angela Davis

## Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter we concentrated on the first wave of the Sexual Harms Cascade Model exploring the biological and behavioral impacts of sexual trauma. We began there in order to keep harmed individuals and their experiences centered within our conversation. In this chapter our lens zooms outwards.

Chapter 2 investigates the model's second wave, addressing the macro-level causes of sexual violence. **We focus specifically on privilege, power, positionality, and patriarchy and how the intersection of these factors can produce environments conducive to sexual harm.** We probe the presence of structural violence and ask questions such as: How might dominant institutions or ideologies normalize sexual violence? Or what role might organizational cultures play in naming or silencing admissions of sexual harm?

The structural factors identified above highlight the power of social institutions in relation to sexual violence. **Institutions produce normative scripts around sexual violence that have a direct influence on its visibility, prevention, and outcomes.** Scrutinizing these environments is therefore key to understanding how structures create and reinforce sexual power dynamics. These dynamics have huge potential to either deconstruct or validate the dignity and power of all parties involved. In this chapter we specifically explore the intersection between sexual violence and structural power. We analyze these dynamics in the following four chapter sections:

1. Identifying Privilege
2. Understanding Power
3. Reflecting on Positionality
4. Naming Patriarchy

## Chapter Objectives

The overarching goal of this chapter is to give special attention to how communities can actively support the dignity and power of persons affected by sexual harm. We do so by prioritizing objectives that help participants:

- Develop proficiency in conducting a structural analysis of sexual harm environments.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how social location and historical harms shape sexual violence.
- Discover how the combination of privilege, power, position, and patriarchy contribute to abuse.
- Practice applying an intersectional justice framework to current sexual harm issues and contexts.



I tried to be quiet but my ancestors wouldn't let me.<sup>1</sup>

## Opening Exercise

### The Power of Collective Voices

Plastered on billboards, T-shirts and multiple blogs worldwide, the ancestral slogan on the left haunts humanity.

What is it about our connection to others, particularly those with whom we closely identify, that so thoroughly programs us?

In the following exercise we will explore some of the messages (life-giving, neutral, or destructive) that we have received from the collective voices around us.

#### Instructions

#### PREPARE

- Reflect on the questions to the right.
- Write your responses on a piece of paper.
- From your list of responses, choose several that you would be willing to share with others.

#### PAIR

- Self-organize in small groups of two or three persons.

#### SHARE

- Provide opportunity for each person in your small group to share their desired reflections.
- Ask for a volunteer to share anonymous highlights from your group back to the larger plenary.

#### Pair and Share Questions

# 1

What are several positive messages that your ancestors have left with you regarding healthy sexual interactions? Share by whom and how these messages were communicated to you.

# 2

What makes ancestors so influential? How have their collective voices shaped your perceptions of what does or doesn't constitute sexual harm?

# 3

What other collective voices have impacted your views on sexual violence?

## Chapter 2: Content Map



### CASCADE FEATURES

- Multiple Structural Contributors

### CHAPTER SEGMENTS

- Privilege
- Power
- Positionality
- Patriarchy

### KEY NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Power
- Dignity

### Cascade Features Explained

The second wave of the Cascade Model explains the power and volatility of waves. The forcefulness of waves is experienced as the cumulative impact of multiple elements at work simultaneously. This dynamic is described as the:

*Interaction of multiple system factors which precipitate structural turbulence and instability.*

As we investigate the role of institutions and social structures we quickly begin to understand the power of waves. Institutions exert authority and therefore their actions have exponential power. **When abuses of power are experienced personally** (through specific incidences of sexual violence) **as well as corporately** (through the negligence or complicity of social structures/institutions), **this combination can be profoundly destabilizing for the individual.** In the same way that the previous chapter illustrated the cascading effects of sexual harm on our biological bodies, this chapter illuminates how abuses of structural power profoundly violate our social selves.

If we don't center the voices of marginalized people, we're doing the wrong work.

- Tarana Burke

## Section 1: Identifying Privilege

### Definition

Privilege<sup>2</sup> is the possession of socially granted advantages which are unearned, and unequally distributed.

### How Privilege Works

A person who has privilege is the recipient of advantages which they have not earned. These assets benefit them while simultaneously disadvantaging others. **There is no such thing as passive privilege; the presence of any form of privilege actively profits some while potentially harming others.**

Institutions and other social structures allocate privilege by differentially dispensing access to legitimacy, power, information, and resources. Broader systems of oppression are the result of unjust power monopolies which profit some, while structurally marginalizing other communities.

**Privilege is often invisible to those who have it because it is normalized through the beliefs and biases of dominant groups.** Systems of structural oppression reproduce these unjust power relations through self-reinforcing practices, policies, and procedures.

Privilege also operates longitudinally across time creating legacies of harm. Colonization, slavery, genocide, systemic discrimination, and gender-based violence are examples of the long-reaching and intergenerational impacts of these types of harms.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. How might a position of **privilege** foster opportunity for sexual predation?
2. What **types/forms** of privilege have you seen at work in instances of sexual harm?

### Reading and Reflection: What Does Gender Privilege Look Like in Everyday Life?

Maisha Johnson, a digital media expert and online columnist, has compiled an interesting list of “160+ Examples of Male Privilege in All Areas of Life.” As you read through some of the “invisible perks” she notes in the U.S. context, begin to think about how these (unearned) benefits may universally position men and boys with special forms of privilege<sup>3</sup>.

Her list of the **advantages of being male** includes:

- There are more lawmakers of your gender determining the rules we all live by. For instance, women make up not even 20% of the U.S. congress.
- You're paid more for your work. On average, White women earn 78 cents to White men's dollar, with wages going down to 64 cents for Black women, 54 cents for Latina women, and 59 cents for Native American and Alaskan Native women.
- If you have a “man's” name on your resume, you're more likely to get an interview for a more prestigious job than if you have a “woman's” name.
- You have a lower risk of living in poverty. 1 in 7 women and 4 in 10 single-mother families are poor, with the poverty rate for Native American, Black, and Latina women at almost double the rate of White women.
- You're less vulnerable to gender norms trapping you in financial abuse – for women in relationships with abusive men, society's idea of men as breadwinners can make financial abuse go unnoticed and more difficult to recover from.
- As you're growing up, you have more positive role models of your gender to choose from in media, history books, fiction, and more.
- Your gender is more represented in higher paid positions. For instance, women are fewer than 5% of Fortune 500 CEO's.

- You can take jobs like service industry positions in restaurants or bars without worrying about normalized sexual harassment based on your gender.

In her article entitled *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack*, Peggy McIntosh describes privilege this way:

“I have come to see White privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious. **White privilege is like an invisible weightless backpack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.**”<sup>5</sup>

## Exercise 2<sup>6</sup> Unpacking the “Invisible Backpack”

The following exercise helps us explore the topic of privilege in more depth. The goals of the exercise are:

- To help us understand various forms of privilege.
- To prompt reflection on ourselves in relation to privilege.
- To discover the role of institutions/social structures in apportioning privilege.
- To illuminate the relationship between privilege and systems of oppression.
- To understand how sexual violence is often linked to systems of privilege.

### Instructions:

- Participants form a large circle, with a basket of pennies set in the circle’s center.
- The group facilitator explains that the facilitator will read statements aloud to the group.
- Each time the facilitator reads a statement,<sup>\*</sup> participants should step into an inner circle if that statement applies (is true) for them and take a penny out of the basket.

- After each prompt and penny retrieval, participants step back to the outer circle.
- After all the prompts are read, the activity concludes with participants counting up their pennies and with a group debrief discussion.

*\* Facilitator prompts<sup>7</sup> may vary depending on the demographics, identities, and contexts of group members. Facilitator statements may also include prompts that depend on the acquisition of previous pennies.*

### Group Debrief Questions:

- What were you feeling as you participated in this group exercise?
- Did the activity’s rules for penny acquisition seem fair to you?
- Whose group interests were being championed in a majority of the prompts?
- In your experience, which groups/institutions set the rules for penny gathering?
- Did acquiring certain pennies increase probabilities for getting other pennies?
- What system-wide dynamics did you see which favored some players over others?
- What if each penny represented an added measure of protection from sexual harm?
- What are your thoughts on how sexual harm vulnerabilities are distributed in society?

***Addendums:** Discussing privilege can at times feel uncomfortable. Feelings of guilt, anger, frustration, rage, or anxiety can accompany exercises that identify how privilege operates. Naming unacknowledged privilege is key to understanding its profound impacts, and to motivating the need for systemic equity and justice. Because of this, it is important to **extend compassion** to ourselves and other parties in the process of creating a more just world.*



Being oppressed means the absence of choices.

- bell hooks

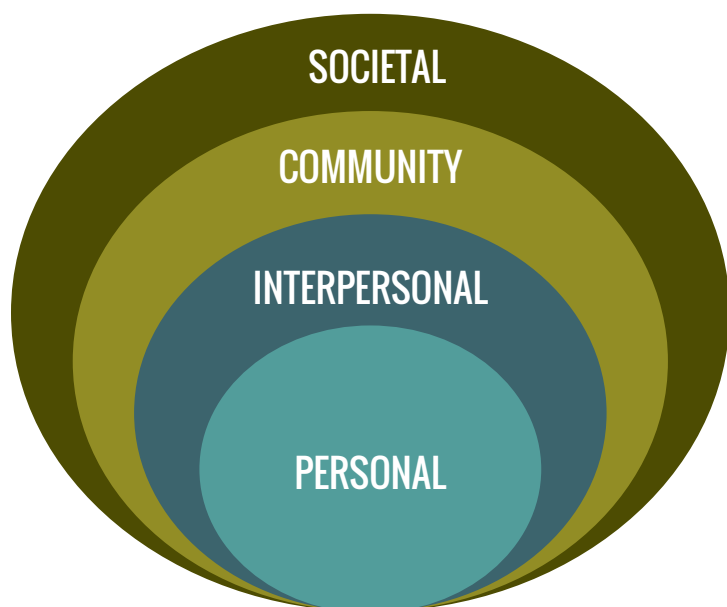
## Section 2: Understanding Power

### Definition

Structural (or institutional) power consists of the authority to exercise control over others by means of prescribing and/or enforcing the decisions, life chances, or choices available to them.

### Reflection Questions

1. Does having structural authority generally increase the array of life choices<sup>8</sup> a person has?
2. Does oppression result in some groups having less “life choices” than others?
3. How might having (or not having) power in each of the four areas below increase the likelihood of a person having control of their own sexual behavior?



## Exercise 3 The Power of Choices

### Instructions:<sup>9</sup>

#### In Advance:

The group facilitator creates a large mural of the four-level diagram presented on this page. The mural should be displayed flat on the floor and needs to be large enough to house groups of participants standing within each level of the diagram.

#### Group Guidelines:

Each participant is invited to think of one positive example of when someone they know of (this can be a public figure or event) exhibited power in regards to their own sexual behavior/choices in terms of one of the four levels noted in the diagram. The facilitator will ask participants to stand on the mural area that corresponds to the level they associate with their example. Participants are then invited to share their example with a group partner of their choice.

#### Group Debrief Questions:

Who had the most structural power/authority in your example? Why? What did the people in your story/example do in order to take their power back? How do social institutions or whole industries create norms that script our sexual behaviors?

**“It’s not just about supplication, it’s about power. It’s not just about asking, it’s about demanding. It’s not about convincing those who are currently in power, it’s about changing the very face of power.”**

- Kimberlé Crenshaw

## Digging Deeper

Let's take a closer look at how **sexualized power** operates in the various domains identified on the previous page's nested model.

### **Personal and Interpersonal**

Power over our own bodies, the capacity to willingly control our faculties, is one of the first and most important infant development milestones. Early on, children learn to differentiate their own bodies from those of others (primary caregivers) and to monitor and control their own body's functions. Learning these skills produces a sense of personal empowerment and healthy childhood autonomy.

**When sexual violence occurs, bodies are acted on (or represented) in ways that profoundly revoke a person's sense of control over their own body.** This results in a violation of personal dignity, shame, and a marked sense of loss of control. Many victims/survivors speak of feeling confused, lost, and disoriented when their bodies are acted on or used in harmful ways.

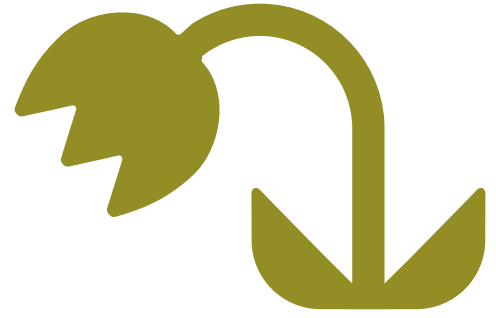
### **Community and Societal**

Sometimes it is difficult to think about the power and influence that social institutions have over sexual behavior because their influence is so generally accepted and pervasive in our lives. However, **this invisibility is precisely why understanding structural power (for good, harm, or for some of each) is so important.**

Communities, organizations, and whole societies have the capacity to build norms of respect and cultures of sexual accountability for all their members. Alternately, systems of oppression tend to entrench privilege and sexualized abuses of power. Educating ourselves about these power relations significantly informs how we view (and critique) sexualized power: **where** it is located, **how** it functions, **why** it operates the way it does, and **what** we can do to bring about constructive change.

#### **"Changing the Face of Power"**

Imagine ... picture yourself as the recipient of three wishes that if granted would eradicate the presence of sexual harm(s) on this planet. Take a moment to imagine a world without these forms of harm ... **what would your three wishes be?**



### **Read and Reflect**

Vanessa Jackson, a social justice therapist and mental health advocate, helps us understand how power operates in our lives. In her book *Understanding Power: A Human Services Imperative*, she and her colleagues suggest that traumas are experienced as profound forms of **"Power Wounding."**<sup>10</sup> This term highlights the significant role that power plays before, during and after traumatic events or circumstances.

Sexual violence in particular, operates as a form of "power wounding" because it involves the use of force, manipulation, or other forms of coercion. **Because sexual harm strips victims of their sense of self-sovereignty, this violation can result in victims no longer experiencing themselves as powerful.** Managing this type of psychic injury siphons off critical amounts of psychological energy. This in turn often robs victims/survivors of the capacity to create a constructive post-trauma futureview. If one is fighting fear, anxiety, and shame on an ongoing basis, it is really hard to give time and energy to reimagining one's self as having dignity and power. These dynamics explain how the fallout of sexual trauma extracts a monumental cost on the affected person's sense of their own agency.

A second way that sexual violence involves "power wounding" hinges on how it relates to systems of authority. **There are very few, if any, forms of sexual harm that do not involve sexualized abuses of power.** Systems of authority within families, communities, and institutions invariably leverage power over people. And precisely because these structures create definitions of normalized sexual behavior, they hold huge clout in shaping the environments and outcomes of sexual violence. As dominant social structures allocate privilege, their influence also determines which groups are, or aren't, shielded from environments predisposed to sexual harm.

### Pause and Process

In the space below, write a four-line poem (it doesn't need to rhyme!) that reflects your feelings regarding power wounding and/or other aspects of what you just read. The poem doesn't need to make sense. This exercise provides permission and opportunity for you to externalize the thoughts and feelings you are carrying inside right now. You will not be asked to share your poem, unless you desire to.

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It is very important to recognize that **WHAT** you see depends on **WHERE** you are standing.

- Letty M. Russell

### Section 3: Reflecting on Positionality

In real estate, the proverbial mantra is “location, location, location”; location is everything. Likewise, social location is equally significant in terms of our society architecture. **Social location, or where/how we are situated within the social structure, determines what we see, how we see it, and therefore what we are likely to do.** Our social position informs our experiences, perspectives, approaches, and many of the choices we make.

However, determinations of social location are not benign. **A person's social location is often dependent on identity, and identities are associated with hierarchies**

**of status, privilege, and power.** Identities related to race, class, age, dis/abilities, gender identity, religion, culture, incarceration status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, employment status, language, or nationality/citizenship are but a few of the many categories that frame who we are. It is also important to recognize that power differentials exist between identities, and that social structures (and organizations) tend to institutionalize the hazards (or benefits) of particular identities.

The relevance of social location to the field of sexual harms is immense. For example, social location shapes disclosure choices, the availability and quality of support services, as well as how sexual misconduct is handled. We will begin by scrutinizing the last item on our list and work backwards: handling cases of sexual misconduct. “Sexual misconduct” is a sanitized way of referring to sexual harm/violence (ranging from harassment to assault) that has been engaged in within professional or other work/employment contexts. **Being that work environments are generally bastions of hierarchy, the power dynamics embedded within these contexts cannot be underemphasized.**

**When evaluating the range and impacts of sexual harms engaged in within work environments, it is important to note that there is no such thing as an objective evaluation of sexual misconduct.** All of us are biased by the preconceptions, prejudices, and partialities that undergird our various identities. While measures can be taken to name or reduce unconscious bias, recognition must be given to the fact that social locations are not devoid of ethical/justice considerations. In order for us to understand this in more depth, next we will observe how social location *influences each of us* in regards to various controversial cases that made U.S. national headlines.



## Exercise 4 Social Location and Sexual Violence

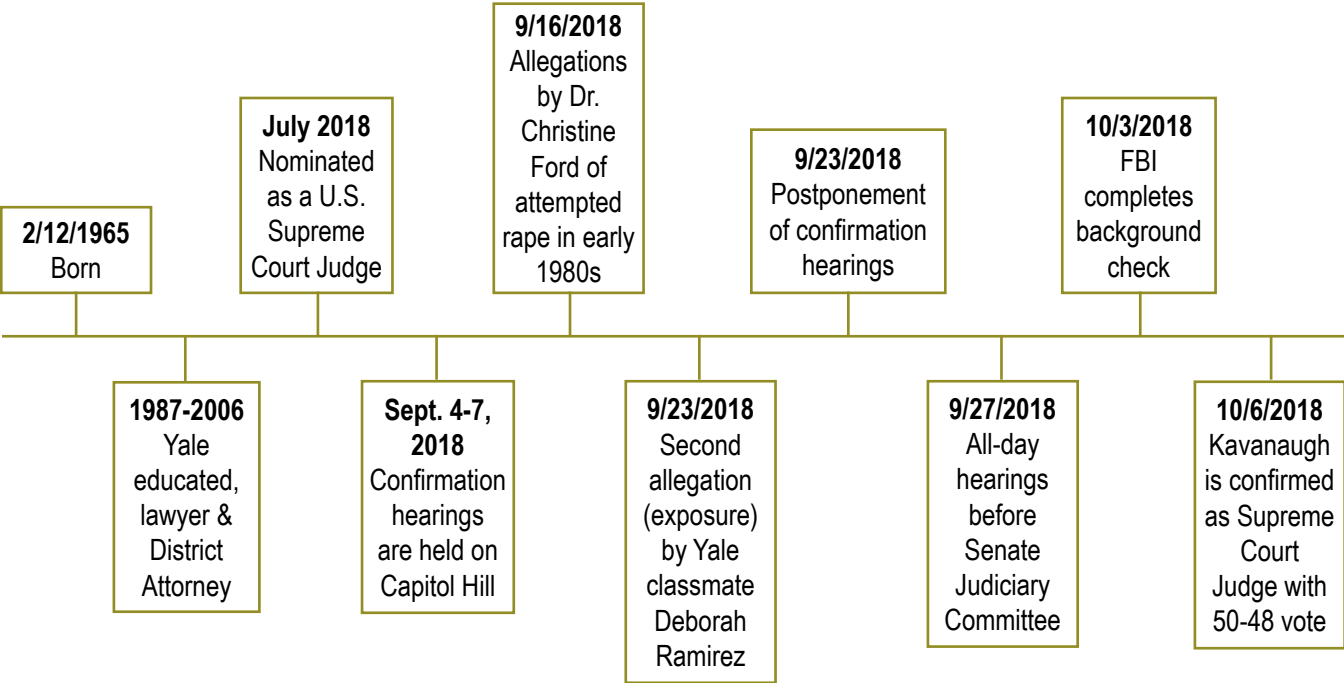
In the following activity, you will be asked to read several summarized versions of the “facts” related to high profile sexual violence cases within the North American context. After reviewing the following cases, choose one and complete out the grid<sup>11</sup> below.

1. Be prepared to articulate how you would evaluate the cases and what the outcome (guilty/not guilty?) should be.
2. Rank four characteristics from the list below that you believe were most influential in your perceptions regarding the case. (1=most important; 4=least important)
3. Provide written comments on the right explaining how you believe your identity influenced your thoughts and feelings about what transpired in the case.

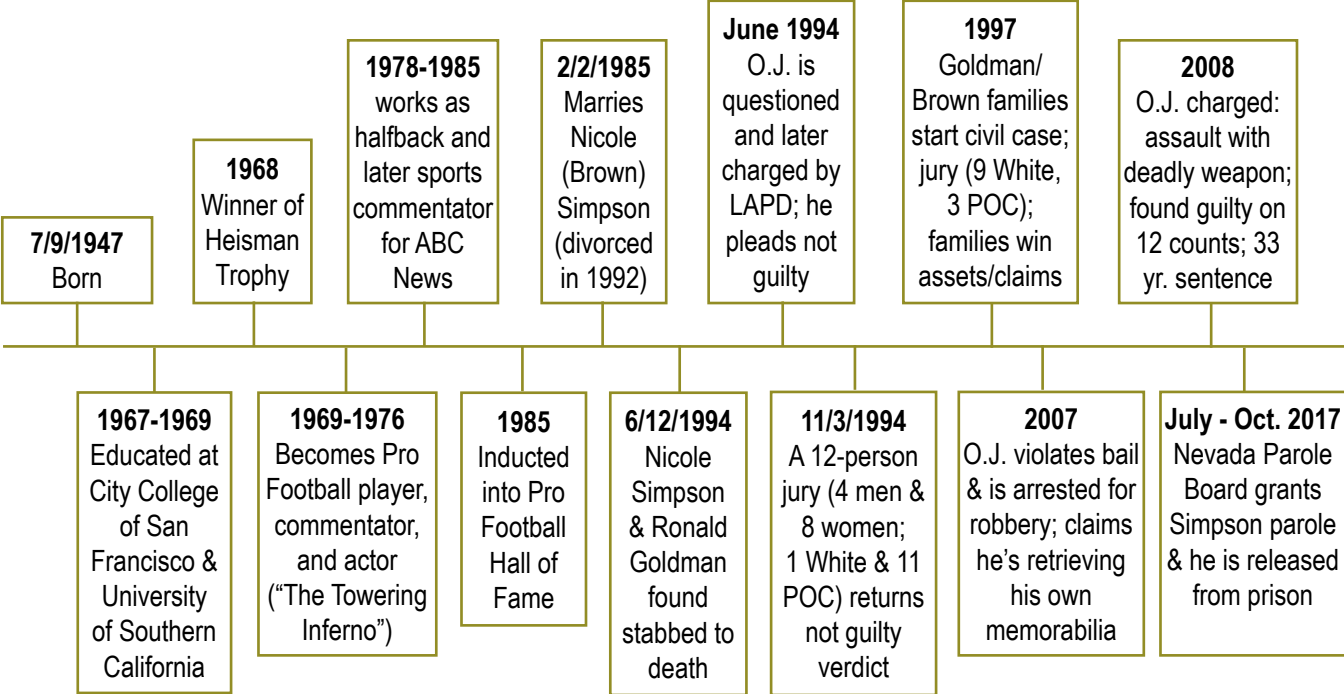
WHERE DO YOU STAND?	RANKING	HOW DOES THIS INFLUENCE YOUR REACTIONS?
Race		
Age		
Dis/ability		
Religion		
Employment Status		
Gender Identity		
Language		
Culture		
Incarceration History		
Marriage/Relationship Status		
Ethnicity		
Nationality/Citizenship		
Sexual Orientation		
Economic Class		
Employment Status		
Education Level		
SV Survivor Status		

# On Trial: Identity and Legal Outcomes

**CASE 1 - BRETT KAVANAUGH<sup>12</sup>** Caucasian American male; now married, two children | Lawyer and district attorney and now Supreme Court Justice

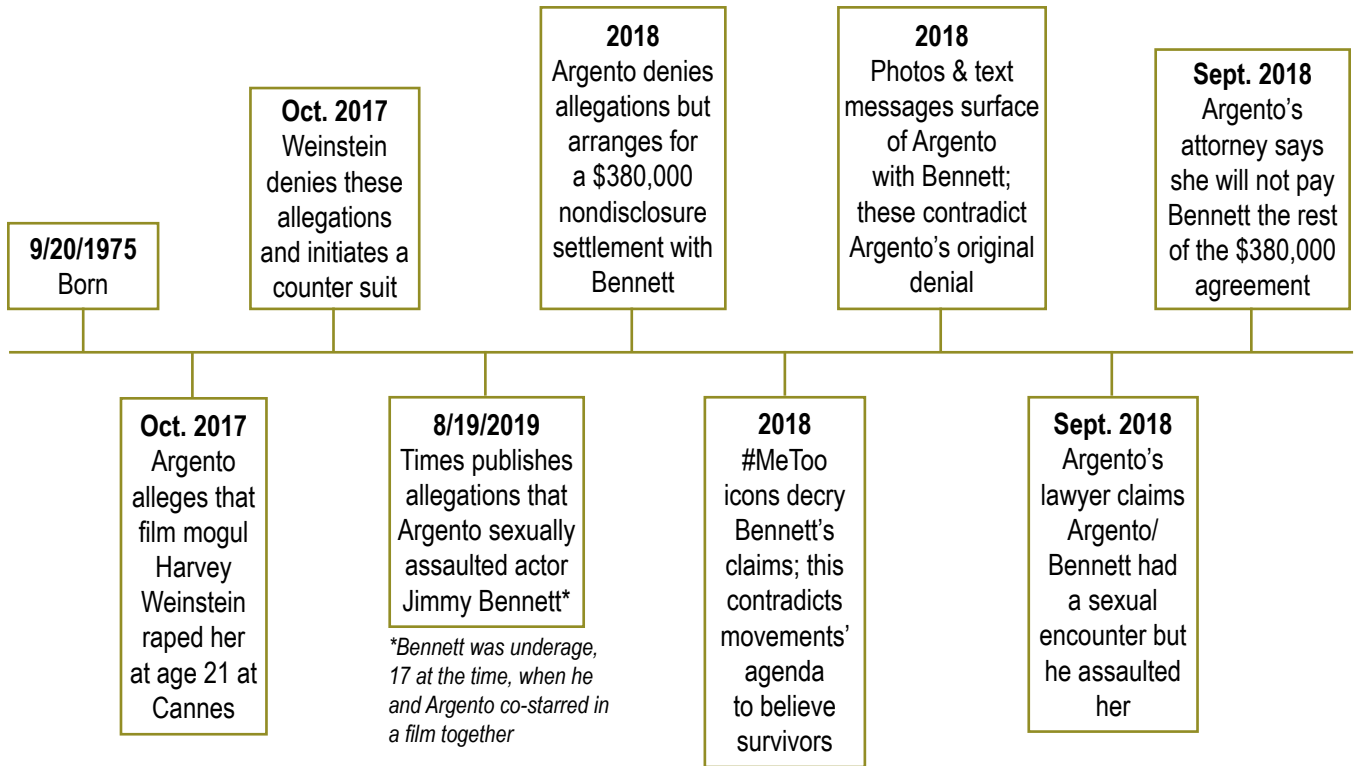


**CASE 2 - O.J. SIMPSON<sup>13</sup>** African American male; twice married, five children | Former pro football player, commentator, and actor



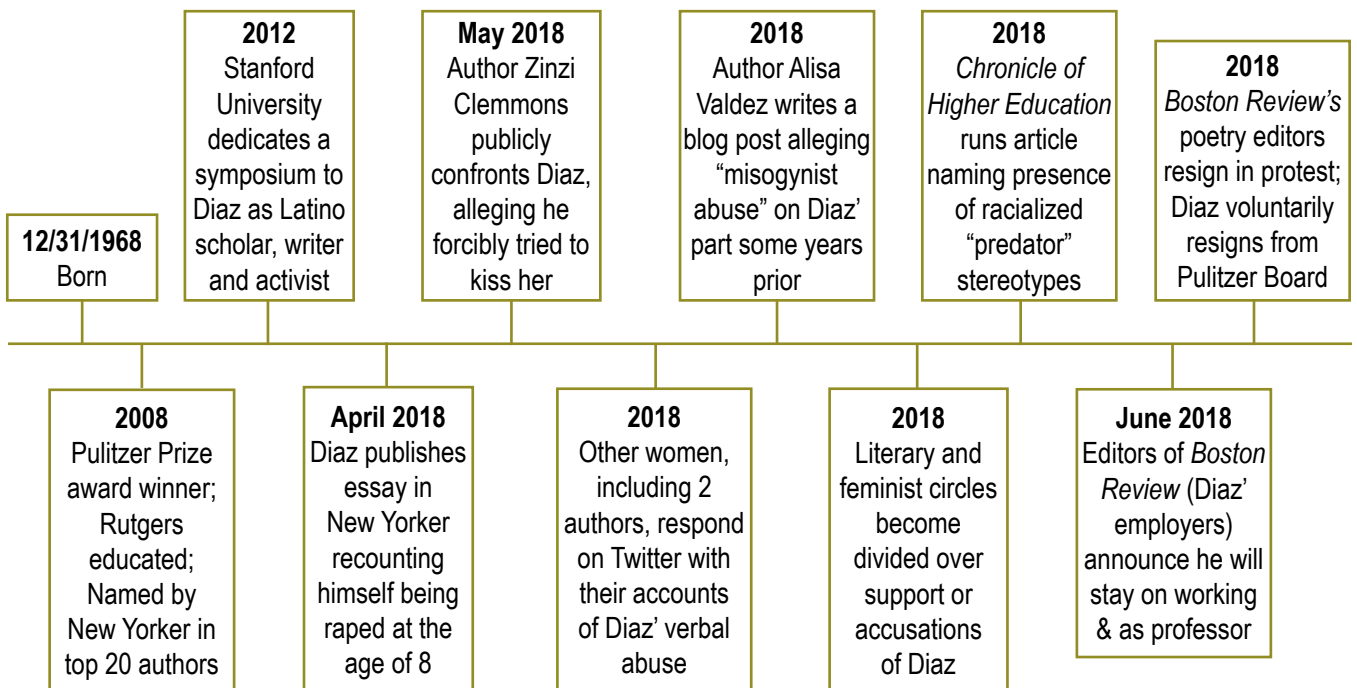
**CASE 3 - ASIA ARGENTO<sup>14</sup>**

Italian female; twice married, two children | Actress, film director, well-known feminist, and #MeToo activist



**CASE 4 - JUNOT DIAZ<sup>15</sup>**

Dominican American male | World renown author and scholar on Latino experiences in North America



There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

- Audre Lorde

In the previous exercise we saw some of the ways that social location shapes perceptions of sexual misconduct. This illustrates how influential identity is in molding our unconscious responses to cases of sexual harm. Next, we will investigate **intersectionality** and how it negatively impacts marginalized individuals and groups.

The term “intersectionality” was coined by civil rights activist and legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. **Through this term, Crenshaw sought to highlight the cumulative impacts of being assigned multiple marginalized identities, and how the interaction between these statuses form larger and interlocking systems of oppression.** This is particularly relevant to the North American Women’s Movement, which has historically focused on the needs of middle class White women while ignoring the intersectionalities experienced by Women of Color.

The idea of intersectionality also has relevance to many marginalized groups and contexts around the globe. For example, a Black South African maid during Apartheid would have had her race, class, and gender identities held against her. The combination of these various marginalized statuses would have blocked her from naming sexual violence perpetrated by a White male employer. In comparison, South African women from European descent would have had more socio-political clout to name sexual violence in work contexts.

Crenshaw, in addition to a cadre of other women of color before her, names the toxicities induced by the interaction between multiple identities at the margins. In the following section we will explore this more fully, focusing on how intersectionality impacts survivors’ **disclosure decisions**.

## Application

Dr. Jennifer Gómez, a clinical psychologist and professor at Wayne State University, has done extensive work on a phenomenon she calls **Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory**<sup>16</sup> or CBTT. In her research Gómez explains CBTT this way:

### CULTURAL BETRAYAL TRAUMA THEORY

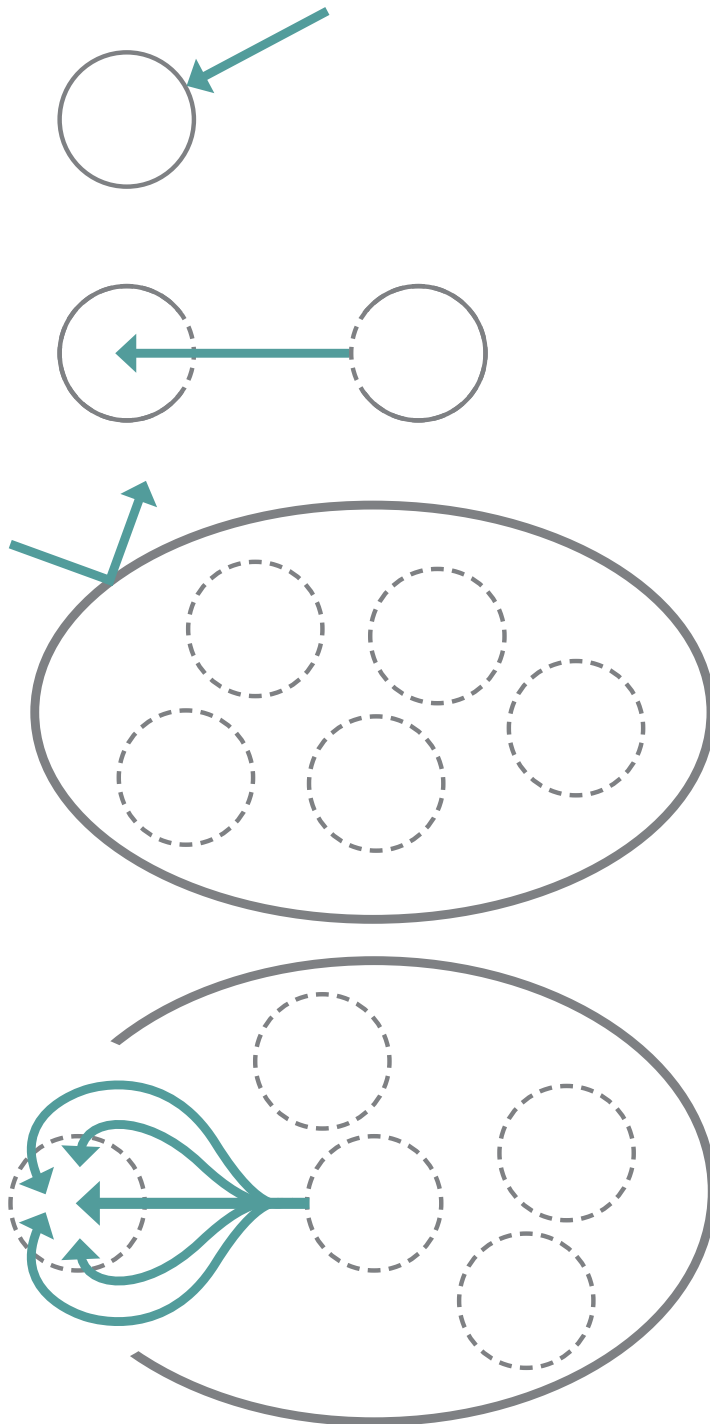
“... membership in a cultural minority (such as ethnic minority status or queer identification) may worsen the psychological symptoms associated with trauma (such as self-blame, PTSD) if the perpetrator and victim are of the same cultural [identity] minority.

... Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory states that the psychological effects of a trauma, such as shame, may be exacerbated by a cultural betrayal, reducing the likelihood of disclosure. In order for a betrayal to occur, there needs to be a violation of trust. Cultural minorities who experience discrimination and oppression may react to their lowered societal status by fostering trust in each other. Therefore, when a trauma, such as rape, occurs between two members of a cultural minority, a cultural betrayal has occurred as well.”<sup>17</sup>

In cultural betrayal trauma theory, I propose that societal trauma (e.g., discrimination) creates the context for interpersonal trauma within minority groups to be uniquely harmful.

- Dr. Jennifer Gómez

## Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory



**Traditional Model of Trauma:**

Traditional models of trauma expect that individuals have defenses (represented by circle) to trauma.

**A** Arrow = all forms of trauma

**Betrayal Trauma Theory:**

Betrayal trauma theory<sup>1</sup> contextualizes trauma in interpersonal relationships with trust and/or dependency, which creates unique vulnerability (perforated defenses) to traumatic betrayal.

**B** Arrow = betrayal trauma

**(Intra)Cultural Trust:**

Cultural betrayal trauma theory<sup>2</sup> contextualizes betrayal trauma within larger sociocultural dynamics. Cultural minorities pool defense resources (represented by ellipse) to buffer against societal trauma.

**C** Arrow = societal trauma

**Cultural Betrayal Trauma:**

A member of a cultural minority has uniquely vulnerable defenses to betrayal of (intra)cultural trust. When a victim is violated by a perceived in-group perpetrator, the victim's (intra)cultural trust is also betrayed.

**D** Arrow = cultural betrayal trauma

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1. Freyd, 1996; 2. Gómez, 2012

Cultural betrayal trauma theory incorporates various aspects of the sociocultural context, such as societal trauma (e.g., discrimination) and (intra)cultural trust. Consequently, interpersonal trauma within minority groups -- termed *cultural betrayal trauma* -- may be linked with diverse outcomes, including PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and internalized prejudice.

Source: <http://jmgomez.org/cultural-betrayal-trauma-theory/><sup>8</sup>



## Exercise 5

### Why I Kept Silent

**\*\* Content Forecast \*\***

#### Instructions:

In small break-out groups discuss the case studies listed below. Have each group construct a list of **two ways intersectionality and/or CBTT may be at work in each of the cases** below, shaping the disclosure decisions of victims/survivors.

#### Case Study # 1

Avery is 26 years old and an engineering graduate from Princeton. Avery identifies as transgender and is part of the university's QAN - queer alumni network. As a high caliber athlete, Avery participated in numerous sports activities while a student. Two years ago, at a home sports game, Avery was sexually assaulted by the team captain in the locker room. Avery did not report the assault to the coach for fear of being "outed," panic over reputational stigma among teammates, and concern over losing the coach's backing for placement in the team's first-string of players.

#### Case Study # 2

Amal, meaning "hope," is a 12-year-old Iraqi girl living with her family in Paris. Amal comes from a devout Muslim household and wears a hijab whenever going out in public. On the way home from school, Amal daily stops at the corner grocery store to fetch fresh produce for her family's evening meal. On numerous occasions the proprietor of the store has harassed Amal with sexually suggestive comments. Then last week, when no other customers were in the shop, the proprietor cornered Amal in the back and shoved his hands up her Abaya (dress/robe). When Amal resisted, the proprietor shouted at her and threatened that if she told anyone he would go to authorities and get her family deported. Amal has since then remained silent about these incidents, telling no one.

#### Case Study # 3

Naomi is a 52-year-old mother of seven, who comes from an Amish farm family that has lived for four generations in Ohio. When Naomi was pregnant with her fourth child, she noticed that during community fellowship meals the Bishop would spend a lot of time with her first-born son, Amos, age six. The Bishop seemed quite partial to Amos, having him sit on his lap frequently and seeking him out to give him special treats. When Amos started complaining of stomach-aches each time a fellowship meal was to take place, Naomi started being suspicious. When she asked Amos about it, he disclosed abuse by the Bishop. Naomi knew that if she confronted the Bishop, there was a high chance her family could be shunned (excommunicated); if she went to the police, she would be demonized by her community for betraying its senior leader.

**Where did you see intersectionality and/or CBTT active in these vignettes?**

Patriarchy is like the elephant in the room that we don't talk about, but how could it not affect the planet radically when it's the superstructure of human society?

- Ani DiFranco

## Section 4: Naming Patriarchy

### Opening the Archives

Earlier in this manual we noted that trauma can have longitudinal and intergenerational effects, if left unresolved. Next, we will investigate what longitudinal legacies look like in terms of patriarchy, a form of systemic advantage based on gender. **Scrutinizing patriarchy is key to unraveling how cultures of sexual violence (those targeting women) have been created, justified, and transmitted across time and space.**

In their collaborative work, David Anderson Hooker and Amy Potter Czajkowski introduce the concept of **“Historical Harms.”** They define this concept as **“the modern day negative impacts of historical trauma that have been transmitted across generations through legacy and aftermath.”**<sup>19</sup> According to Hooker and Czajkowski, historical harms include traumagenic events, policies, and practices that are aimed at specific groups within society because of some distinguishing feature (such as race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, etc.).<sup>20</sup> Racism is another example of the many forms that historical harms can take – whether in the historic context of slavery and colonialism or in its more recent manifestations of police brutality, the school-to-prison-pipeline, and racially selective immigration policies.

**In many ways, patriarchy<sup>21</sup> can be viewed as a historical harm because of the way that it has contributed to women's lower levels of education, representation in**

**government, property ownership, and salaries, as well as disproportional rates of female poverty.** These forms of disempowerment have also profoundly shaped mores of sexual behavior towards women and scripted responses to sexual minorities more generally. Toxic masculinities have extracted phenomenal costs from humanity, unleashing waves of sexual and gender-based violence in multiple arenas and locations.

In this next chapter segment, we explore the excesses of patriarchy, and how its legacies have enabled and normalized sexual violence around the globe. We do this by highlighting the political, economic, social, and representational structures undergirding patriarchy. **Whether in the battlefield, boardroom, or bedroom, toxic masculinities have undoubtedly taken their toll.**

### Illustration 1: The Battlefield

In her seminal work on women and war, Cynthia Cockburn insightfully probes the “en-gendering” of armed conflict. Cockburn analyzes **“four critical moments”**<sup>22</sup> within the cycle of armed conflict and unpacks how each of these stages becomes the breeding ground for sexual violence against women. Through Cockburn's analysis, we begin to recognize the frequently invisible vulnerability of female bodies during war.

#### 1 Pre-conflict – Unwaged Labor Vulnerabilities

Many conflicts are induced by dynamics of economic scarcity and deprivation. These dynamics make females disproportionately exposed to pre-conflict economic hardships because of women's entrenchments in systems of unprotected and unwaged labor.

#### 2 Open-conflict – Conflict Honor Equated with Men's Sexual Supremacy

War rapes are not only the product of the breakdown of law and order. They are also a result of women being commodified as men's assets. If females are violated/ rendered unusable as sexual/reproductive resources, conquering men have successfully stripped warring parties of a vastly significant (and symbolic) resource base.

### 3 Post-conflict – Subsidizing the Labor Costs of a Non-Provisioning State

In the aftermath of war, large swaths of a locale's public provisioning structure are compromised. National support structures related to health, education, and other social safety nets are often decimated. Since women regularly carry responsibility for vulnerable dependents (offspring, elderly, the sick), their burden of care expands inordinately.

### 4 Reconstruction - Transactional Sex as a Survival Strategy for Women

The sexual vulnerabilities of internally displaced people and refugees writ large are immense. This is especially true for women/girls, who in the aftermath of war may face threats of dispossession and/or the menace of new male "occupiers." Under such circumstances of transience and duress, women may turn to transactional sex as their only viable livelihood strategy.<sup>23</sup>

### Illustration 2: The Boardroom

Boardrooms are typically seats of power where important decisions are made. They are also locations with limited attendance and selective voting rights. In most locations around the world, it was only in the twentieth century that women obtained the political right to vote. **Women's political rights remain contested, and certainly women are still working to get commensurate representation in government (and other corridors of boardroom power) around the world.** These are unfortunately not singularly historical harms but forms of gender-based violence that are still very relevant today.<sup>25</sup> Differentials between women's voting suffrage span nearly a hundred years from Finland and Norway (suffrage in 1906 and 1913) to the Emirates and Saudi Arabia (2006 and 2011).

**Perhaps more importantly, within-country differentials highlight profound disparities between the voting rights of Indigenous women and other female nationals.** Australia, the second country globally to approve suffrage in 1903, granted suffrage to Aboriginal women only in 1962. Likewise, Canadian women, with the exception of Canadian Indian women, won the vote in 1917 while Native women were granted the vote only in 1960. South African White women won equal voting rights in 1930, but Black citizens were only enfranchised in 1994 with the advent of the Government of National Unity (GNU).<sup>26</sup>

At the root of the above scenarios lies one common theme: **the role of identity.** Whereas the enfranchisements of political rights and economic parity are ongoing projects, identity is also a prominent (and no less important) part of disparity. "Ethnostress,"<sup>27</sup> a term coined by Canada's Tribal Sovereignty Associates in 1992, describes the identity disruptions experienced by Native communities due to the erasure of their culture, livelihoods, and self-governance. In a similar vein, psychologist and Indigenous trauma therapist Dr. Eduardo Duran speaks of the primal "soul wound"<sup>28</sup> experienced by native communities in the aftermath of genocide.

## Exercise 6 Bodies and Battlefields

### Instructions:

Participants are invited to prepare a two-minute response (to be discussed in small groups) that addresses these question prompts:

1. How/when have you seen ONE of the above four dynamics present/active in a contemporary context that is familiar to you?
2. How might you explain male-on-male sexual violence in instances of war? How might a singular focus on the vulnerability<sup>24</sup> of female bodies impact perceptions of women more generally; how might this focus affect men who have suffered sexual violence during war?

Forms of dignity violation are also signature pieces of the types of sexual harms often experienced by members of the LGBTQ+ community and other sexual minority groups. Next, we turn our attention to these communities and the ways that identity threats can compound experiences of sexual violence. The sexual violence hazards experienced by persons who identify as LGBTQ+ have historically not gotten airtime. **Identity politics related to hetero-normativity have also resulted in profound gaps in sexual violence services for LGBTQ+ community members.**

## Exercise 7 Invisibility - Gaps and Omissions

### Instructions:

Participants are invited to break into groups of three to four persons.<sup>29</sup> Each group is to serve as a **research engine**, gathering data online regarding the following:

1. What services are available for SV victims/survivors who identify as LGBTQ+ in your community?
2. How do the quantity and quality of these services compare to services provided for non-LGBTQ+ identified groups?
3. What might be unique challenges to accessing services for sexual minority communities?
4. How are local schools as well as safety, social, health, and emergency services responding to this challenge?
5. What could/should ensuring the safety of LGBTQ+ community members look like?

### Illustration 3: The Bedroom

In addition to political and economic influence, the #MeToo movement has highlighted the need for power in the social domain. **In terms of sexual violence, this includes the right to name and be safe from abuse, assault, and/or harassment in the home or other private spaces.**

#MeToo has raised the bar by demanding institutional accountability for complicity or neglect in these social realms. This includes but is not limited to denouncing the public's tendency to dismiss relationship violence or the assault of a colleague as a somehow private matter. **Whole industries (for example sports, entertainment, higher education, government, music, and film) have been called to account for their roles in buttressing denials and silencing disclosures.** From the casting couch to the assault/rape of spouses, partners, or subordinates, attention is being drawn to the pervasiveness of sexual violence in these private (and yet ironically very public) spheres.

This interrogation of the social domain has also included calls to acknowledge the role of whole industries in the production and distribution of images that sexually objectify bodies. **The pornography, advertising, and media industries have long been in denial about their contributions to merging violence with sex in the public imaginary.** These depictions, which are transmitted globally with immunity, speak to yet another (related) issue surfacing in the current social landscape: the role and power of representation.

**As a Caribbean-born cultural theorist, activist, and scholar, Dr. Stuart Hall already in 1997 spoke of media representation<sup>30</sup> as the twenty-first century's engine powerhouse.** He suggested that the way that issues, stories, and images are represented to the public has everything to do with what responses they get. According to Hall, representation was the new locus of power.

**In the sexual violence field, representations also hold particular significance.** These include if/how victims/survivors are portrayed, what depictions are given of the violence that occurred, how the person that caused the harm is characterized, and what role the surrounding community is/isn't assumed to have.

## Exercise 8

### The Power of Naming and Framing

#### Instructions:

Participants are invited to read the next case and then count off, forming four teams:

- Team 1 is tasked with analyzing how the victim/survivor is portrayed.
- Team 2 with how the violence/harm is portrayed.
- Team 3 with how the harm-doer is portrayed.
- Team 4 with how the role of the surrounding community is portrayed.

After reading and discussing the story below, each team is tasked with creating a “body sculpture”<sup>31</sup> (using multiple members of their team) to describe/depict how their character/issue is represented in the article.

Teams are also invited to convey how their issue/character could have been re-cast otherwise.

**Lessons in Harassment 101:** Case *Lipphardt v. Durango Steakhouse of Brandon, Inc.*, 267 F.3d 1183 (11th Cir. 2001)<sup>32</sup>

In a case ideally suited to teach how not to handle a sexual harassment situation, a restaurant employer managed to do just about everything as wrongly as it could be done, and in so doing showed how important common sense is in the area of employee relations. A restaurant’s manager and a subordinate employee, a female server, carried on a consensual relationship for a while, but then the subordinate broke off the relationship. Thereafter, the manager refused to work with her, but still sought encounters with her: brushing up against the server on several occasions in a sexual way, threatening to hurt her and her child, and on the final occasion confronting her in the office and propositioning her. They argued for about fifteen minutes, after which the server was able to leave, however, when she later went to her car, he followed her out and prevented her from closing her car door, while begging her to reconsider the breakup. On the following day, the manager asked the server whether she would report his behavior, which she did, telling the general manager, a second manager, and a regional manager. She even requested a transfer.

Here’s where the plot thickened: the female employee went on vacation, whereupon the general manager told the manager that the general manager’s supervisor was considering firing both the manager and the server. (“No, no,” you whisper, “not the server - fire the manager!” Alas, they cannot hear you...) At the trial (of course, there was a trial - remember, this article is about managers who did not do the right thing), the harasser testified that the general manager asked him whether he could tell him anything that would justify getting rid of the server, since the employer would rather not fire him, but instead wanted to “get rid of the b----.” (“No, no,” you shout, “it’s not too late - this is a no-brainer - fire the manager!” Sadly, they still cannot hear you...) The harasser then obligingly told the general manager about the server

giving away food for free in order to get free tans at a salon. (Aahhh, yes, the last refuge of a desperate manager – dig just deeply enough to find something, anything, to use against an employee and then lower the boom – there’s no chance anyone would view that as a trumped-up charge, right?)

The general manager recommended that the regional manager terminate the server based upon that report, even though neither of those two higher managers had bothered to confirm the manager’s report about the food giveaways. Unfortunately for the employer, the evidence at the trial showed that the employee giving away free food was someone else and that the manager, desperate to save his own position, had not actually witnessed the server doing such a thing. In other words, he based his report on secondhand, hearsay statements from others.

The female server won her lawsuit, charging the employer with illegally retaliating against her for filing a complaint about sexual harassment. As the court observed, just because the server and the manager had had a consensual relationship in the past, their prior history did not give the manager a “free pass” to harass the server at work later. In addition, the court held that the jury could properly conclude, as it did, that the harassment crossed the border between personal animosity, which is not illegal, and sexual harassment, which **is** illegal.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter’s macro-level lens explains how sexual harm is often a product of privilege, power, position, and patriarchy. The cumulative and cascading effects of these four factors intersecting together create a formidable and self-reinforcing environment conducive to sexual violence.

### PRIVILEGE + POWER + POSITION + PATRIARCHY = Opportunity, Status, Authority and Impunity to Commit Sexual Harm

An awareness of how these four factors work in concert, is key to understanding their collective power.

The above-mentioned power dynamics are the reason why offering persons affected by sexual harm choices in their own survival and healing journey is so critical. Institutions that monopolize power and rescind dignity through their response protocols, reinforce feelings of disruption, alienation, and disconnection. **Prevention and advocacy protocols that build and reinforce power and dignity are therefore key to both personal and collective post-traumatic growth as well as to the creation of accountable communities.**

## Suggested Readings

1. Sehgal, P. (2016, May 3). [The Forced Heroism of the Survivor](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/the-forced-heroism-of-the-survivor.html). The New York Times Magazine. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/the-forced-heroism-of-the-survivor.html>
2. Jackson, V. (2014, November 26). [From Trauma to Power Wounding](http://www.breathingforgiveness.net/2013/11/anti-slavery-campaign-interview-series.html). Anti-Slavery Campaign Interview Series. Retrieved from <http://www.breathingforgiveness.net/2013/11/anti-slavery-campaign-interview-series.html>
3. National Organization of Women. (n.d.) [The Disability Community and Sexual Violence](https://now.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Disabled-Women-Sexual-Violence-4.pdf). Retrieved from <https://now.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Disabled-Women-Sexual-Violence-4.pdf>
4. Crenshaw, K. (n.d.) [Kimberlé Crenshaw at Ted + Animation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRci2V8PxW4) [YouTube file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRci2V8PxW4>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Woppaburra Official Social Media Publications (2018, October 13). [Facebook Post]. Retrieved from <https://fr-fr.facebook.com/pg/Woppaburra/posts/>
- <sup>2</sup> Critical Race Theory (CRT) directly addresses the issue of privilege. CRT builds on the work of theorist/activists such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, Mari Matsuda, Patricia Williams and Richard Delgado. It provides a foundation for understanding how race-based privilege (as well as other forms of privilege) operate within society. Illustrating the depth and reach of race-based structural violence are contemporary works such as Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Counter arguments coming from the Functionalist school of thought would suggest that hierarchy is an inevitable characteristic of all social structures and that divisions of labor are organized around merit-based allocations. While both perspectives have been championed by a spectrum of voices, it is important to note that the criteria which designate merit are usually defined by dominant/oppressor groups.
- <sup>3</sup> A rebuttal to the traditional feminist argument of "male privilege" would be: all identity categories have benefits as well as hazards attached to them. So, for example, men face hazards too - particularly those related to customary gender binaries. Traditionally men have been expected to be assertive, competitive, and primary providers; these pressures put men under undue stress and are hazardous for them. While there is no doubt some truth in this rebuttal argument, the history of male privilege points to the collusion of multiple domains of male dominance, namely: in politics, law, economics, government, education, etc. In all of these domains of power, women have historically been marginalized.
- <sup>4</sup> Johnson, M. (2016, February 25). [160+ Examples of Male Privilege in All Areas of Life](https://everydayfeminism.com/2016/02/160-examples-of-male-privilege/). *Everyday Feminism Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://everydayfeminism.com/2016/02/160-examples-of-male-privilege/>  
The list included here is an excerpt from the above source.
- <sup>5</sup> McIntosh, P. (1988). ["White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences](#)

[through Work in Women's Studies](https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf)". Working Paper 189 - Independent School (1990, Winter Issue). Retrieved from <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent recent book on the topic of privilege, see Robin Diangelo's (2018) *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*.

<sup>7</sup> *Instructors are encouraged to begin with generic prompts before launching into more nuanced prompts based on the demographics and identities of group members. These more general initial prompts could include questions such as "come to the middle of the circle, IF...":*

- *You like ice-cream.*
- *You are born between Jan and March.*
- *You had a pet when growing up.*
- *You are a middle child.*
- *Your middle name has more letters than your first name.*

*As the group warms up to these more general types of questions, the prompts should slowly begin to become increasingly exclusionary. For example, "join the inside circle IF..."*

- *Your parent(s)/guardian(s) had a college degree.*
- *Growing up, your household owned more than one vehicle (at one point in time).*
- *One of your parent(s)/guardian(s) was a stay-at-home primary caregiver.*
- *Your family did not rent but rather owned a house.*
- *Growing up, the books you read mostly had pictures of people of the same race as you.*

*Facilitators can slowly add in prompts that build on previous questions (ex: "come to the middle of the circle IF the home your family owned had a room for each child in it"). As your questions become more complex, glean prompt ideas from the Peggy McIntosh article referred to on the previous page. Additionally, create your own prompts that are specific to the makeup of the group, and which highlight any privilege disparities that may be present.*

<sup>8</sup> Theorist Max Weber originally coined the term "life chances" (lebenschancen) in order to calibrate the opportunities that each individual did/didn't have to improve their quality of life. This concept explained the impact of socioeconomic status on a person's social and economic mobility across the lifespan. While neo-Weberians have been eager to capitalize on the life chances concept, some caution is important here on two fronts. First, life chances/opportunities are not singularly based on economic status but are also highly influenced by the intersectionality of other identities we inhabit as well. (For example, religious affiliation, citizenship status, gender-identity, and/or sexual orientation can be equally influential markers of opportunity or lack thereof.) Second, in more collectivist societies the number and breadth of an individual's choices is not always the point; group goals are often perceived to trump individual advancements.

<sup>9</sup> *Course facilitators may find it helpful to preempt this exercise with some illustrations for each of the four levels highlighted in the nested model. For example: (1) Personal level – a sexually active young person decides to buck the cultural norms around them and chooses to use condoms to protect themselves from HIV infection; (2) Interpersonal level – your university roommate decides to report a sexual assault that happened to him on campus; (3) Community level – you decided to lead/facilitate an educational event that informs your religious group about the dangers of sexual abuse by clergy; (4) Societal level – your father was a part of the Women's March in Washington DC for the past three consecutive years.*

<sup>10</sup> Jackson, V., Romney, P., & Pinderhughes, E. (Eds.). (2017). *Understanding Power: A Human Services Imperative*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

<sup>11</sup> Office of International Programs. (2016). [Exercise on Positionality, Situated Knowledge, Standpoint, and Social Location](http://sckool.org/office-of-international-programs.html?page=13). Retrieved from <http://sckool.org/office-of-international-programs.html?page=13>  
This exercise is loosely adapted from the above resource.

<sup>12</sup> [Brett Kavanaugh Fast Facts](https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/16/us/) (2018, October 26). CNN Library. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/16/us/>



brett-kavanaugh-fast-facts/index.html

- <sup>13</sup> [O.J. Simpson Fast Facts](https://www.cnn.com/2013/04/12/us/o-j-simpson-fast-facts/index.html) (2018, June 30). CNN Library. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2013/04/12/us/o-j-simpson-fast-facts/index.html>
- <sup>14</sup> [Asia Argento](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_Argento). (n.d.). Retrieved June 7, 2019, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia\\_Argento](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_Argento)
- <sup>15</sup> [Junot Diaz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junot_D%C3%ADaz). (n.d.). Retrieved June 7, 2019, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junot\\_D%C3%ADaz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junot_D%C3%ADaz)
- <sup>16</sup> Gómez, J. M. (2019). [What's the Harm? Internalized Prejudice and Cultural Betrayal Trauma in Ethnic Minorities](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000367). *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 89(2), 237-247. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000367>
- <sup>17</sup> Gómez, J. M. (2012). [Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory](https://sites.google.com/site/betrayalbook/betrayal-research-news/cultural-betrayal). Retrieved from <https://sites.google.com/site/betrayalbook/betrayal-research-news/cultural-betrayal>
- <sup>18</sup> Gómez, J. M. (2016). [Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory](http://jmgomez.org/cultural-betrayal-trauma-theory/). Retrieved from <http://jmgomez.org/cultural-betrayal-trauma-theory/>
- <sup>19</sup> Hooker, D. & Czajkowski, A. (2012). *Transforming Historical Harms. Coming to the Table*, Harrisonburg, VA: Eastern Mennonite University, pp.15-16.
- <sup>20</sup> Hooker, D. & Czajkowski, A. (2012). *Transforming Historical Harms. Coming to the Table*, Harrisonburg, VA: Eastern Mennonite University, pp.15.
- <sup>21</sup> It is important to note that not all forms of patriarchy are innately abusive. Many households organize themselves around gendered divisions of labor that relegate leadership to one or the other genders, by choice of all parties involved. In such instances, patriarchy can be viewed as benign and instrumental. The point here is whether all parties have the authority to negotiate the power relations that they desire within their household. It is under circumstances when individuals are stripped of these powers of equity and equal representation that environments are ripe for sexual violence.
- <sup>22</sup> Cockburn, C. (2001). *The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. In C.O. Moser & F.C. Clark (Eds.). *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors?* pp.13-29. London: Zed Books.
- <sup>23</sup> Cockburn, C. (2001). *The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. In C.O. Moser & F.C. Clark (Eds.). *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors?* pp.13-29. London: Zed Books.  
The four stages discussed here constitute a loosely adapted synthesis of Cockburn's ideas. See her complete chapter for a more in-depth and nuanced rendition.
- <sup>24</sup> While it is important to note the vulnerability of a marginalized or targeted group, some would argue that this type of deficit framing further compounds disempowerment. In light of this, some scholars/practitioners prefer to focus on the agency that people exhibit amidst circumstances of structural violence. This is not to deny the destructive effects of marginalization, but rather to work from a strengths-based approach that highlights resistance and resilience even amidst circumstances of contingency.
- <sup>25</sup> For an example of how sexual harms manifest in cross cutting ways see this article: [Experts Ranked the Most Dangerous Countries for Women: The U.S. Made the Top 10](http://fortune.com/2018/06/27/thomson-reuters-us-top-ten-most-dangerous-countries-for-women/) <http://fortune.com/2018/06/27/thomson-reuters-us-top-ten-most-dangerous-countries-for-women/>
- <sup>26</sup> Anderson, B. (2016, January 13). [Gender Income Gap Still Severe in Global Economy](http://atlaslens.com/index.php/2016/01/13/women-still-greatly-oppressed-in-global-economy/). Atlas Lens. Retrieved from <http://atlaslens.com/index.php/2016/01/13/women-still-greatly-oppressed-in-global-economy/>

- <sup>27</sup> Tribal Sovereignty Associates. (1992, August). [Ethnostress: The Disruption of the Aboriginal Spirit](http://www.oninjuryresources.ca/downloads/SLS/2007/SLS-2007F-Ethnostress-handout.pdf) [Online Paper]. Retrieved from <http://www.oninjuryresources.ca/downloads/SLS/2007/SLS-2007F-Ethnostress-handout.pdf>
- <sup>28</sup> Duran, E. (2006). *Healing the Soul Wound: Counseling with American Indians and Other Native Peoples*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press Columbia University.
- <sup>29</sup> Course instructors are encouraged to provide each group with a sheet of flip-chart paper and some markers so that groups can draw, summarize, and/or record their findings.
- <sup>30</sup> Hall, S. (1997). [Representation and the Media](https://www.mediaed.org/transcripts/Stuart-Hall-Representation-and-the-Media-Transcript.pdf). [Media Education Foundation Transcript]. Retrieved from <https://www.mediaed.org/transcripts/Stuart-Hall-Representation-and-the-Media-Transcript.pdf>
- <sup>31</sup> *Facilitator note: Body Sculpting exercises involve using multiple members of a group to together form a physical representation of a concept. Participants are then encouraged to “freeze” in their chosen/created form, and to explain what they are representing, why they chose this particular formation, and how it communicates their concept(s). Facilitators should confirm whether all participants are comfortable with physical contact; groups members who are not comfortable with contact can be encouraged to be their group’s spokesperson/s or interpreters.*
- <sup>32</sup> [Case Studies in Sexual Harassment](https://twc.texas.gov/news/eftc/case_studies_in_sexual_harassment.html). (n.d.) Texas Workforce Commission. [E-book]. Retrieved from [https://twc.texas.gov/news/eftc/case\\_studies\\_in\\_sexual\\_harassment.html](https://twc.texas.gov/news/eftc/case_studies_in_sexual_harassment.html)

# CHAPTER 3

# ATTACHMENT



The need for connection and community is primal, as fundamental as the need for air, water, and food.

- Dean Ornish

## Chapter Overview

The last chapter discussed the second wave of the Sexual Harms Cascade Model, focusing on the structural factors that foster an environment prevalent with sexual violence. Building on what we have learned about the experiences of individuals who have been harmed and the larger forces that cause sexual violence, this chapter will draw inward as we examine interpersonal components of this topic.

This chapter studies the third wave of the model, discussing the interdependencies amplified by sexual harm. **We will narrow in on relationships, risks, resilience and renewal, and responsibility, following a path from our earliest attachments to ruptured connections.** We will explore questions such as: What role do relationships play in our response to incidents of sexual harm? What are the personal costs of exposure to these experiences and how can we grow beyond the experience itself? And whose responsibility is it to repair harms that have been sustained?

The topics above speak to the power of connection within our lives, and the damage that is incurred when those connections are broken. **We will investigate connection as it relates to our primary relationships, to ourselves and the greater world, and to others when harm has occurred.** We explore these factors in the following four chapter sections:

1. Relationships
2. Risks
3. Resilience and Renewal
4. Responsibility

## Chapter Objectives

The primary goal of this chapter is to understand the interplay of interpersonal dynamics that shift during and following experiences of sexual harm. Additionally, we will delve into the psychological and physiological toll that exposure to these incidents can take on individuals. By the conclusion of this chapter, participants will:

- Gain a fuller understanding of the importance of relational attachments as well as the impact of relational ruptures.
- Understand the cumulative effects of trauma exposure for both victims/survivors as well as those working within the field of sexual harm.
- Acquire a working knowledge of self-care strategies and practices for post-traumatic growth.
- Become familiar with restorative justice processes as they relate to the unique experience of sexual harm.

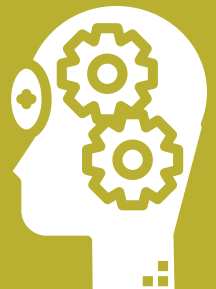
## Opening Exercise

### Exercise Supplies:

Colored pencils, markers, paper, pipe cleaners, sculpting clay or play dough

Take a moment to reflect on what connection means to you and then:

1. Think of a symbol, image, or story that resonates with your concept of connection.
2. Draw or create the symbol/image/story using the art materials on your tables **OR** journal about the symbol/ image/story.
3. Share as much as you are comfortable with your neighbor.



## Chapter 3: Content Map



### CASCADE FEATURES

- Amplifying Interdependencies

### CHAPTER SEGMENTS

- Relationships
- Risks
- Resilience & Renewal
- Responsibility

### KEY NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Attachment
- Community

### Cascade Features Explained

The third wave of the Cascade Model examines the interplay of individual waves against the backdrop of the larger ocean. Each wave is unique – from the way it is formed, its journey toward shore, and its cycle back into the collective waters. **This concept is reflective of ubuntu, a Southern African philosophy that speaks of our universal connection to others or “I am because we are.”** We cannot separate the issue of sexual harm from relationships and human connections, as this type of wound occurs at the hands of another human.

Following our learning of the effects of structural power abuses in the previous chapter, **this chapter will discuss how connection is built; the cumulative effects of broken connection; and how we can take steps to rebuild connection to ourselves, others, and the world around us.** The chapter will conclude by looking at how restorative justice approaches to sexual harm may have the potential to provide ways of repairing relationships, finding closure, and revealing alternatives to the criminal justice process.

A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick.

- Brené Brown

## Section 1: Relationships

### Attachment Theory

**Attachment theory says “our attachment bonds are our greatest protection against threat” and “traumatized human beings recover in the context of relationships.”<sup>1</sup>**

First coined by John Bowlby, attachment theory is based on the idea that a physical and emotional connection to another individual (often a parent) in early development allows us to form a secure base. This security affords us the freedom to take risks and grow as we age and mature, and builds a foundation for all other relationships moving forward.<sup>2</sup>

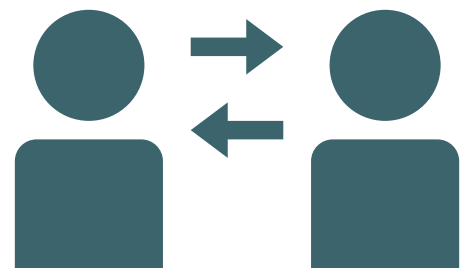
**Attachment is a necessary developmental undertaking for all humans, which can be disrupted in unique ways by traumatic events such as sexual harm.**

The bonds formed during infancy and early childhood can be highly predictive of future well-being throughout the remainder of a lifespan. **Attachment theory suggests that the early connections or attachment styles made at birth will shape the way we interact in all future relationships.** Children with a secure attachment are more apt to explore the world around them, trusting they have a safe environment and caregiver(s) to return to.<sup>3</sup> Sexual harm that occurs at a young age can rupture developed attachments or the ability to form attachments, especially in cases of interfamilial abuse. Additionally, survivors of child sexual abuse may be at a higher risk of developing insecure or dysregulated attachments with their own children.<sup>4</sup>

The attachment relationship can affect the development of the right brain, which is responsible for processing social cues and regulation of stress and emotions. Furthermore, incidences of abuse at an early age directly affect the ability to process events bodily and to interpret social information.<sup>5</sup> **It is believed that attachment and trauma have a symbiotic relationship in that traumatic experiences have the ability to influence the quality of connection, and a child's attachment style can also affect the way they cope with trauma.** Insecure attachments can create dynamics that may predispose individuals to experiencing sexual harm, particularly when other protective factors are not in place.<sup>6</sup>

### Attachment Styles

Building on Bowlby's attachment theory, we will look at the four styles of attachment – secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful – as further explored and defined by Bartholomew and Horowitz.<sup>7</sup> Figure 3.1 describes the unique characteristics of each style, as well as behavior changes that may occur in each following a disruption of attachment or an incident of sexual harm.



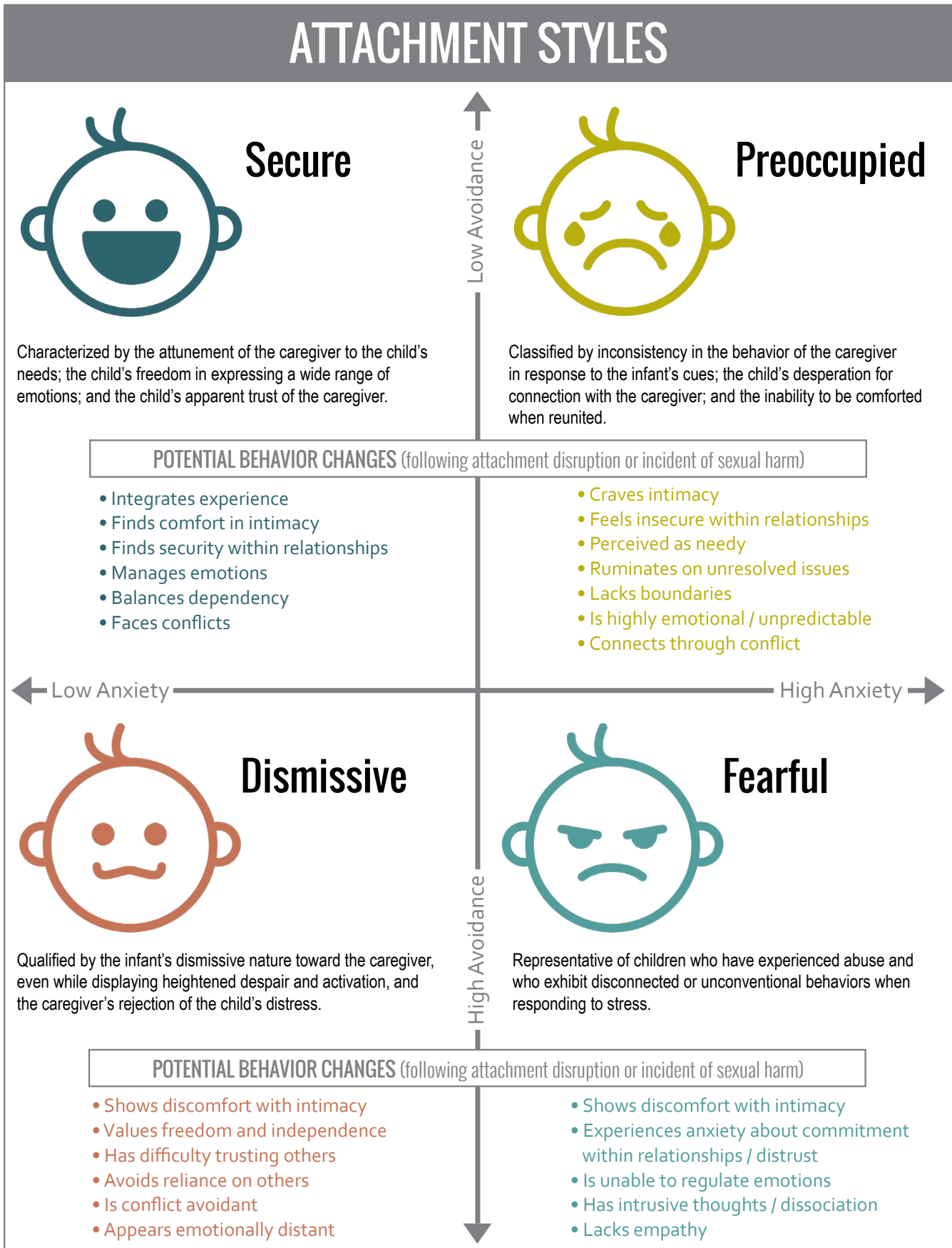


Figure 3.1: Attachment Styles, based on the work of Ainsworth & Bell (1970)<sup>8</sup>

### ***Why does sexual harm disrupt attachment?***

A fundamental part of human nature is to form attachments with others. Forging these connections not only opens us up to experiencing joy, pleasure, and contentment, but also to encountering pain, heartbreak, and disappointment. Because the vast majority of sexual harm is caused by someone well known to the victim/survivor, the relationship between the two is irrevocably impaired when harm occurs at the hands of another human being. The harm may be experienced physically, emotionally, spiritually, and cognitively. **The intimate nature of it has the potential to rattle us to our core, impeding our faith in humanity and shaking the foundational beliefs that shape our worldview.**

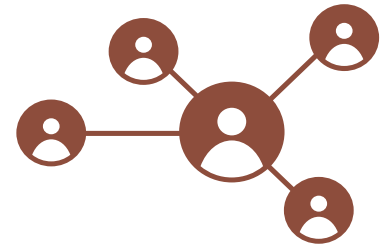
### ***How does sexual harm disrupt attachment?***

When sexual harm occurs in childhood by a trusted adult and particularly a caregiver, the connection and security that had been present and reliable in the relationship is called into question. The same may be true in situations of sexual harm by another child or adolescent. **Previously held notions of the harm-doer and the relationship with that individual are no longer accurate, and it is difficult for the child to reconcile the wounding experience with what was previously believed to be true.**

The cognitive distortions that result after an incident of sexual harm are therefore not surprising - it is easier for people to deny the abuse entirely, tell themselves they must have misunderstood, or engage in self-blaming behavior. This can be true not just for victims/survivors, but also for the larger affected community. Many people cannot accommodate the new information into what they already believe about an individual. People will often say statements like "They're such a good person. I just can't imagine they would have done something like that." This type of response creates a ripple effect of ruptured connections. **The damaging experience not only severs the relationship between the harmed and the harm-doer, but also with individuals who should be available in supportive roles.** Often it is the response from and the ruptured relationships with family or friends that end up being more damaging than the abuse itself.

In the aftermath of sexual harm, it is not only attachments that are disrupted, but also worldviews and identities. Affect control theory suggests that "surprising or traumatic experiences challenge cultural understandings of behaviors and

identities and perceptions of ourselves, causing not only negative emotion but cognitive confusion and reconceptualization of an event."<sup>9</sup> **When people undergo experiences that overwhelm their entire being, it only makes sense that they reconceptualize what happened to understand it.** The enormity of the effects of sexual harm cannot be understated. Addressing ruptured attachments is fundamental to healing and moving forward.



### ***How do attachment styles affect us in the long term?***

Longitudinal studies have shown that the quality of connections formed in early childhood compounded with later life traumatic experiences can directly influence future emotional and social capacity.<sup>10</sup> **Those with disorganized attachment are the most at risk for adverse consequences in later life, including behavior problems such as aggression toward others, developmental delays, higher levels of impulsivity and suicidality, and unbalanced self-awareness.** On the contrary, those with secure attachments are better able to regulate emotions and integrate adverse experiences when they do occur.<sup>11</sup>

**While early attachments and traumatic experiences cannot be undone, there is hope for recovery through addressing the impacts, and regaining a sense of self through empowerment.** The process of rehabilitation involves:

- Discovering a focus and cultivating peacefulness
- Assimilating this knowledge to remain calm when facing past triggers
- Anchoring oneself in the present
- Being fully honest and compassionate with oneself<sup>12</sup>

Trauma is carried within the body. Learning to physically breathe through agonizing memories and retaining a sense of physical calm are some of the most powerful tools in regaining a sense of self and reconnecting the body with the emotional brain.<sup>13</sup> Connection has the power to heal past wounds and combat loneliness. **Even the simplest of human interactions such as eye contact or a hand shake reduce stress by both lessening cortisone levels and releasing dopamine.**<sup>14</sup>



## Exercise 2 Breathing Exercise and Meditation

### Practice Nadi Shodhana or “Alternate Nostril Breathing”

<https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/info/ayurvedic-living/living-ayurveda/yoga/nadi-shodhana-pranayama/>

This breath is used to enhance calm and balance, uniting the left and right sides of the brain.

- Beginning in a comfortable position, use the right thumb to close the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril.
- Before exhalation, release the right nostril and close the left nostril with the ring finger. Breathe out through the right nostril.
- Continue this pattern, inhaling through the right nostril and exhaling through the left nostril for two minutes.<sup>15</sup>

### The Bodyscape Practice to Notice Sensations

A three-minute meditation with Diana Winston (See Endnotes for transcript and/or link to audio)<sup>16</sup>

## Moral Injury

Incidents of sexual violence are rife with manipulation, often involving a purposeful pattern of pushing boundaries until it may appear from the outside that the harmed individual was compliant in the abuse. **This perception of compliance ignores the multitude of actions that took place to pave the way for more egregious abuse to occur. Therefore, compliance does not imply consent.**

The way one perceives the actions or effects of sexual harm (on others or oneself) is deeply linked to one’s belief

system and concept of morality. The term moral injury was first coined in the early 2000s by Dr. Jonathan Shay, who is most well-known for his work with war veterans. **Shay defines moral injury as “(1) a betrayal of what’s right, (2) by someone who holds legitimate authority, (3) in a high stakes situation or all three elements combined.”**<sup>17</sup> Betrayal is at the heart of this definition and is always a component in instances of sexual harm.

This definition has been expanded to include the additional harm compounded for victims when their requests for help receive no response or assistance: **“the silence constitutes a humiliating ‘second injury’ of indifference that prevents reparations, emboldens potential transgressors and alienates victims through a sense of ‘normative abandonment’ and alienation from the community.”**<sup>18</sup>



This speaks to the victim’s/survivor’s need for and the importance of:

- Acknowledging the trauma caused
- Naming the harm
- Involving the harm-doer and community to engage in repair

These are key elements in restorative justice practices, which will be discussed more fully at the end of this chapter. Concepts of betrayal and institutional response will be explored in Chapter 4.

Numerous similarities have been drawn between war veterans and victims/survivors of sexual harm, many of whom experience symptoms of and are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Shay’s work focuses primarily on war veterans but his research highlights some important connections to the experience of sexual violence. **Much as a soldier may struggle with being ordered to act in a way that violates his/her values, so does a victim/survivor of sexual harm; both experience the betrayal of an authority figure** (or an individual who holds more power). While it is likely the two will coexist, moral injury is unique from post-traumatic stress disorder in that PTSD manifests from a physiological response, while moral injury stems from the internalization of shame and guilt.<sup>19</sup> (see figure 3.2)

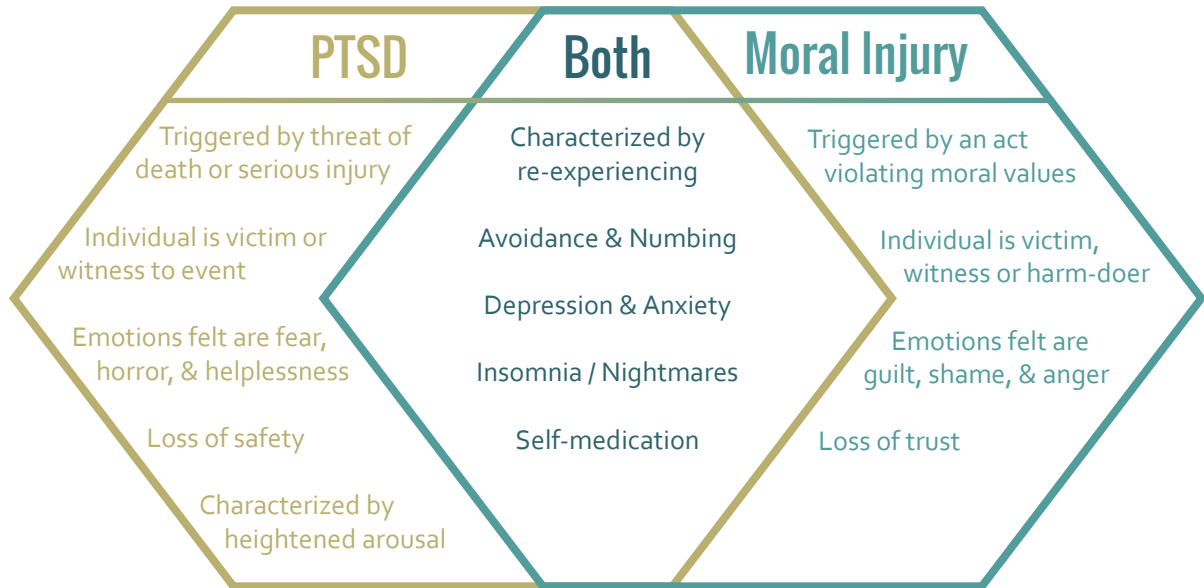


Figure 3.2: PTSD vs. Moral Injury, based on the work of Shay (2014) and Sullivan & Starnino (2018).<sup>20</sup>

**Brené Brown defines shame as “the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging – something we’ve experienced, done, or failed to do makes us unworthy of connection.”<sup>21</sup>**

Both victims/survivors and those who cause harm have the capacity to feel shame and may experience moral injury as a result of an incident of sexual harm. As discussed in Chapter 1, the brain acts during a traumatic event to self-protect, which may include coping strategies such as dissociation or freezing. **These responses are perfectly natural and often prevent further harm from occurring, yet a victim/survivor may experience shame as a result of their perceived inaction.** While shame is a universal human experience, unaddressed shame can wreak havoc on wellbeing. There is much work to do in creating a culture where victims/survivors can disclose harm without shame. In the next section, we dive deeper into the unique needs of those affected by sexual harm and discuss how to cultivate environments that nurture a sense of safety and understanding.

### Victim/Survivor Needs

The STAR model identifies safety, acknowledgment, and reconnection as vital needs and steps in the process of healing from trauma.<sup>22</sup> **Safety cannot be prescriptive and looks different for every individual based on their unique circumstances and environment.** For example, the concept of safety will be measured differently for

individuals stuck within a cycle of ongoing abuse than it will for a person who has experienced an isolated incident of sexual harm.

While there is value in acknowledging the traumatic experience, an emphasis should be placed on first establishing safety. **One can begin by learning coping strategies that allow the victim/survivor to face the feelings and physiological responses that resurface from the past.**<sup>23</sup>

### Factors Contributing to Perceptions of Safety

Social	Support through social connections
Physiological	Development of a mind-body connection
Spiritual	Reliance on a spiritual practice
Intellectual	Conceptualization of the trauma experience or cycle and steps for moving through it <sup>24</sup>

## Exercise 3<sup>25</sup> Safety Integrated

The purpose of this exercise is to identify the multi-faceted parts of self that are important to address when establishing safety. We will also discuss how to nurture a safe environment.

### Exercise Supplies:

Markers, sticky notes, poster board, tape

### Instructions:

- Facilitator will place four large posters on the wall with the titles: Social, Physiological, Spiritual, and Intellectual.
- Participants will use sticky notes to write several factors/actions/statements that have the power to increase or enhance their perceptions of safety.
- Facilitator will invite participants to place their notes on the posters that best align with what they have written.
- Participants will be invited to walk around the room to view what others have shared.

### Group Discussion Questions:

- We identified areas that enhance safety. What are some ways that perceptions of safety are diminished?
- How can we avoid falling into these pitfalls when looking to support those affected by sexual violence?
- How may you be able to cultivate a sense of safety for others?
- In what ways has your own sense of safety been honored or diminished?
- What did you learn from this exercise in terms of the way you personally experience safety?

**The significance of reestablishing the mind-body connection and learning to feel safe within one's body cannot be understated, particularly for those who experienced bodily trauma or harm.** Meditation, rhythmic motion, massage, and movement-based exercises such as yoga, qigong, and tai chi are just some of the ways one can begin to reconnect with the body.<sup>26</sup> Beyond this, reconnecting with self and others is a powerful way to regain balance, through:

- Connection with friends, family, support groups, etc.
- A trusting relationship with a therapeutic treatment provider/counselor.
- Reconnection with self by learning about power dynamics in abuse, and changing perspectives about where responsibility lies.<sup>27</sup>

Additionally, the act of acknowledgment can take many forms and encompasses a wide range of victim/survivor needs. **The vulnerability involved with sharing about the experience of sexual harm creates one of the single most fundamental needs: to be heard, believed and understood, regardless of the particularities of the incident.**<sup>28</sup> The importance of sharing one's experience is vital, as "storytelling includes the integration of both facts and emotions."<sup>29</sup>



A crucial need for victims/survivors is to be empowered through the provision of information, allowing them to make informed choices moving forward. **For victims/survivors, sexual harm can create a profound loss of control that compromises their opportunity to receive information and review options.** This "power wounding" is important because the autonomy and right to make informed decisions is crucial to returning power to victims/survivors.<sup>30</sup> Accompanying and advocating for those affected by sexual harm can bolster the process of empowerment. In the following section, we will explore the potential risks to engaging in supportive roles.

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

- Helen Keller

## Section 2: Risks

### Support Roles and Trauma Exposure

Much as a pebble in a lake creates a ripple effect, so too does a wave in the ocean. When we reflect on the third wave of the Cascade Model, we recognize the preceding waves that built up to this point, and the potential the third wave has to influence the following two. **The effects of sexual harm also create a ripple effect that influences not only the harmed individual, but also their support network and larger community.**

The response victims/survivors receive from others is highly predictive of their long-term wellbeing. Those met with skepticism, blame, and judgment are more likely to have significant negative outcomes than those who receive validation, support, and acknowledgment. These “others” we speak of are represented by friends, family members, coworkers, mental health professionals, sexual assault nurse examiners, law enforcement, advocates, and attorneys, to name a few. Many of the professions listed above represent well-meaning individuals who have pursued their line of work to help others. **Engaging in a helping role (as a professional or friend/family of a harmed individual) may eventually take a toll by diminishing wellbeing and altering worldviews for the helper.**

#### Learn More:

*The Compassion Fatigue Workbook*<sup>31</sup>

[Video: Laura van Dernoot Lipsky - Beyond the Cliff](#)<sup>32</sup>

Laura van Dernoot Lipsky is the author of Trauma Stewardship and the founder of The Trauma Stewardship Institute.

After years as a first responder to individuals experiencing traumatic events, she began to look inward at the cumulative effect of being exposed and open to these stories. **Her internal process led her to believe she “had to find some way to bear witness to trauma without surrendering my ability to live fully.”**<sup>33</sup>

## Exercise 4 Trauma Exposure Continuum

Both Françoise Mathieu and van Dernoot Lipsky share personal experiences and discuss common responses following exposure to traumatic stories or events. Van Dernoot Lipsky identifies 16 warning signs that indicate potential negative impacts of trauma exposure (figure 3.3). Please note that the presence of any of these in your own life are not a reflection of who you are or your commitment to and passion for your work. It is normal to exhibit these responses after exposure to trauma – their presence indicates your ability to internally process what you are experiencing externally.<sup>34</sup> Being able to identify when these are present in our lives and understanding how to regulate these responses is what is important.

### Exercise Supplies:

Poster board, markers, stones, baskets

### Instructions:

- Facilitator will place posters with van Dernoot Lipsky’s 16 warning signs of trauma exposure on the floor in a large circle.
- Participants may review Figure 3.3 in their manual, or take a minute to walk around the room to examine the different elements of a trauma exposure response.

- Facilitator will supply participants with a basket of small stones (16 per person).
- Participants will be invited to walk around the circle and place a stone on the poster on any of the responses they have personally experienced or are currently experiencing.
- This portion of the activity may be done in silence or while a song plays. (We suggest the song [\*Resilient by Rising Appalachia\*](#).)
- Following the stone placement, facilitator will invite participants to take a final walk around the circle to reflect on their shared experiences.
- Participants will be invited to engage in group discussion using the questions below.<sup>35</sup>



Figure 3.3: Trauma Exposure Response

A Trauma Exposure Response comes from Laura van Dernoot Lipsky's work and her book *Trauma Stewardship*. More information can be found at [traumastewardship.com](http://traumastewardship.com)

### Group Discussion Questions:

- Which of these 16 factors resonate with you and your work as a helper?
- Have you seen any of these expressed in your personal experience, either by yourself or in another person you know?
- What does this look like in work environments? In personal experiences?
- Are there real-life examples you can think of or feel comfortable sharing?
- What have you found helpful (or what do you think would be useful) in counteracting some of these responses to trauma exposure?
- If applicable to your role, how has your workplace helped you to integrate these responses?
- On the contrary, has your workplace failed to address them or adequately prepare you to work through them? How so?

## Hazards of Caring for Others

The negative toll of trauma exposure on those in helping professions is widely acknowledged. It has been given many names, including secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout (see Figure 3.4). On the contrary, compassion satisfaction indicates the feelings of gratification and self-worth garnered from helping others.<sup>36</sup> **While it is healthy and natural to feel affected by hearing difficult narratives, it is crucial to nurture self-awareness and maintain an understanding of how work affects oneself.** Those who are able to identify shifts in their behavior, wellbeing, or worldview have an increased capacity to ask for help and support when needed, and recognize when it may be time to step away from their work (whether temporarily or permanently).

Earlier we discussed how responses to those who have experienced sexual harm can have long-term impacts. The same principles are seen in professional environments. **When support structures are in place to process difficult cases, foster healthy relationships, and promote self-care, individuals will have better access to the tools needed to continue the work.** Work settings that proliferate toxic stress and do not cultivate safe spaces are more likely to witness higher levels of staff dissatisfaction, burnout, and turnover. Workplaces that require their employees to be present with the traumatic experiences of others have a responsibility to constantly evolve in ways that help mitigate the cumulative effects of absorbing difficult information.

## Exercise 5 Looking Inward

The purpose of this exercise is not to feel shame about our responses to trauma, but rather to acknowledge very real shifts in our perspective and enhance our self-awareness in order to live healthier, more fulfilled lives. The trauma exposure identifiers listed in Figure 3.4 are not static and individuals may experience one, some, all, or none of these at different times or simultaneously.

### Instructions:

- Review Figure 3.4 to gain a deeper understanding of the common responses to trauma exposure.
- Complete and score the [\*Professional Quality of Life Scale \(PROQOL\)\*](#).<sup>37</sup>
- Take a few minutes to reflect on these concepts and the results from the inventory, and then share your reflections (as much as you are comfortable) with your neighbor.

Common Responses to Working in Helping Professions	
<p><b>Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)</b></p> <p>A condition characterized by the existence of PTSD symptoms following the indirect exposure to (at least one) traumatic experiences or stories.</p>	<p><b>Compassion Fatigue</b></p> <p>A condition experienced by those in the helping profession of being so preoccupied with the suffering of others that it causes extreme tension and distress in one's own life. Often used interchangeably with STS.</p>
<p><b>Vicarious Trauma</b></p> <p>Identified by a shift in worldview that takes place after prolonged engagement with individuals who have experienced trauma.</p>	<p><b>Burnout</b></p> <p>Represented by the diminished feelings of accomplishment, emotional weariness, and detachment from self. Emerges in response to general occupational stress.</p>
<p><b>Compassion Satisfaction</b></p> <p>The feelings of positivity resulting from working with individuals who have experienced trauma, represented by good relationships with coworkers and allied partners, and the belief of contributing to the greater good.</p>	

Figure 3.4: Hazards of Helping Professions, based on resources from NCTSN<sup>38</sup>

Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.

- Audre Lorde

## Section 3: Resilience and Renewal

### **Mindfulness Moment: Take Five**

We will begin this section of the training with a short breathing and mindfulness exercise called [Take Five](#). Holding the left hand out, palm up, we will inhale and exhale while tracing each finger with the right hand pointer finger.<sup>39</sup>

### **Resilience**

We identified resilience in the Core Concepts chapter as the “outcome of maximizing coping (“an act of survival, subversion, and agency”) and change” (“personal metamorphosis and the activation of structural transformation”).<sup>40</sup> Many define resilience as the ability to rebound or recover following a tragedy or crisis, utilizing metaphors such as rubber bands, bridges, and trees that bend but don’t break in the wind. **The risks discussed in the previous section have the potential to directly impact one’s resiliency, particularly when left unaddressed.** This section will focus on the importance of caring for oneself in a way that builds resilience and encourages mindfulness.<sup>41</sup>

### **Self-Care**

Self-care refers to activities we engage in to promote our emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental health. **Whether you are someone who works with individuals who have experienced sexual harm, are a survivor yourself, or both, the importance of self-care cannot be understated. Unfortunately, it is typically the first thing to go by the wayside when we become overwhelmed with other aspects of our lives.** This is especially true for those working in helping professions; it can easily become habitual

to focus all caretaking energy towards clients and neglect personal needs.

The cumulative burden of caring for others is often insidious and it may take a major incident such as an illness or ruptured personal relationship to recognize the weight one has been bearing. Imagine carrying a heavy backpack – it may not be bothersome for an hour or two, but the longer the weight is carried, the heavier it feels and the more damage it can cause. **Self-care means having opportunities and invitations to empty the backpack regularly in order to remain open to oneself and others.**

Self-care is often described as engaging in activities such as exercising, enjoying good food, relaxing, and spending time in nature and with close friends, yet the concept goes much further. **Self-care cannot be limited to extracurricular activities, but needs to be prioritized as an integral part of daily routines.** Additionally, it must bleed into our professional spheres. Ideally, self-care is nurtured through effective leadership and made accessible to all types of individuals in helping professions.

Unfortunately, many workplaces encourage a culture of “toughing it out” with little to no support from those in supervisory roles. **It is difficult to engage in adequate self-care practices during free time to offset a taxing work environment with little trauma awareness.** We also acknowledge that while self-care is a basic human right, the opportunity to practice self-care activities is a privilege that may not be accessible to everyone. For example, how can an individual working three jobs and caring for an aging relative possibly have the time, energy, or financial reserves to focus attention inward? And yet, helpers offer victims/survivors support and encouragement to take steps to care for themselves on a daily basis. Isn’t it time they allow themselves the same level of care they offer others?



## Exercise 6

### Self-Care Themes

The intention of this exercise is to identify some of the common themes that emerge among participants regarding their self-care practices and challenges.

#### Instructions:

- Using the tool [Poll Everywhere](#),<sup>42</sup> the facilitator will ask a series of questions
- Participants will respond by accessing the provided site on their phones
- Participants' answers will be shown on the screen in real time
- Allow for time between each question for discussion and to identify themes

#### Potential Questions:

1. What words come to mind when you hear the term “self-care”? (word cloud)
2. What challenges keep you from practicing self-care? (open-ended)
3. Which of the following areas of your life do you find it easiest to prioritize? (multiple choice bar chart)
  - Spirituality
  - Nutrition
  - Physical Activity
  - Play / Pleasure
  - Vocation
  - Relationships
  - Rest / Relaxation
  - Education / Learning
4. Which area of your life do you struggle to put energy into? (multiple choice bar chart - same options as question 3)
5. What activities do you engage in regularly to care for yourself? (open-ended)
6. What barriers can you identify that would keep someone from engaging in self-care practices? (open-ended)<sup>43</sup>

Just as there are noteworthy similarities between post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and trauma exposure response, so too there is significant overlap between the coping strategies that best serve primary trauma survivors and the behaviors that can most benefit those of us impacted by trauma exposure through our work.

- Laura van Dernoot Lipskey

#### Self-Care Strategies

Bessel van der Kolk identifies individuals who have the capacity to transform and incorporate their traumatic experiences into their lives as “stress resistant persons.”<sup>44</sup> Stress is an inevitable part of life, and therefore it is more important to learn tools to manage, rather than resist it. **That being said, there is value in reviewing the characteristics shared by these individuals that promote wellbeing and serve as a guide for integrating experiences (or engaging with stories) of sexual harm in constructive ways.**

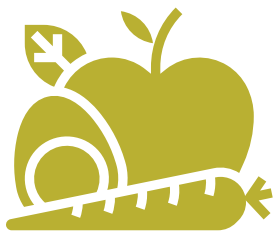


**THESE TRAITS INCLUDE:****A SENSE OF AGENCY**

Believing in one's own ability and power to choose actions that will create a positive life trajectory can be empowering and resilience building. Working toward justice is one example of reclaiming one's agency.

**ENGAGEMENT IN MEANINGFUL ENDEAVORS**

Being an active participant in one's own life discourages passivity during more difficult times.

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES**

Finding a balance of exercise, relaxation, and a healthy diet can increase general wellbeing and decrease risks of disease and chronic health issues.

**SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

Being in relationship with others creates a network of safety through connection.<sup>45</sup>



**By taking steps to cultivate the above traits, one can begin to move toward a healthier way of working in the helping fields, connecting with others, and being actively involved in the surrounding world.** It is important to remember that there is no quick fix for feeling better and that any action taken to promote self-care is a step in the right direction.

**Another component of caring for oneself is to practice self-compassion, which Kristin Neff describes as “honoring and accepting your humanness.”<sup>46</sup>**

**Three Components of Self-Compassion****Self-kindness vs. self-judgment**

Self-kindness involves having empathy toward oneself, particularly when things go wrong, rather than berating oneself for failing. This element recognizes that life does not always follow one's planned trajectory. During these times, practicing self-kindness honors feelings of frustration with understanding and gentleness toward oneself.

**Common humanity vs. isolation**

Common humanity acknowledges the human suffering present for everyone as part of the global human experience.

**Mindfulness vs. over-identification**

Mindfulness focuses on being present with our negative emotions, acknowledging them, while not blowing them out of proportion.<sup>47</sup>

**Neff goes on to explain that “with self-compassion we mindfully accept that the moment is painful, and embrace ourselves with kindness and care in response, remembering that imperfection is part of the shared human experience. This allows us to hold ourselves in love and connection, giving ourselves the support and comfort needed to bear the pain, while providing the optimal conditions for growth and transformation.”<sup>48</sup>**

This state of mindfulness means being actively aware and present in one's own experiences, no matter how challenging they may be at any given time. In order to be cognizant of one's sensations and feelings, one must first understand the motivation behind precipitating one's actions. When motives for engaging in caretaking behaviors (whether in our personal or professional lives) are identified, the foundation is laid to be mindful in the present moment. Furthermore, being in this place of awareness allows one to recognize the choices one has, including and perhaps most importantly, knowing when to step away.<sup>49</sup>

**Pause and Reflect**

Take a moment to reflect on and/or write about the following questions:

- What motivates me to go to work each day?
- What about helping others brings me joy or is life giving?
- What feelings come to mind if I think about continuing to do this work?
- What feelings come to mind if I think about leaving the helping field?
- Who am I doing this work for?



True reconciliation is never cheap, for it is based on forgiveness which is costly. Forgiveness in turn depends on repentance, which has to be based on an acknowledgment of what was done wrong, and therefore on disclosure of the truth. You cannot forgive what you do not know.

- Desmond Tutu



actions have the capacity to impact our intimate and larger communities. Furthermore, while there are times when individuals are harmed by strangers, we know the vast majority of sexual harm occurs at the hands of people known to the victim/survivor. This creates (at minimum) one ruptured connection which then ripples out to also affect additional relationships in the lives of both the harmed individual and the harm-doer.

## Section 4: Identifying Responsibility

### *Pause and Reflect: Needs Assessment*

Take a moment to think about a time you were harmed, injured, or hurt by another individual. Then journal on the following prompts:

- What questions did this experience bring up for you?
- What needs did the experience create?
- Who else was affected by what happened?
- Who should be obligated to make things right again?

### Restorative Justice

We began this chapter with a focus on attachment and the impacts of ruptured relationships following incidents of sexual violence. **Now we explore paths to reintegration by turning our attention to restorative practices for addressing the resulting wounds of sexual violence.** Some critics of restorative justice are concerned with the language of restoration and argue we cannot restore a relationship that never existed in the first place. This critique is shallow in its understanding of relationship; it ignores the way we as humans are all interconnected and how our

The current criminal justice system offers limited options to survivors of sexual violence and is disempowering in that it removes the power of choosing a method of redress away from the person who experienced the harm. **Retributive justice takes ownership of the crime and is concerned with the breaking of laws, who committed the offense, and what punishment they deserve, while doing little to engage the voice or needs of the victim.** Additionally, the criminal legal process is often retraumatizing to victims. Because sexual violence nearly always occurs with no witnesses, the burden of proving the crime often unfairly rests solely on the testimony of the victim. The questioning by investigators, medical professionals, and prosecutors who may not be trained in trauma-informed approaches, can insinuate doubt and victim blaming. These factors, coupled with a multitude of misconceptions about sexual harm held by the general public (who constitute juries) can amplify isolation and trauma for victims/survivors.<sup>50</sup>

RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE	RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
Crime violates the law and the state	Crime is a harm experienced by an individual and/or the community
Accountability = punishment for offender	Accountability = harm-doer accepts responsibility and acts to repair the harm
Victim's involvement in the process is peripheral	Victim remains central to the process
Seeks to prove guilt and place blame	Seeks to solve problems, identify obligations
Assumption that punishment will prevent future crime from occurring	Restitution seen as a way to restore both parties
Community remains uninvolved / represented by the state	Community involved in restorative process
Process depends on representation by professionals	Process involves direct participation by involved parties
Emphasis on punishment for past actions	Emphasis on future actions

Figure 3.6: Retributive versus Restorative Justice, adapted from Zehr (1990).<sup>51</sup>

Some may feel caught up in a vicious cycle that is perpetuated by the failure of systems to deliver any kind of true justice. **Sexual violence is notoriously underreported. When brought to the attention of authorities, cases rarely move beyond the initial report and are seldom pursued by prosecutors due to a perceived lack of evidence.** The low number of charges and convictions in cases of sexual harm therefore reinforce the reluctance for victims to report what has happened.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, this does not begin to address the increased reluctance to report faced by marginalized and minority populations for reasons discussed in the second chapter.

The story typically ends here. Victims are told of their options to report or not report and are rarely made aware of alternative methods to pursue a sense of justice. They may be given medical and therapeutic referrals, but these resources can only do so much to provide accountability and address questions that can only be answered by the harm-doer. What if victims/survivors were offered another option that may be able to answer their questions and increase accountability for the individual who caused them harm? **Restorative justice can provide a different approach to addressing harm and may be offered in conjunction with legal action, or may occur separately or following a criminal justice process.**

**While we readily acknowledge restorative justice is not appropriate in all cases of sexual harm, we do believe when thoughtfully executed using trained practitioners, it has the potential to provide an alternative (or supplemental) path to justice for some victims/survivors while increasing their agency within the process.** Additionally, it presents another way forward for those who cause harm by holding them accountable, allowing them to address their shame, and for reparations to be offered. At its best, restorative justice has the potential to prevent further harm, and could create a culture shift that fosters primary prevention when its principles are modeled at an early age.<sup>31</sup> We acknowledge the inequities, structural flaws, and inherent racism that exists in the current criminal justice system and recognize the vulnerability of any justice process to fall into this trap.

### **What is Restorative Justice?**

With roots in indigenous communities worldwide, contemporary restorative justice offers an approach that shifts the focus from legal matters of crimes and broken laws to an examination of the harm that occurred. At its core, restorative justice seeks to answer the following questions:

- Who is the recipient of harm?
- What needs have arisen from this experience?

- Whose responsibility is it to address these needs?

While a range of restorative processes exist, they all share significant commonalities, namely the use of facilitators, a voluntary process, and an encounter between significant stakeholders. **In order to address and rectify the wrongdoing during the meeting or conference, the following must occur:**

- **Acknowledgment of the harm that has occurred.**
- **A restoration of equity.**
- **Discussion of future goals, aspirations, and potential amends.**<sup>53</sup>

The dominant restorative approaches include victim-offender dialogues, circle processes, and conferencing, yet models are now more frequently being integrated to best address the particularities of a case. **Restorative justice has gained traction globally and is widely recognized as an approach to incidences of wrongdoing.** A restorative process can be implemented at various stages, from a method of deferral to a post-conviction, post-incarceration process. Outside of addressing criminal events, restorative practices are being taught and modeled within school systems beginning at the elementary level. This has the potential to decrease future incidences of sexual harm by addressing bullying (which often involves harassment related to race, gender, and sexual orientation as well as physical harm) at a younger age.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Criticisms of Restorative Justice as a Response to Sexual Harm***

The use of restorative practices as a response to incidences of sexual harm is a highly contested issue within the fields of both criminal and restorative justice, as well as victim-serving organizations and those working to combat gender-based violence. Its use has been particularly discouraged in cases of intimate partner violence, or when incidents of sexual harm are ongoing and/or paired with physical violence. **Perhaps the greatest concern regarding the use of restorative justice in response to gender-based violence is the power imbalance that inherently exists between the victim/survivor and the harm-doer and an apprehension surrounding offender accountability.**<sup>55</sup>

Additional criticisms lie in the belief that restorative justice is more offender focused than victim centered. Many restorative justice practitioners are more experienced in working with harm-doers and are concerned with providing them an alternative route to the criminal justice system. **Numerous**

**restorative initiatives exist within or work in conjunction with the legal sphere, which traditionally has been more concerned with those who commit crimes than those who were victimized.** Moreover, restorative processes are often offered to harm-doers regardless of victim participation, whereas less services are extended to victims absent of offender engagement.<sup>56</sup>

**Further critiques argue that restorative justice opens up victims to retraumatization or trivialization of their experience.** Others highlight caution surrounding the use of language, particularly the use of the word mediation as a process, which implies a more level playing field and that both parties have experienced harm.<sup>57</sup> Many prefer the term dialogue as it places the emphasis on a give and take conversation between stakeholders rather than on the goal of coming to an agreement.<sup>58</sup>

### ***Benefits of Restorative Justice as a Response to Sexual Harm***

**Restorative justice offers victims/survivors ownership of their experience and empowers them to choose an approach to seek equilibrium on their own terms and timeline.** A restorative process offers those affected by sexual harm a chance to ask questions and hear responses from their harm-doer, a key component overlooked by the criminal justice system.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, restorative practices operate on the understanding that the one who has caused harm will acknowledge and take responsibility for their actions, as opposed to the legal system's language of "suspect," "allegations," and "innocent until proven guilty." In incidences of intrafamilial abuse, restorative justice does much to enlighten family members of both the harmed and harm-doer about the dynamics of sexual abuse. This can reduce victim blaming behaviors by teaching involved parties to recognize that the blame lies with the responsible party.<sup>60</sup>

**Many studies show a high rate of victim/survivor satisfaction with restorative justice responses to incidents of sexual harm.** The most commonly expressed factors that impacted satisfaction were:

- Experiencing acknowledgment of the harm caused.
- Having the opportunity to ask questions.
- Communicating the impact on their lives.
- Experiencing the harm-doer as a fellow human.
- Promoting personal healing.
- Providing a mechanism for reconciliation within their families.<sup>61</sup>

Conceivably one of the most impactful benefits of restorative justice is its capacity to confront the shame experienced by victims/survivors, harm-doers, their families, and immediate communities. **“Properly applied, restorative processes enable the articulation of the intense sense of shame in a rehabilitative and non-stigmatising manner which can be part of a process of personal transformation.”**<sup>62</sup>

Damaging labels are often assigned following incidents of sexual violence, casting victims/survivors as weak and needing protection and harm-doers as calculating and domineering. Both of these labels rob individuals of their agency and ability to name and define their own experience.<sup>63</sup>

**Restorative justice minimizes the power of the state to designate identities to individuals, giving those on the continuum of harm the possibility of shame reduction and the opportunity to see their shared humanity.** A restorative approach is more suited to honor the experience of victims/survivors by giving them voice and returning a level of control and choice.<sup>64</sup> Finally, restorative justice has the power to more effectively confront sexual harm at all levels – interpersonal, community, structural, and societal.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Restorative Justice Protocols when Addressing Sexual Harm***

The most common type of restorative justice process when addressing issues of sexual harm is a conferencing model that involves the victim/survivor, the harm-doer, a trained facilitator (or two), supportive persons of the affected parties, and potentially others in the community who have been harmed. Regardless of when a restorative process is initiated, the same care and attention apply when adequately preparing the participants.

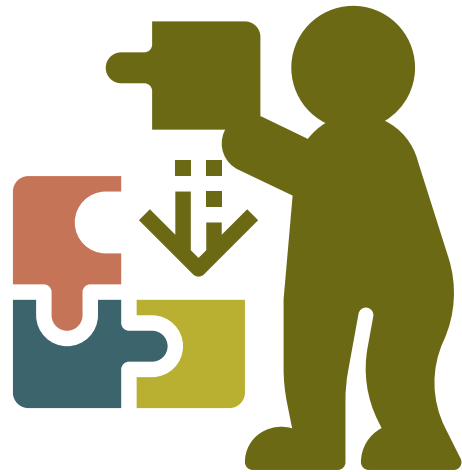
Restorative processes are not quick and easy, but the time spent in preparation is critical in order to assure a safe environment to engage in such a difficult topic. In fact, much more time is spent in preparation than in the actual conference or dialogue. **Facilitators must meet with all participants prior to the encounter as many times as necessary to ensure they understand the process and its potential outcomes.** Additionally, the following factors are essential when utilizing a restorative justice intervention to address sexual harm:

- Victim-centered approach.
- Voluntary participation for all parties.
- Safety protocols and procedural protections.

- Negotiation of location, timing, structure.
- Prevention of re-victimization.
- Confidentiality with accountability.
- Rectification of power imbalances.
- Discussion around parameters of redress.
- Due process rights and responsibilities.
- Community/agency/individual support role designations.
- Clarifications around interface/follow-up with surrounding institutions and systems.
- Monitoring and evaluation processes.<sup>66</sup>

### ***Reintegrating Harm-Doers***

There is often little to no support for those who have perpetrated sexual harm and even fewer resources available to those who are contemplating acting out sexually but have yet to offend.<sup>67</sup> **Following the placement of charges, a conviction, or incarceration for sexual crimes, most harm-doers are placed on the sex offender registry, ostracized, and given no tools for being reintegrated into their community.**



One restorative justice model seeks to do better through circle processes called **Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)**. CoSAs are active in areas of Canada, the United States, and United Kingdom with the goal to reintegrate sex offenders post-incarceration. **Harm-doers who pledge to not reoffend are surrounded with a small group of volunteers (supported by professionals) who commit to being in community with the individual.** Initially, formal circle processes are held regularly and volunteers are in contact with the harm-doer on a daily basis. As time passes and the needs of the harm-doer lessen, contact becomes more informal and infrequent, but any member of the circle can initiate a meeting at any time to

address issues that have arisen.<sup>68</sup>

Assessments of CoSA programs have shown remarkable success.<sup>69</sup> A review of multiple studies showed a reduction in recidivism when individuals were involved in a circle, yet results were quite varied when compared to the control groups. Additionally, many studies focused on short-term follow up, which cannot present a full scope of the intervention.<sup>70</sup> **When successful, reduced recidivism was attributed to the increased social support, resulting in better housing, employment, and reintegration outcomes.**<sup>71</sup>



## Exercise 8 Case Study

**\*\* Content Forecast \*\*** | All case studies discuss incidents of sexual harm, though not in great detail.

### Instructions:

Review one of the following case studies (facilitator's choice)

- **ARTICLE:** "I Just Wanted Him to Hear Me"<sup>72</sup>
- **ARTICLE:** "An Unfamiliar Justice Story: Reflections on Dalhousie's Facebook Incident 2015"<sup>73</sup>
- **VIDEO:** [\*I Met the Man Who Abused Me as a Child\*](#)<sup>74</sup>
- **VIDEO:** [\*Our Story of Rape & Reconciliation\*](#)<sup>75</sup>

### Group Discussion Questions:

- Which elements of a restorative process (see list on previous page) did you see clearly represented in this case?
- What stood out to you about the victim's/survivor's contribution to the process?
- What was notable about the harm-doer's involvement?
- What actions or steps did the facilitator take to nurture a safe environment?
- What structures were put in place to foster the best possible outcome?
- How could the process have been handled differently or better?
- Are there people missing from the conference? Who?

## Chapter Summary

This chapter dials into the cumulative effects of sexual trauma on relationships, the development of the self, and the potential for restorative practices to heal and address these harms. Ruptured attachments, broken relationships, and repeated exposure to trauma create needs for primary victims/survivors, as well as for those who carry support roles for harmed individuals or harm-doers. Self-care practices that are undergirded by support networks or supervisory structures are necessary for moving forward with accountability, integrity, and effectiveness with those who have experienced sexual harm. **And finally, restorative justice processes may offer an alternative approach to confronting the issue of sexual harm, for "the work of doing justice implicates all of us in learning and then acting together to build and maintain just relationships that structure culture and climate."**<sup>76</sup>

## Suggested Readings

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1. Bloom, S. (2003). Understanding the impact of sexual assault: The nature of traumatic experience. In A. Giardino, E. Datner, & J. Asher (Eds.), *Sexual assault: Victimization across the lifespan* (pp. 405-432). Maryland Heights: MI: GW Medical Publishing.
2. Boyle, K. (2018). Sexual assault and identity disruption: A sociological approach to posttraumatic stress. *Society and Mental Health*, 7(2), 69-84.
3. Smith, M. & Segal, J. (2018). Recovering from Rape and Sexual Trauma [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/recovering-from-rape-and-sexual-trauma.htm>
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6. National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women. (2008). Restorative justice responses to sexual assault. Harrisburg, PA: Koss, M. & Achilles, M. Retrieved from <https://vawnet.org/material/restorative-justice-responses-sexual-assault>

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. (pp. 212). New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- <sup>2</sup> Rosenblum, K.L., Dayton, C.J., & Muzik, M. (2009). *Handbook of infant mental health*. Zeanah, C. (Ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- <sup>3</sup> Bloom, S. (2003). Understanding the impact of sexual assault: The nature of traumatic experience. In A. Giardino, E. Datner, & J. Asher (Eds.), *Sexual assault: Victimization across the lifespan* (pp. 405-432). Maryland Heights: MI: GW Medical Publishing.
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- <sup>5</sup> Schore, A. (2003). Early relational trauma, disorganized attachment, and the development of a predisposition to violence. In M.F. Solomon & D.J. Siegel (Eds.), *Healing trauma* (pp. 107-167). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.
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between research and practice. (pp. 139-171). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

- <sup>7</sup> Bartholomew, K. & Horowitz, L. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 61(2), 226-244.
- <sup>8</sup> Ainsworth, M. D. S., & Bell, S. M. (1970). Attachment, exploration, and separation: Illustrated by the behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation. *Child Development*, 41, 49-67.
- <sup>9</sup> Boyle, K. (2018). Sexual assault and identity disruption: A sociological approach to posttraumatic stress. *Society and Mental Health*, 7(2), pp.70.
- <sup>10</sup> Rosenblum, Dayton, & Muzik (2009).
- <sup>11</sup> Van der Kolk (2014) and Rosenblum, Dayton, & Muzik (2009).
- <sup>12</sup> Van der Kolk (2014). pp.205-206.
- <sup>13</sup> Van der Kolk (2014).
- <sup>14</sup> Brown, B. (2017). *Braving the wilderness: The quest for true belonging and the courage to stand alone*. New York, NY: Random House.
- <sup>15</sup> [Nadi Shodhana Pranayama](https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/info/ayurvedic-living/living-ayurveda/yoga/nadi-shodhana-pranayama/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/info/ayurvedic-living/living-ayurveda/yoga/nadi-shodhana-pranayama/>
- <sup>16</sup> Greater Good Science Center (2017). [Brief body scan meditation with Diana Winston](https://www.mindful.org/a-3-minute-body-scan-meditation-to-cultivate-mindfulness/). Retrieved from <https://www.mindful.org/a-3-minute-body-scan-meditation-to-cultivate-mindfulness/>
- Begin by bringing your attention into your body.
  - You can close your eyes if that's comfortable for you.
  - You can notice your body seated wherever you're seated, feeling the weight of your body on the chair, on the floor.
  - Take a few deep breaths.
  - And as you take a deep breath, bring in more oxygen enlivening the body. And as you exhale, have a sense of relaxing more deeply.
  - You can notice your feet on the floor, notice the sensations of your feet touching the floor. The weight and pressure, vibration, heat.
  - You can notice your legs against the chair, pressure, pulsing, heaviness, lightness.
  - Notice your back against the chair.
  - Bring your attention into your stomach area. If your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Take a breath.
  - Notice your hands. Are your hands tense or tight? See if you can allow them to soften.
  - Notice your arms. Feel any sensation in your arms. Let your shoulders be soft.
  - Notice your neck and throat. Let them be soft. Relax.
  - Soften your jaw. Let your face and facial muscles be soft.
  - Then notice your whole body present. Take one more breath.
  - Be aware of your whole body as best you can. Take a breath. And then when you're ready, you can open your eyes.
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- <sup>18</sup> Congdon, M. (2016). Wronged beyond words: On the publicity and repression of moral injury. *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 42(8), pp.816.

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- <sup>22</sup> Yoder, C. (2005). *The little book of trauma healing*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.
- <sup>23</sup> Van der Kolk (2014).
- <sup>24</sup> Yoder (2005).
- <sup>25</sup> *Facilitator note: Materials needed: large sheets of poster board, tape, markers, post-it notes*
- <sup>26</sup> Van der Kolk (2014).
- <sup>27</sup> Rapsey, C., Campbell, A., Clearwater, K., & Patterson, T. (2017). Listening to the therapeutic needs of male survivors of childhood sexual abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 1-22.
- <sup>28</sup> The Healing Center. (2010). *Toward a coordinated sexual assault advocacy response in Milwaukee: A needs assessment of sexual assault advocacy services*. Milwaukee, WI: M. Uglund.
- <sup>29</sup> Yoder (2005). pp.53.
- <sup>30</sup> Rapsey et al. (2017).
- <sup>31</sup> Mathieu, F. (2012). *The compassion fatigue workbook*. New York, NY: Routledge. (See pages 17-21 for reading excerpt) Additionally, consider viewing the TEDx video: [The Edge of Compassion with Françoise Mathieu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcaUA6A37q8): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcaUA6A37q8>
- <sup>32</sup> Laura van Dernoot Lipsky: [Beyond the Cliff](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOzDGrcvmus): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOzDGrcvmus>
- <sup>33</sup> Van Dernoot Lipsky, L. (2009). *Trauma stewardship: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others*. (pp.4). Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- <sup>34</sup> Van Dernoot Lipsky (2009).
- <sup>35</sup> *Facilitator may consider debriefing this activity utilizing a circle process and/or choosing questions or prompts that more directly relate to the specific group of participants.*
- <sup>36</sup> Secondary Traumatic Stress. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.nctsn.org/trauma-informed-care/secondary-traumatic-stress>
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- <sup>38</sup> NCTSN (n.d.).
- <sup>39</sup> Cory Muscara: [Take 5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqariSXiSvs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqariSXiSvs>
- <sup>40</sup> Stauffer, C. (2020). *Core Concepts*, pp 18.

- <sup>41</sup> We recognize the language of resilience may not feel accessible and may not resonate with all participants. We utilize this term as an aspect of self we all are on a path toward, yet may never fully achieve.
- <sup>42</sup> [Poll Everywhere](https://www.polleverywhere.com/) is an interactive tool that allows facilitators, presenters, and educators to engage participants in real time: <https://www.polleverywhere.com/>
- <sup>43</sup> *Facilitator may include additional or different questions based on the makeup of the participant group. Facilitator may also consider providing additional devices such as a tablet or laptop to make the exercise accessible to all participants.*
- <sup>44</sup> As cited in van Dernoot Lipsky (2009). pp.121.
- <sup>45</sup> Van Dernoot Lipsky (2009). pp.121.
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- <sup>47</sup> Neff (2019).
- <sup>48</sup> Neff, K. (2019). [Self-Compassion](https://self-compassion.org/tips-for-practice/). (Tips for Practice section, para 2). Retrieved from <https://self-compassion.org/tips-for-practice/>
- <sup>49</sup> Van Dernoot Lipsky (2009). pp.147-171.
- <sup>50</sup> National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women. (2008). Restorative justice responses to sexual assault. Harrisburg, PA: Koss, M. & Achilles, M.
- <sup>51</sup> Zehr, H. (1990). Changing Lenses. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press.
- <sup>52</sup> Koss & Achilles (2008).
- <sup>53</sup> Zehr, H. (2002). The little book of restorative justice. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.
- <sup>54</sup> Koss & Achilles (2008).
- <sup>55</sup> These criticisms are shared by Koss & Achilles (2008) and the authors in endnotes 56 & 58-59.
- <sup>56</sup> National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women. (2008). Restorative justice and intimate partner violence. Harrisburg, PA: Ptacek, J. & Frederick, L.
- <sup>57</sup> These critiques are shared by Koss & Achilles (2008) and the authors in endnotes 58, 60, & 64.
- <sup>58</sup> Keenan, M. (2014). Sexual trauma and abuse: Restorative and transformative possibilities? Dublin, Ireland: School of Applied Social Science, University College Dublin, Ireland.
- <sup>59</sup> Mercer, V. & Madsen, K.S. (2015). Doing restorative justice in cases of sexual violence: A practice guide. M.Keenan & E. Zinsstag (Ed.) Leuven, Belgium: Leuven Institute of Criminology, University of Leuven.
- <sup>60</sup> Marsh, F. & Wager, N. (2015). Restorative justice in cases of sexual violence: Exploring the views of the public and survivors. *Probation Journal*, 62(4), 336-356.
- <sup>61</sup> Koss & Achilles (2008) and Keenan (2014).

- <sup>62</sup> Mercer & Madsen (2015). pp.13.
- <sup>63</sup> Mercer & Madsen (2015).
- <sup>64</sup> McGlynn, C, Westmarland, N. & Godden, N. (2012). I just wanted him to hear me: Sexual violence and the possibilities of restorative justice. *Journal of Law and Society*, 39(2), 213-240.
- <sup>65</sup> Llewellyn, J., Demsey, A., & Smith, J. (Fall 2015). An unfamiliar justice story: Restorative justice and education: Reflections on Dalhousie's Facebook incident 2015. *Our Schools Our Selves*, 43-56.
- <sup>66</sup> Mercer & Madsen (2015).
- <sup>67</sup> **Stop It Now!** is an excellent prevention resource and offers support not only to victims/survivors and their friends and families, but also to individuals at risk to offend. They offer a helpline that is available in email, telephone, and online chat formats. <https://www.stopitnow.org>
- <sup>68</sup> Umbreit, M. & Armour, M.P. (2011). *Restorative justice dialogue: An essential guide for research and practice*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- <sup>69</sup> Umbreit & Armour (2011).
- <sup>70</sup> Clarke, M., Brown, S., & Völlm, B. (2017). Circles of support and accountability for sex offenders: A systematic review of outcomes. *Sexual Abuse*, 29(5), 446-478.
- <sup>71</sup> Northcutt Bohmert, M., Duwe, G., & Kroovand Hipple, N. (2018). *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(3), 739-758.
- <sup>72</sup> McGlynn, Westmarland & Godden (2012). *CASE STUDY: see pages 223-231 for the story of Lucy.*
- <sup>73</sup> Llewellyn, Demsey & Smith (2015). *CASE STUDY: see pages 43-55.*
- <sup>74</sup> BBC News – [‘I met the man who abused me as a child’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z45JCqV3vPc): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z45JCqV3vPc>
- <sup>75</sup> Thordis Elva & Tom Stranger | TEDWomen 2016: [Our story of rape and reconciliation](https://www.ted.com/talks/thordis_elva_tom_stranger_our_story_of_rape_and_reconciliation?language=en): [https://www.ted.com/talks/thordis\\_elva\\_tom\\_stranger\\_our\\_story\\_of\\_rape\\_and\\_reconciliation?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/thordis_elva_tom_stranger_our_story_of_rape_and_reconciliation?language=en)  
*\*Facilitator note: While this case does not follow a formal restorative justice process with a facilitator, many RJ elements are evident and it is a remarkable story told from both sides.*
- <sup>76</sup> Llewellyn, Demsey & Smith (2015). pp.55.

## Additional Resources

### Connection

- Brene Brown: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>
- Matthew Lieberman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNhk3owF7RQ>

### Attachment Styles videos

- The Attachment Theory: How Childhood Affects Life: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-jOowWxOXCg>
- Attachment Theory Explained!: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7-ieoYsPQ4>
- Attachment Theory: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhUSA5CrYVk>

### Attachment Articles

- What is Attachment Theory? Bowlby's 4 Stages Explained by Courtney Ackerman: <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/attachment-theory/>
- How Our Own Attachment Style Impacts Our Relationships by Laura Vogel, Ph.D.: <https://momentousinstitute.org/blog/how-our-own-attachment-style-impacts-our-relationships>
- Find out How to use Attachment Theory to Build Better Relationships by Alex Barnette: <https://www.alexbarnettecounseling.com/find-out-how-to-use-attachment-theory-to-build-better-relationships/>
- Four Styles of Adult Attachment by Terry Levy: <https://www.evergreenpsychotherapycenter.com/styles-adult-attachment/>

### Shame

- What is a Compass of Shame and Why is it Useful? By Cole Bubenik: <http://www5.esc13.net/thescoop/behavior/2017/10/27/compass-of-shame/>
- Listening to Shame by Brené Brown: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=2&v=psN1DORYYV0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=psN1DORYYV0)
- Why Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse Don't Disclose by Beverly Engel L.M.F.T.: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-compassion-chronicles/201903/why-adult-victims-childhood-sexual-abuse-dont-disclose>

### Moral Injury

- Moral Injury by Dr. Jonathan Shay: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBkCg6\\_ISpQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBkCg6_ISpQ)

## Additional Resources

### Support Roles

- **Help Someone You Care About:**  
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/help-someone-you-care-about>
- **Tips for Talking with Survivors of Sexual Assault:**  
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/tips-talking-survivors-sexual-assault>
- **How to Support a Friend or Loved One Who Has Been Sexually Abused by Vanessa Marin:**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/27/smarter-living/sexual-abuse-assault-support-mental-health.html>

### Secondary Victimization

- **“Secondary Victims” of Sexual Assault:**  
<https://aifs.gov.au/publications/ripple-effects-sexual-assault/secondary-victims-sexual-assault>

### Self-care

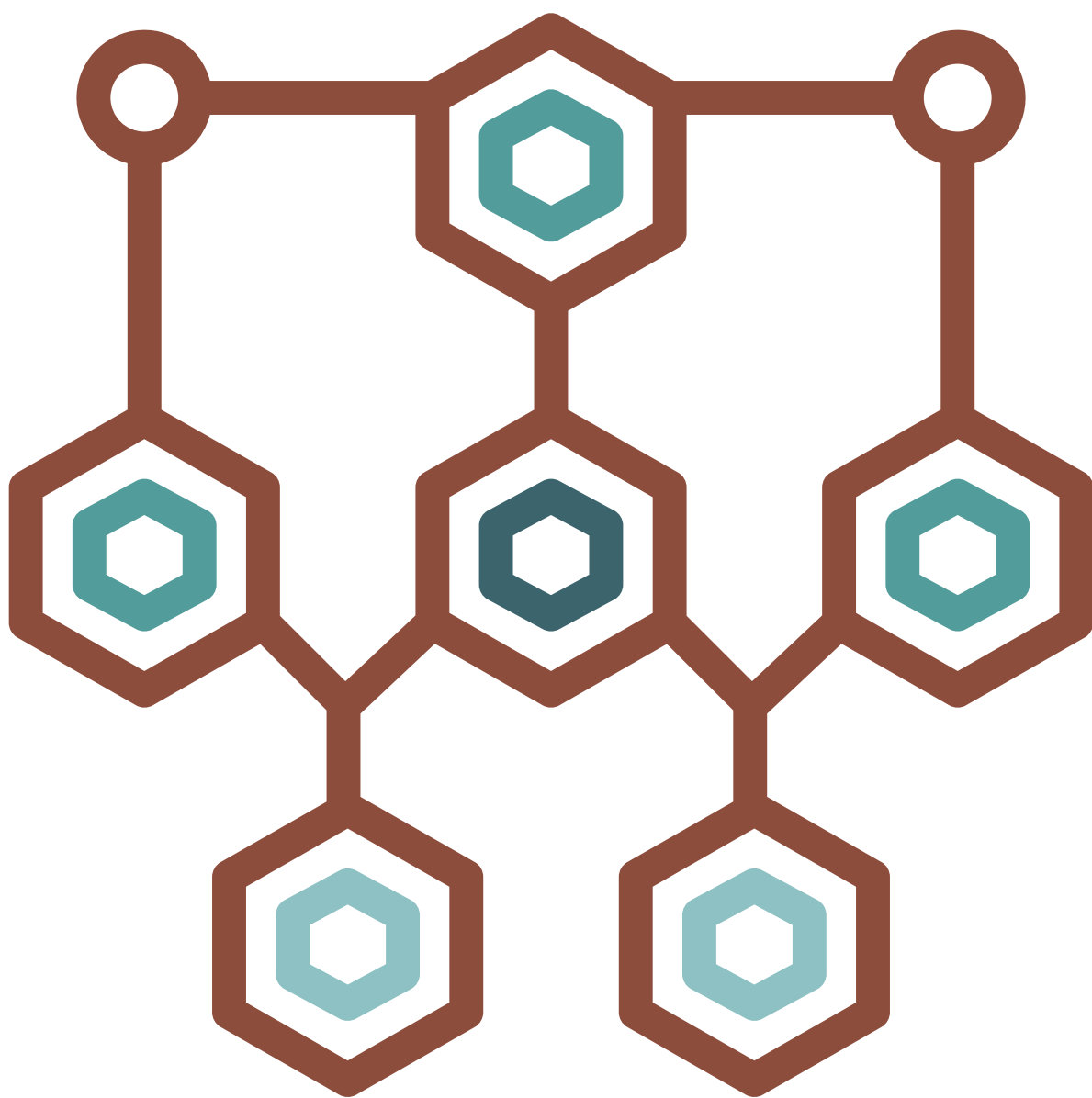
- **Kristin Neff: Self-Compassion:**  
<https://self-compassion.org/>
- **Self-Care Wheel by Olga Phoenix Project:**  
<http://www.olgaphoenix.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/SelfCare-Wheel-Final.pdf>
- **The 8 Dimensions of Self-care:**  
<https://www.livingupp.com/the-8-dimensions-of-self-care/>
- **The Mindful Movement YouTube channel:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu\\_mPIZbomAgNzfAUEIRL7w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu_mPIZbomAgNzfAUEIRL7w)

### Restorative Justice

- **A Different Path for Confronting Sexual Assault by Sujatha Baliga:**  
<https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/10/10/17953016/what-is-restorative-justice-definition-questions-circle>
- **Restorative Justice Center, UC Berkeley, RJ Videos:**  
<http://rjcenterberkeley.org/rj-videos/>

# CHAPTER 4

# STRUCTURE



For there to be betrayal, there would have to have been trust first.

- Suzanne Collins

Individuals who have been impacted by sexual harm have a variety of needs related to safety, dignity, attachment, and justice. The institutions which individuals are a part of also have the responsibility to prevent and respond to sexual violence on a structural level. This imperative requires a coherent system-wide strategy and occupies the focus of this chapter.

## Chapter Overview

Having examined the biological and behavioral impacts of sexual trauma in Chapter 1, the intersectional social factors which allow for and complexify the conditions in which sexual harm occurs in Chapter 2, and the disrupted relational and emotional stability that can result from sexual harm in Chapter 3, we have now arrived at the fourth wave of the Sexual Harms Cascade Model. **In Chapter 4 we expand the conversation to focus on the particular factors which shape the perfidy<sup>1</sup> or betrayal that persons impacted by sexual harm can experience at the hands of the organizations they are a part of.** We will also outline some basic **principles** that should be considered when developing **protocols** for institutional responses to sexual harm. Finally, we will consider promising **practice models** that can be utilized to both guide institutional responses and shift organizational attitudes about sexual harm in powerful and positive ways.

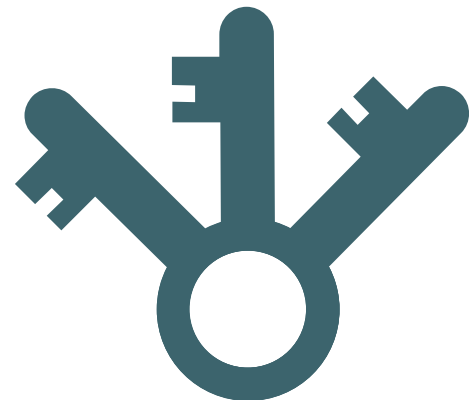
This chapter will ask questions including: **What is at stake for individuals when their institutions do not respond appropriately to situations of sexual harm?** How can organizations be most supportive to those affected by sexual harm? What needs to be in place in order to respond to and prevent sexual harm? Are there positive models or examples that can be leveraged or adopted in our own organizational environments?

It has now been well established in this manual that people impacted by sexual harm have unique needs as a result of their experiences. These needs vary based on the intersectional realities of who the individuals are, external factors, their particular histories, and a variety of power dynamics. Victims/survivors have needs including physical/emotional/spiritual care and healing; agency, voice, and a reclamation of personal power; education, information, and options; fair processes and justice. Harm-doers also have needs, including accountability; restrictions which prevent further or future harm; education, information, and support.<sup>2</sup>

**Chapter 5 will consider the opportunities for personal and societal transformation in situations where sexual harm has occurred.**

Structural realities, such as how a reporting process is experienced by the victim/survivor, can compound the negative impacts of the sexual harm because of the perfidy experienced when organizations do not live up to expectations to provide for, protect, defend, or hold accountable those in their purview. **When sexual harm occurs within an organization, that organization assumes a particular responsibility and corresponding opportunity to respond appropriately.** Closely examining our structures and the systems utilized to process situations of harm is central to understanding how organizations can compound trauma or be agents of healing, hope, and wholeness for those impacted by sexual harm. This chapter will analyze these dynamics in the following four sections:

1. Organizational Perfidy
2. Just Principles
3. Effective Protocols
4. Models of Promise





## Chapter Objectives

This chapter will first focus attention on how organizations can support people affected by sexual harm through collaborative processes that establish or rebuild trust in the wake of sexual trauma. **We will also look at how organizations can develop protocols that honor the justice needs which emerge in the aftermath of sexual harm.** In this chapter we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Investigate the particular perfidy that individuals experience as a result of organizational responses to sexual harm.
- Examine principles for consideration in developing organizational responses to sexual harm.
- Offer audit tools and frameworks that can assist organizations in producing protocols for use in responding to sexual harm.
- Consider some leading practice models for responding to sexual harm.

- As participants reflect on these experiences, they are invited to make observations on the back of the tear shaped paper cut outs about the role institutions or organizations may have played in these circumstances, specifically noting any dynamics related to power.
- To conclude the opening exercise, participants will choose one tear to name in the presence of the group with one word or a short phrase as they tape their tear to a space on a wall that the instructor has identified for this purpose. After each situation is verbally offered, there will be a moment of silence while the group thoughtfully holds those impacted, sending them compassion and care.

## Opening Exercise Tears of the Universe

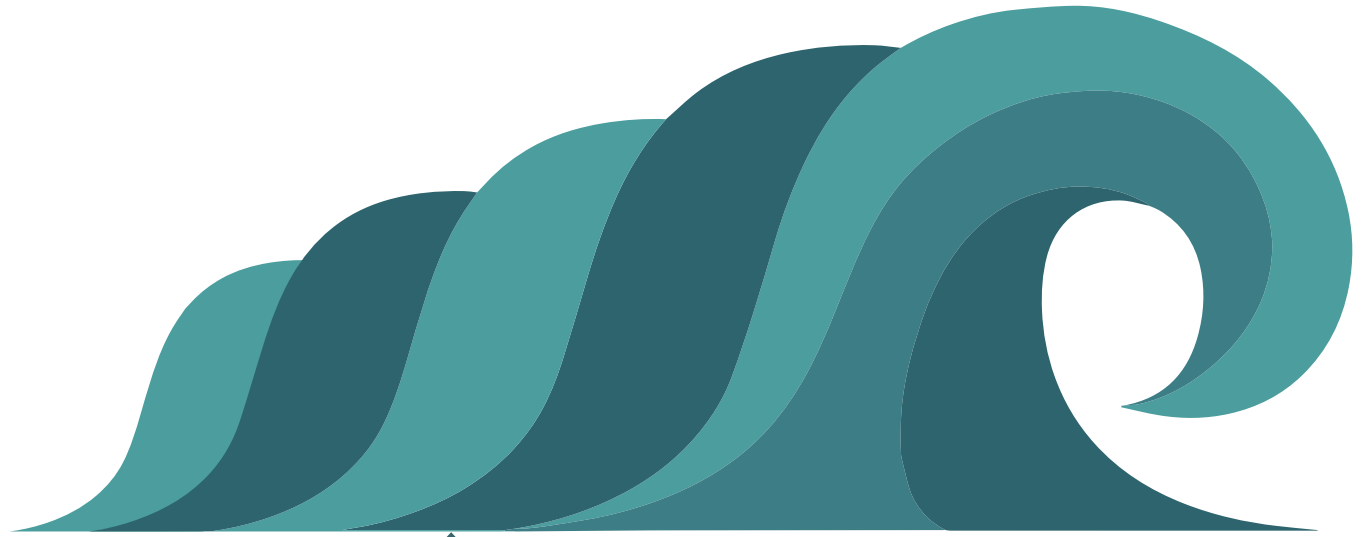
Each of us have either personally known or been aware of situations of power-based personal harm, in which a connection that is based on certain expectations, trust or obligation has been violated. For the purposes of this exercise, participants are encouraged to consider instances of betrayal which have occurred within institutions or organizations. The perfidious nature of this type of experience transcends individual circumstance.

### Instructions:

- Participants will be given two to three tear-shaped paper cutouts to note situations in which they have had experiences of or been aware of organizational perfidy or betrayal.



## Chapter 3: Content Map



### CASCADE FEATURES

- Progressive Effects

### CHAPTER SEGMENTS

- Organizational Perfidy
- Just Principles
- Effective Protocols
- Models of Promise

### KEY NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Structure
- Collaboration

We have investigated the physical impacts of sexual harm with the first wave, the role of social structures in the second wave, and the realities of disrupted relational and personal stability in the third wave. **The cumulative impact of previous waves roll into the fourth, which carries with it the potential negative impact of organizational betrayal in the wake of profound personal trauma.**

Organizations are meaning making operations. Whether a place of worship, a school, a prison, a political organization, a non-governmental organization, a social club, or the military, the organizations we are a part of help us to order our experiences through the world views, frameworks, and systems they provide. As chapter 2 says, institutions and organizations serve as a “collective voice and therefore their actions have exponential power. When abuses of power are experienced personally (through specific incidences of sexual violence) *as well as corporately* (through the negligence or complicity of social structures/institutions) this combination can be profoundly destabilizing.”<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the fourth wave offers the possibility for transformative momentum toward wholeness. **While potential harm can be amplified by organizations acting on behalf of the collective, they are also uniquely positioned to implement processes and protocols that offer security, dignity, attachment, structure, and the possibility for justice.** As opposed to perfidy, organizations have the opportunity to exercise fidelity.

Telling and knowing can be risky because a bad response from others can constitute a new and harmful betrayal.

- Jennifer Freyd

## Section 1: Perfidy

Sexual harm involves a sexualized abuse of power exercised against another individual. When sexual harm happens within the larger context of an organization, an additional layer or wave of complexity is introduced. **Power differentials coupled with the impacts of harm and the obligations that result are all amplified when organizations are involved.** This section will unpack these realities and provide vocabulary for some of the dynamics that develop between individuals and their organizations when harm has occurred – dynamics built on trust and involving power.

### Organizational Obligation

Organizations assume liability for the wellbeing of the individuals/constituents for whom they are responsible and are trusted to meet a variety of physical, emotional, and/or spiritual needs. In light of this, organizations develop formal (and other) systems to respond when things go wrong, and to address the resultant needs of the various parties involved. **When institutions fail to deliver on an expectation of guardianship, the results are intensely disruptive to an individual's sense of order and meaning.** Specifically, when sexual harm has occurred, the compromise disrupts both physical and moral stability and compounds the traumatic impacts.

**Principles inform protocols which provide structure for relationships and power dynamics.** These guides frame primary organizational interactions and responses and ar-

ticulate an institution's values while moving the organization toward its objectives. **These frameworks also provide the meta-structure within which organizations meet our expectations to respond to, care for, support, and hold accountable those within the organization when abuse happens.**



### Betrayal Trauma Theory

When expectations are not met with regard to victims/survivors and/or harm-doers, organizations become agents of significant further harm to the impacted parties. Individuals rely on their organizations and institutions for clear and helpful structure, protection, and justice. **If** organizations respond to sexual harm, it is often with processes that take on a confusing and opaque life and momentum of their own. This is disempowering for the impacted parties, further compounding the trauma that has been experienced. “Betrayal Trauma Theory” articulates how, at the individual level, “abuses perpetrated by someone the victim trusts and depends on – pose a unique challenge to the victim, creating a conflict between the need to maintain relationships and the need to respond to betrayal with protective action.”<sup>4</sup> **When unwanted sexual experiences occur within the context of an institution, dissociation, or a sense that the world is disordered, leads to a dramatic magnification of trauma.**

**Those impacted by sexual harm have needs related to: security, dignity, attachment, structure, and justice.** When harm happens within institutions, there is an assumption of organizational responsibility for meeting those needs. When this does not happen, organizational perfidy is committed and further harm is experienced.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFDY		
BETRAYAL TRAUMA		
Occurs when someone you trust and/or someone who has power over you mistreats you. For instance, it's a betrayal trauma when your boss sexually harasses you. Research shows that betrayal trauma causes shame and leads to real, measurable harm, such as symptoms of depression, anxiety, problematic substance abuse, and physical illness.		
DYNAMICS OF BETRAYAL TRAUMA WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victims/survivors who experience sexual harm within organizations are then reliant on those same organizations to manage the response to their situations in ways that do not cause further harm.</li> <li>• Victims/survivors experience a negative compounding of their initial trauma when the organization that they put their trust in to provide for them in some way ignores, neglects, or mishandles their experience.</li> </ul>		
BETRAYAL BLINDNESS		
In many cases those impacted by sexual harm are reliant on the institutions they are a part of, so the reality of what has happened is neglected in favor of the status quo when the benefits of remaining "blind" outweigh the consequences of disclosure. Victims/survivors and bystanders can be incapacitated in this way as a result of exposure to harm. To see injustice requires action, and maintaining our blindness to betrayal allows us to maintain some sense or order in our world, even if that order is corrupted.		
BETRAYAL TYPOLOGIES WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS		
OMISSION (implicit)	COMMISSION (complicit)	CONSPIRACIES OF SILENCE (explicit)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can happen unwittingly due to negligence or oversight</li> <li>• Can happen intentionally via "<i>omission of protective, preventative, or responsive institutional actions...such as organizational tolerance for harassment, a lack of standards or serious sanctions, and management that does not take reports of harassment seriously.</i>"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed along with or secondarily to omission</li> <li>• Carried out against victims/survivors or whistleblowers through retaliation or retribution</li> <li>• Minimizing or ascribing a lack of credibility to experience/reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreeing, formally or not, to be publicly silent on a generally known situation which has caused or is causing harm</li> <li>• Misapplying or ignoring accountability processes, if they even exist</li> <li>• Leading to pervasively corrupt organizational culture</li> </ul>
D.A.R.V.O.		
Deny the situation of harm; Attack the individual making a disclosure of report; Reverse the perception of Victim and Offender so the harm-doer assumes the role of victim and the true victim/survivor is cast as the harm-doer.		

Figure 4.1. Adapted from Foley, D.O. & Dittel, T. (2016).

## Exercise 1

### Organizational Perfidy

In this exercise, we investigate what perfidy can look like in the international aid arena. Consider the following example of organizational perfidy experienced by Haitian nationals who were reliant on the British non-governmental organization Oxfam for material aid following an earthquake in 2010. As you read through this case study, reflect on other situations that you may be familiar with that exhibit similar dynamics.

#### Case Study: Oxfam, Haiti Prostitution Scandal

In 2011 the British international aid organization Oxfam was made aware that employees had been engaging in prostitution, sexual exploitation, and the exchange of sexual favors for humanitarian aid after a 2010 earthquake. The allegations included the involvement of Haitian minors as young as ages 12 and 13. Four Oxfam officials left the organization, including Oxfam's Haiti country chief, who had been directly implicated in the allegations of abuse, but he was allowed a "phased and dignified" departure from Oxfam, going on to work at another humanitarian aid organization which stated that it hired him without knowledge of his involvement in this case. Despite Oxfam employees continuing to report more extensive misconduct to the organization, the full extent of the scandal was not revealed until a 2018 investigation by *The Times* which led to public apologies, additional resignations, departures of senior Oxfam staff, and an examination of protocols.

#### Instructions

1. **PREPARE** - Read the article linked above or visit <https://news.sky.com/story/how-oxfam-sexual-misconduct-scandal-unfolded-11250070>
2. **PAIR** - Self organize in groups of two to three participants. Each group will be provided with a sheet of flip chart paper and a marker.
3. **SHARE** - As a group, take time to identify the following concepts outlined in Figure 4.1. The group's task is to draw out a map of key instances when they saw these concepts active in the Oxfam case study. For groups who need further clarity, refer to the endnotes.<sup>6</sup>
  - Betrayal Trauma
  - Organizational Dynamics of Betrayal Trauma
  - Betrayal Blindness
  - Acts of Omission and Commission
  - Conspiracy of Silence

I know for sure that what we dwell on is who we become.

- Oprah Winfrey

## Section 2: Just Principles

Organizational perfidy takes many forms, whether it is the sexual exploitation of people in need by staff of a non-governmental organization; the world-wide crisis of Catholic clergy sexual abuse of children and others;<sup>7</sup> the failure of universities to hold harm-doers responsible,<sup>8</sup> or the military's mistreatment of whistleblowers.<sup>9</sup> All too often, institutions fail to prevent sexual harm. **When it does occur, it is critical that obligation is accepted in terms of protection, process, care, and resources for victims/survivors.** When obligations are not met, the experience is that of betrayal, adding insult to injury, and unleashing a cascade of harms that can be personally devastating.<sup>10</sup>

In the aftermath of such harm, victims/survivors have needs related to security, dignity, attachment, structure, and justice. **These five components relate to ten principles that trauma-informed institutions must attend to: safety and choice, empowerment and identity, relationship and reintegration, trustworthiness and collaboration, and advocacy and resilience.**<sup>11</sup> These principles inform the development of protocols.

### Security Needs

The first and most basic principle that should guide organizational responses to situations of sexual harm is to meet the physical and emotional **safety** needs of victims/survivors. Interactions and processes should be approached through a trauma-informed lens in order to preserve or restore emotional and physical security. A second guiding principle involves **choice**. Victims/survivors should be

consulted, and where possible, direct the process and collaborate on outcomes. They should have choices when accessing services, including any available internal helping resources, along with community services.

### Dignity Needs

Third, **empowerment** builds on the principles of voice, choice, and dignity. This focus enables victims/survivors to claim personal agency and ownership over disclosure choices and support options. This is a critical component of the post-trauma journey, as sexual harm is fundamentally about one person assuming coercive control over another person's body. Reclaiming personal power is therefore a significant pre- and post-trauma milestone. **Identity**, the fourth principle, is closely linked with dignity, and calls for responses that are intersectional and trauma-informed. We must interrogate our structures and organizational cultures for racism, classism, physical/emotional/mental ableism, homophobia, and other forms of bias that contribute to further disenfranchisement.

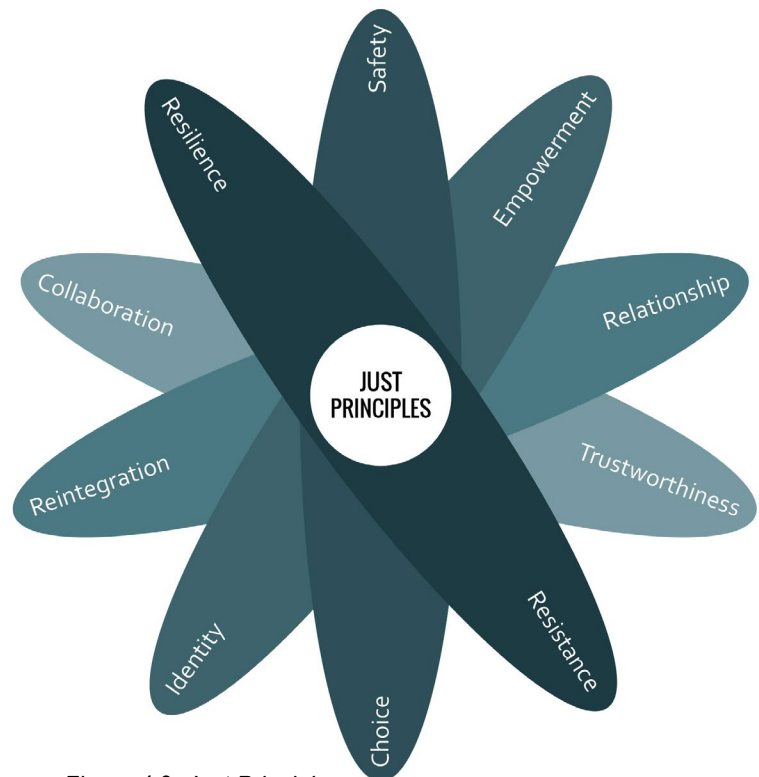


Figure 4:2: Just Principles

### Attachment Needs

The fifth and sixth principles recognize that situations of sexual harm fundamentally change and/or sever relationships both with the harm-doer(s) and often with others in the victim's/survivor's social networks. These networks of affected parties are often linked to, or at times tied into, family and community systems and/or organizational structures. Within these work and affinity contexts, disclosure can result in further disruption both interpersonally and professionally. The principles of **relationship** and **reintegration** require that these realities are considered and addressed for the wellbeing of the victim/survivor and as a necessary ingredient to the successful/satisfactory implementation of any repair/recovery or restitution process.<sup>12</sup>

### Structure Needs

Emerging from the principles of relationship and reintegration, organizational perfidy involves fractured trust between the victim/survivor and the institution. Therefore, the seventh principle, **trustworthiness**, is about restoring or rebuilding trust through good process, honoring confidentiality, offering transparency, and providing accountability. Related to this is the institutional imperative to examine system gaps that may have allowed harm to occur in the first place. The eighth principle, **collaboration**, loops back to the first principle and requires that physical and emotional safety are offered in trauma-informed ways and that our responsive measures are likewise trauma-informed. This ensures that our approaches are victim-driven; that victims/survivors are clear on the process and have consented to what is going to happen through the process; and that our policies are intersectionally informed around needs that emerge in light of identity realities.<sup>13</sup>

### Justice Needs

Justice is about answering to obligations that have been created as determined by the needs/wishes of the victim/survivor. It is about the imperative to set right what has been disrupted and includes the mandate for system-wide change. This emphasis is captured in the call for **advocacy** and massive **resilience**, the ninth and tenth principles. At the micro level, these concepts invite embodied self-awareness and self-healing rituals in the form of practices such as drumming, dance, drama, and culturally responsive contemplative practices. At the macro level we see these same principles applied, but with an activist agenda toward advocacy and policy change that involves structural and cultural shifts. As seen in the #MeToo movement and other

grass-roots mobilizations, new metrics are being introduced for processes of justice-making. This emphasis on both advocacy and resilience will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

### Why Principles Matter

Energy follows intention. This is true both for an individual's personal experience and the ways in which organizations operate. Organizations with principles that are justice and victim-driven will develop coherent practices and protocols that are permeated with a high level of integrity. A clear articulation and authentic embodiment of the principles that ground an organization's actions is key to developing protocols that work well for impacted parties. Many organizations are not prepared to respond appropriately to sexual harm, much less deal with the complexity of the issue in preventive or proactive ways. **Faulty protocols can develop when there is a flimsy commitment to affected parties and/or thin principles to govern conduct and policy. This results in organizational perfidy.**

Just as organizational mission or vision statements inform and drive strategic plans, principles provide the chain of reasoning which inform and drive protocol development. Principles serve as the fundamental basis upon which practices are built. Of course, it must be acknowledged that while organizations often aspire to certain principles, the lived reality can be something else, whether that is due to acts of omission or commission. **Organizations that are positioned to respond well to sexual harm have clearly articulated organizational principles informing cogent protocols.**

In the wake of sexual harm, organizations must attend to the needs of those directly impacted. In addition, there will be community needs around safety, trustworthiness, and relationship which may indicate that a more systemic or cultural transformation is required to prevent such things from happening again. Organizational responses to situations of harm must be carefully considered, monitored, and evaluated. **By centering our principles on justice, institutions have the opportunity to change the systems that cause or allow harm to happen.** System transformation is an explicit community need.

## Case Study: Safe Church

We now consider a comprehensive approach to addressing harmful dynamics at both micro and macro organizational levels. The following case study offers an example of how child sexual abuse can be addressed proactively within local faith community contexts. From prevention to response, this program engages individuals, institutions, and systems.

The Samaritan Counseling Center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA developed the training, which is now used in communities of faith across the country. Safe Church is a process that works to shift congregational culture to provide adults with the education and awareness they need to create safe environments and protect children from sexual harm. **Safe Church is a comprehensive approach which involves congregational teams meeting regularly for education around prevention and response best practices.** Participating churches are offered guidance in policy development, ongoing educational resources for congregants, worship and curriculum resources for all ages, and training for staff and volunteers.

**As opposed to a focus on liability issues, Safe Church centers the issue of sexual violence prevention and response as a strategic organizational initiative.** Working to build congregation-wide ownership through the development of policies, adoption of practical safety protocols, ongoing education, training, and advocacy, the result is a comprehensive approach to addressing child sexual abuse. The approach builds out protocols based on a clear set of principles.

The Safe Church program features some of the following components:

1. “Core team” members gather to participate in an extensive strategic planning process involving regular training meetings. The core team works with church leadership to craft new policy or review and update existing church policy, guided by the program’s established best practices;
2. The core team works to raise awareness of the Safe Church program with the congregation through worship resources, promotion of congregational education sessions, and seeking input from leaders within the congregation to inform an interactive policy-making process;
3. Two congregational trainings are offered by trained facilitators designed for caregivers, parents, and all adults within the faith community;
4. Three-hour staff and volunteer training sessions are conducted for those working with children – covering topics including the congregation’s new or revised policies, ways to keep children safe, and appropriate interventions when they see warning signs of abuse.



5. Ongoing compliance requirements are followed, including:
  - Conducting three levels of background checks for adults working with children.
  - One Sunday service each year dedicated to prevention and response themes.
  - Biannual adult recertification processes involving extensive paperwork.
  - Regular and ongoing education of children in the congregation.
  - An expectation that two adults are present when children are being supervised.<sup>14</sup>

Over a two year time period, one such Christian congregation in Virginia, USA, trained 50 of the 120 adults in the church, undertaking what the pastor calls “a culture shift”<sup>15</sup> that brought with it opportunities to:

- Understand why this issue is so important.
- Focus on the care of children and youth, while offering framing to consider and process issues of consent, safety, and trauma for adults at the congregational level.
- Consider congregational access for other marginalized groups, making the group more aware of how, when, and where they can be intentional about welcome and inclusion.

While the overall experience of participating in Safe Church was positive, the congregation also faced challenges including:

- Gaining buy-in from members who questioned whether this labor intensive process was really necessary since the group is tight knit and knows each other well. Full endorsement was lacking as concerns were expressed about whether this program cultivates a culture of suspicion if every participant is viewed as a potential harm-doer.
- A need for adults to accept responsibility to recognize potential abuse or grooming behavior from other adults and to have the courage and know how to step in. With knowledge comes responsibility and that has not always been a comfortable space within a tight knit church family.
- The program is victim/survivor centered, but some Christian groups are theologically oriented to work from restorative perspectives which would seek to address and involve harm-doers. This inherent tension can be a practical challenge for a congregation.
- The program’s ongoing compliance requirements can be difficult to sustain over the long term.



One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results.

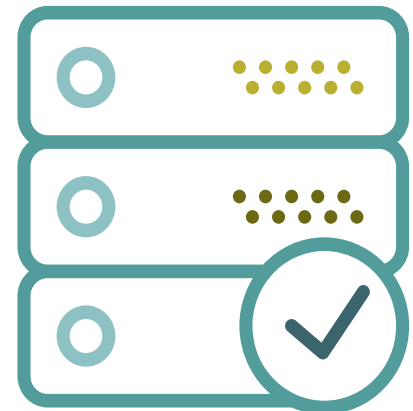
- Milton Friedman

### Section 3: Effective Protocols

**Institutions commit perfidy against their members when security, dignity, attachment, structure, and justice needs are not met.** The principles which we are proposing in this manual include an institutional commitment to safety, choice, empowerment, identity, relationship, reintegration, trustworthiness, collaboration, advocacy, and resilience.

Effective protocols are driven by principles grounded in a firm commitment to justice characterized by institutional courage. Figure 4.3 frames the scope of what has been covered in this chapter so far, along with a set of questions to help guide the development of effective protocols.

While various situations are distinctive from each other, there are universally applicable considerations that courageous organizations should attend to. **Organizations have the opportunity to become trustworthy collaborators committed to offering processes that address harms. These actions demonstrate institutional courage and offer a movement toward wholeness for parties impacted by sexual harm.**<sup>16</sup>



TRAUMA-INFORMED SEXUAL HARM RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATIONS		
PERFIDY	PRINCIPLES	PRODUCING PROTOCOL
SECURITY	SAFETY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the organization proactive about preventing harm?</li> <li>2. Is physical and emotional safety ensured?</li> <li>3. Are “Do No Harm” measures in place?</li> <li>4. Are impacted parties experiencing us as “safe” people and a “safe” place?</li> <li>5. Does the organization allow dynamics to persist in which harm happens frequently or is minimized when it does occur?</li> <li>6. How difficult is it for situations of harm to be reported?</li> </ol>
	CHOICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are victims/survivors being actively supported in taking control over their healing journey? Are their experiences being validated?</li> <li>2. Are victims/survivors effectively educated about recovery and safety options?</li> </ol>

TRAUMA-INFORMED SEXUAL HARM RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATIONS		
PERFIDY	PRINCIPLES	PRODUCING PROTOCOL
DIGNITY	EMPOWERMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is power being shared (structurally) with impacted parties in effective ways?</li> <li>2. Is victim/survivor decision-making prioritized? Where and how?</li> <li>3. Are impacted parties assisted in identifying their own strengths and resources?</li> <li>4. Are community support structures being effectively involved and considered for long-term impacts?</li> </ol>
	IDENTITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the protocol address the physical needs of diverse people? How?</li> <li>2. Are language and other diversity needs addressed in verbal and written format?</li> <li>3. Does the composition of employees and leaders reflect the identities of the people being served?</li> <li>4. Does the organization foster discrimination against those who have been harmed or in the wake of a situation of harm?</li> <li>5. Does the organization respond differently to reporters in light of intersectional dynamics (i.e. race, gender, sexual orientation, position, class)?</li> <li>6. Does the organization communicate or demonstrate bias against those who have been harmed or in the wake of a situation of harm?</li> </ol>
CONNECTION	RELATIONSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who are the identified support persons for affected parties?</li> <li>2. Are these support persons equipped to be effective?</li> <li>3. Do impacted parties experience the institution as having effective processes?</li> </ol>
	REINTEGRATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are impacted parties supported in reintegrating into life &amp; social circles?</li> <li>2. What formal (and informal) restorative processes are in place?</li> <li>3. Is the community at large being educated about a culture of healthy sexual relationships? Where and how?</li> </ol>
STRUCTURE	TRUSTWORTHINESS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How (in)adequate is the organization's response to situations of harm?</li> <li>2. Does the physical structure and process support trust building? Is there transparency at all levels of the organization?</li> <li>3. Is confidentiality ensured? Are there gaps in the system or physical set up?</li> <li>4. Are appropriate boundaries being maintained?</li> <li>5. Does the organization engage in retribution or retaliation in the wake of report of harm?</li> </ol>
	COLLABORATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are entry, maintenance, and exit processes trauma-informed?</li> <li>2. Are the organizational 'rules of engagement' clear and consensual for all parties involved?</li> <li>3. Do referral processes reflect a trauma-informed approach?</li> </ol>
JUSTICE	ADVOCACY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What needs and obligations have been created by the situation of harm?</li> <li>2. How will responding to these needs and obligations create real and lasting change in systems?</li> <li>3. What ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes are in place in order to gauge system-wide accountability?</li> </ol>
	RESILIENCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What resources are in place for resilience work among victims/survivors, harm-doers, and other affected parties?</li> <li>2. What practices/resources are in place to foster institutional resilience post-trauma?</li> </ol>

Figure 4:3: Adapted from Harris, M. & Fallot, R. (Eds.). (2001) and SAMHSA<sup>12</sup>

**Consider these best practice guidelines:**



**Attend to criminal laws and civil rights codes:** Organizations are embedded in larger processes with obligations and legal compliance issues to which they are accountable and that should serve as a frame for protocols.

**Utilize Trauma-informed practices:** While organizations meet their legal obligations they must go outside of those parameters and ensure that their procedures are trauma-informed or risk organizational perfidy against victims/survivors and other impacted parties.



**Take responsibility:** Organizations must learn from and accept responsibility when they are in any way accountable for harm. However, organizations face significant structural barriers to honesty about sexual harm happening within their purview. Although counterintuitive, transparency is the first step to safety and reparation for those impacted by sexual harm.



**Assure safety for those who make reports:** Organizations must have protocols in place which encourage and support whistleblowers and others making disclosures or reports.



**Implement evaluation and surveys:** Protocols should be clear around organizational self study in order to evaluate the experience of those who encounter the institutional process and to ensure alignment with principles including trauma-informed practices, and legal compliance.

**Institutional leadership:** Organizational leadership should lead on this issue. They should be aware of both research and best practice and be directing institutional efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence.



**Practice transparency:** Data, processes, and protocols should be made available to the public, while respecting ethical and legal considerations around privacy and confidentiality. Various perfidious tendencies develop when transparency is lacking.



**Exploit the opportunity for organizational leadership:** Self preservationist/protectionist institutional impulses can easily lead organizations to further harm victims/survivors, fail to hold harm-doers accountable, and cause damage to institutional reputation over the long haul. These hazards can be not only avoided but subverted if the institution chooses to lead on this issue out of what it has learned from the past and/or its prevention efforts moving forward. In fact, these can be opportunities for positive marketing. When institutions are able to be honest and transparent, perfidy is reversed and allegiance can be restored or established.



**Offer adequate resourcing:** Organizations demonstrate their will to make real and substantive change when they adequately resource through funding and support of personnel who have authority to access change. Principles and protocols are not enough if the institution is not ready to adequately support their implementation.



## Case Study

### Higher Education, Title IX

In the following case study, we provide a snapshot of the federal protocol requirements to which United States colleges and universities must comply. Institutions that have effective responses to sexual harm are able to both comply with federal standards such as Title IX and exceed those expectations, by engaging trauma-informed principles and transforming their learning communities into resilient settings of institutional courage.

Educational institutions across the United States are required to comply with a 1972 law commonly referred to as Title IX which reads: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”.<sup>17</sup> The application of Title IX has developed and expanded, from its early days as a guarantee of equal rights for women in athletics to President Obama’s 2011 Dear Colleague letter which defines sexual assault as a civil rights violation.<sup>18</sup> In the era of President Trump and Education Secretary DeVos, the law continues to evolve with proposed guidance in favor of due process rights for responding parties and a rollback of university liability.

Colleges and universities have worked to develop comprehensive Title IX procedures embedded in more extensive relationship violence and sexual misconduct policies. A stripped down outline of the approach that many schools have taken is: receive a report of sexual discrimination, determine if the issue is persistent, pervasive or severe enough to rise to the level of a Title IX violation, and/or determine if a violation meets the institution’s standard of evidence, and if not, close it without sanction for the accused.

As the procedures are applied, a significant number of situations of sexual harm receive a less than robust response. Institutions are not motivated to respond in a full throttled way out of fear over negative public perception, or that their response mechanisms will be perceived to lack due process or challenge academic freedom. Meanwhile, victims/survivors are disincentivized to report because they are generally not interested in engaging a system they know will not meet their needs and may cause more trauma than the original event did. “Each college and university now has a choice: nervously guard its reputation at the profound expense of student well-being or courageously invest in student safety, health and education.”<sup>19</sup>



## Exercise 2

### Institutional Courage

Use the following scorecard (continued on next page) to evaluate an **instance of sexual harm** that you are aware of in an **organizational context**.

INSTITUTIONAL COURAGE SCORECARD				
	Institutional Courage Protocols	Outcome Descriptions	1 - 10 Score	Action Steps
1	Comply with criminal laws and civil rights codes.	Beyond compliance, institutional courage means the needs of those impacted by sexual harm are met within the spirit and letter of the law.		
2	Respond sensitively to victim disclosures.	Courageous institutions do not engage in harmful responses such as DARVO, and do practice trauma-informed responses to disclosure.		
3	Bear witness, be accountable, and apologize.	Courageous institutions listen with compassion, and when appropriate or necessary, apologize.		
4	Cherish the whistleblower.	Courageous institutions honor, encourage, and provide safety for those who bear witness to the truth, no matter how inconvenient.		
5	Engage in self-study.	Courageous institutions practice honest self-assessment, which can prevent institutional betrayal.		
6	Conduct anonymous surveys.	Courageous institutions gather anonymous feedback and offer confidential reporting mechanisms to assist in collecting meaningful data. This facilitates the development of strategic responses and shifting institutional culture and climate.		

INSTITUTIONAL COURAGE SCORECARD				
	Institutional Courage Protocols	Outcome Descriptions	1 - 10 Score	Action Steps
7	Make sure leadership is educated about research on sexual violence and related trauma.	Courageous institutions work to shift the culture and climate by educating from the top down, using data collection to inform strategic institutional responses.		
8	Be transparent about data and policy.	Institutions fear negative public fallout if they openly share information and statistics. Ironically, sexual violence actually decreases when it is honestly assessed and public perception can improve significantly. Courageous institutions share information with the public in ways that protect the confidentiality of those impacted by sexual harm, while facilitating an understanding of processes and the scope of the problem and possibilities for the future.		
9	Use the power of the institution to address the societal problem.	Institutions act in courageous ways when they lead on this issue from their area of expertise.		
10	Commit resources to steps one through nine.	In order to make an impact, institutional courage dictates that resources are invested in both comprehensive prevention and response efforts and that this issue becomes a strategic initiative endorsed in meaningful ways by those at the top of the institution.		

Figure 4:4: Adapted from Freyd, J.J. (2018)<sup>16</sup>

### Exercise 3

## Examining Sexual Harm in United States Higher Education

Read the following article and work in groups of two to three to answer the questions below:

### Article: Official Campus Statistics for Sexual Violence Mislead<sup>19</sup>

1. Why do victims/survivors of sexual abuse on college campuses hesitate to make disclosures or official reports?
2. Why do colleges and universities discourage reporting and attempt to cover up situations of sexual violence?
3. How do colleges discourage reporting?
4. What are the results of discouraged reporting?
5. What can be done to counter harmful effects of sexual violence cover ups on campuses?
6. How did the author's institution respond when she asked for their assistance in conducting such data collection?

*Possible answers are offered in the endnotes<sup>20</sup>*



## Receiving Disclosures of Sexual Harm

This final section on organizational protocols provides practical tips for how to effectively respond to sexual violence disclosures. The experience of sharing a situation of personal sexual violence can be a key pivot point in a victim's/survivor's healing journey.<sup>21</sup> **If a victim/survivor has a positive disclosure experience, they are more likely to continue sharing and looking for support, help, and healing.** If the victim/survivor has a negative first experience in disclosing, they are more likely to engage in self-blaming behaviors, not engage in any sort of institutional or legal process, and may wait to get other help and support that they need. Appropriate, positive, and effective responses to disclosures of sexual violence is imperative.<sup>22</sup>

An appropriate and positive response on the part of an individual or institution means believing the victim/survivor and really listening to them. **Since only 2-10% of sexual assault reports turn out to be false, starting from a point of believing is important both physically, psychologically and emotionally for the victim/survivor.**<sup>23</sup> Saying "I believe you," may feel awkward, but it can make the difference between encouraging a victim/survivor to keep talking and seeking help, or that same individual experiencing amplified trauma, anxiety, and dissociation. Starting from a place of belief is also key to an institution's wellbeing. Institutional climate deteriorates when disclosure is mishandled and institutional betrayal may occur for the victim/survivor.

### Consider the following when receiving a disclosure of sexual violence:<sup>24</sup>

#### DO:

- Believe the victim/survivor and validate their feelings.
- Listen and be comfortable with silence.
- Address immediate needs.
- Reassure the person the violence was not their fault.
- Acknowledge the person's strengths both personally and in terms of resources and connections they have.
- Address confidentiality. If you are required by your job to report the disclosure, make sure the victim/survivor knows that as soon as possible!
- Understand potential triggers and avoid them.
- Ask how the person wants to be supported.
- Let the person tell their story in their own words and at their own pace.
- Respect experiences and concerns.
- Respect decisions and restore choices.



- Respect gender identity and pronouns.
- Respect and mirror language choices.
- Recognize trauma responses and their impacts.

**DO NOT:**

- Make promises you can't keep or take on more than you can handle.
- Disregard the impacts of systemic oppression on victims/survivors.
- Ignore your own needs after you receive a disclosure.

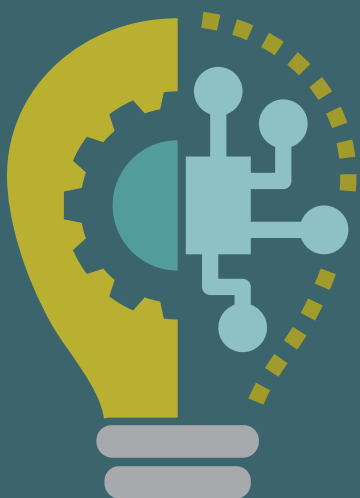
## Case Study

### Callisto

This case study offers an opportunity for schools in the United States to support affected parties by enhancing safety, offering choice and empowerment, considering identity and relationship, encouraging reintegration, working at institutional trustworthiness and collaboration, while simultaneously fostering advocacy and resilience. Institutions that have effective sexual harm policies in place are positioned to positively transform their organizational culture by practicing institutional courage as detailed in the example below.

Callisto<sup>31</sup> is a technology-based non-profit which has produced a product that can uncover and reveal repeat “perpetrators of professional sexual coercion and sexual assault.” They identify the problem they are addressing as follows:

“Sexual assault and professional sexual coercion are far too common and often never reported. The process of reporting can feel isolating – or worse, retraumatizing. Reporting also comes with its own set of personal and professional risks. Callisto changes the equation. Our technology empowers survivors, providing options and allowing disclosure in a way that feels safe. Our unique matching system securely connects victims of the same perpetrator to identify repeat offenders.”



Callisto is a unique Model of Promise in that it successfully addresses the Domains of Promising Practice. It is trauma-informed and offers victim/survivor support, makes policies and procedures clear, offers a vehicle for meaningful accountability measures, provides system wide educational opportunities, requires system wide engagement, is a tool that was specifically designed to facilitate transparency, and offers regular opportunities for ongoing assessment.

**[Watch the Callisto Ted Talk Here](https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica_ladd_the_reporting_system_that_sexual_assault_survivors_want)**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica\\_ladd\\_the\\_reporting\\_system\\_that\\_sexual\\_assault\\_survivors\\_want](https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica_ladd_the_reporting_system_that_sexual_assault_survivors_want)

The moment we begin to fear the opinions of others and hesitate to tell the truth that is in us, and from motives of policy are silent when we should speak, the divine floods of light and life no longer flow into our souls.

- Elizabeth Cady Stanton

## Section 4: Models of Promise

As organizations map their principles and develop protocols to address sexual harm they must keep the victim/survivor voice central. This prioritizes justice as a primary consideration. **The following Domains of Promising Practice, when implemented, can serve to map the development of organizational models of promise:**<sup>25</sup>

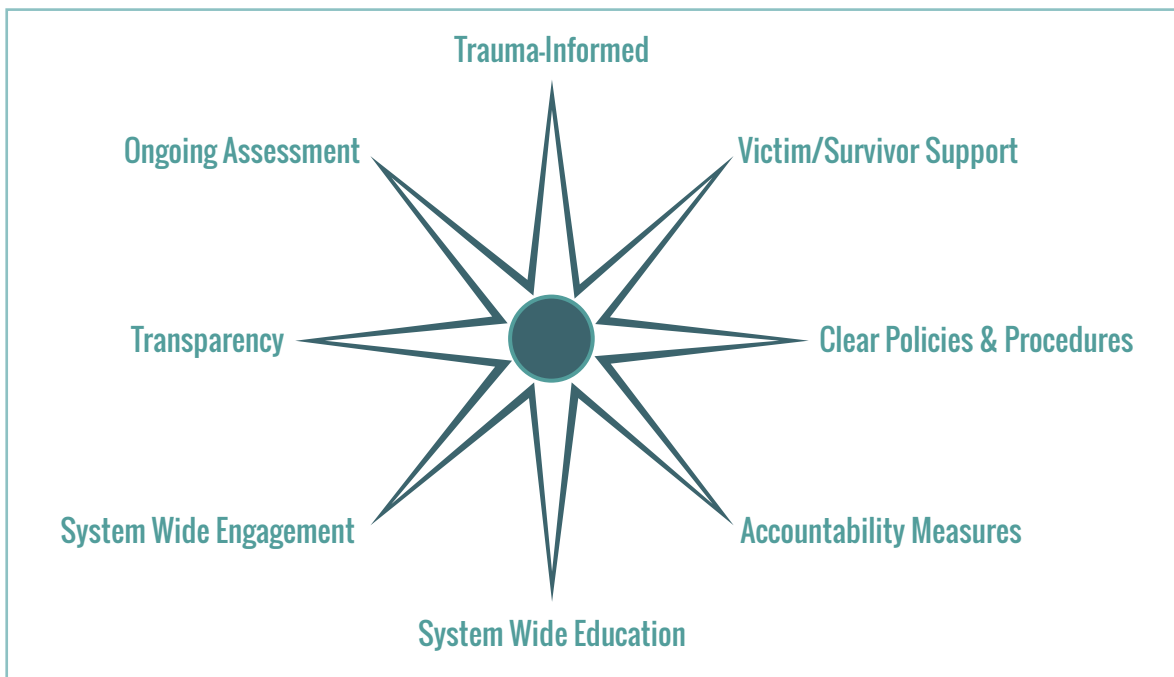


Figure 4:5: Adapted from NASPA (2017)<sup>26</sup>

### **Trauma-Informed**

Throughout this writing, certain practices and protocols have been identified as “Trauma-informed” (TI). **The benchmarks of TI practice are consolidated in this chapter’s principles: safety, choice, empowerment, identity, relationship, reintegration, trustworthiness, collaboration, advocacy, and resilience and are features of institutional courage.** “The program, organization, or system responds by applying the principles of a trauma-informed approach to all areas of functioning...[and] integrates an understanding that the experience of traumatic events impacts all people involved, whether directly or indirectly.”<sup>27</sup> Language, behaviors, and policies should shift to be attentive to the impacts of trauma.

### **Victim/Survivor Support**

**This domain covers the crucial aspects of physical and emotional safety for those impacted by sexual harm, ideally offering wrap-around supportive measures in terms of both internal and external resources.** Safety and resources may represent both immediate and ongoing needs. When the needs of affected parties are prioritized, organizations demonstrate institutional courage.

### **Clear Policies and Procedures**

**This domain addresses the importance of fairness and coherence to all phases of the process and procedures.** In a trauma-informed scenario, it also helps the impacted parties know what to expect from the process, and provides the parties with the information that they need in order to be engaged in meaningful ways. Institutions are held accountable to their stated processes, so procedural clarity also fosters higher levels of compliance and equity.

### **Accountability Measures**

Harm produces need. Justice “is best understood as meeting the needs of victims.”<sup>28</sup> **This domain recognizes that in the aftermath of sexual harm both the victim/survivor and other impacted parties will have needs that must be met.** The word “accountability” also infers that harm has occurred, needs have resulted, and obligations have been created. In the institutional context this domain is linked to transparency and there is an organizational imperative to both hold harm-doers responsible and address and remedy the contexts that allowed the harm to happen. Institutional courage is demonstrated when this occurs.

### **System Wide Education**

Awareness is the first step in prevention. **Having the capacity and tools to engage in difficult conversations is how we both prevent sexual violence from happening in our organizations, and counteract the shame and secrecy which allow it to continue.** Education must be sensitive to intersectional and diverse social locations, since “some student groups may have higher rates of perpetration, while others may be less likely to seek assistance after an assault, due to fear of not being believed or supported, or being racially profiled. A common problem many campuses face is that their programs generally focus on examples that connect with White, heterosexual, cisgender people.”<sup>29</sup> Awareness campaigns should address the needs of a diverse public including people who identify as coming from LGBT+ communities, male victims/survivors, people who may have physical or psychological disabilities, various racial, cultural and religious groups, and those

whose citizenship status may be insecure. Further, organizations must go beyond compliance, engaging a variety of mediums, learning styles and power dynamics, through year-round wraparound care. This domain is closely linked to engagement and transparency.

### **System Wide Engagement**

In order to create change on the prevention front, institutions need involvement and support from all stakeholders. Victims/survivors and other impacted parties, organizational leadership and other affiliated members including all employees, security, police, etc. All parties need to work together to create a cultural shift around sexual harm.

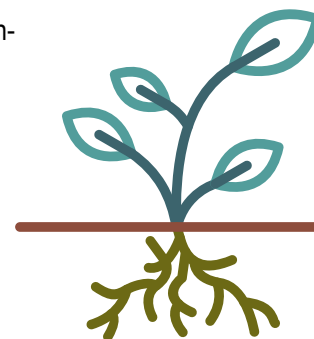
**This is characterized by a commitment to prevention and justice for those impacted.** “Changing the culture to promote gender equality, reduce homophobia and racism, and challenge practices that contribute to sexual violence is a critical component of reducing sexual violence.”<sup>30</sup> Beyond endorsement, explicit verbal support from the organization’s administration and institutional financial support through increased budgets and co-sponsorship of workshops and awareness events, both increases the capacity of an organization and demonstrates their commitment to addressing sexual violence.

### **Transparency**

**Clear policies, procedures, and accountability go hand in hand to produce transparency which is a building block towards trustworthiness,** one of the key principles of this chapter. Transparency is a crucial component of institutional courage.

### **Ongoing Assessment**

**Routine evaluation conducted through surveys and studies offer valuable analysis as institutions fine tune their approach to sexual violence.** From prevention programming, to analyzing attitudes toward sexual violence, to tracking incidences of violence, to collecting data on services provided and accessed to those impacted by sexual harm. Information from assessments can be used to address gaps in the institutional response.





## Case Study

### Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)

A Model of Promise from the justice arena is outlined in this case study. CoSA is a supportive and professionally facilitated community re-entry program for individuals who have caused sexual harm. “The CoSA model has provided hope that communities can assist in risk management, the end result being greater safety for potential victims and increased accountability for released offenders.”<sup>32</sup>

Introduced in the last chapter, the CoSA program assembles groups of people in a supportive network “circle” around each core member (i.e., the person who was convicted of a sex offense).

#### The program is described as follows:

- These “circles” are volunteer-driven.
- The volunteers establish relationships with core members that are based on mutuality, equality, and an agreement (i.e., a “covenant”) to work toward building a lasting and responsible friendship.
- The exact models can differ depending on the location and needs of the jurisdiction, but CoSA programs primarily include a group of volunteers who meet with the core member weekly and discuss the various challenges of reentry.
- Community professionals are also essential to ensuring these projects are running effectively; they provide training and support to volunteers while also holding core members accountable to their commitment to the project.

**\*\* Content Forecast<sup>33</sup> \*\***

[Watch CoSA Introduction and Overview<sup>34</sup>](#)

### The CoSA model is driven by the following set of key values:

1. No one is disposable.
2. No one does this alone.
3. No more individuals should become victims.
4. The community is responsible for victims and those who harm them.
5. Health and safety are among the primary concerns of the community.

CoSA is a Model of Promise in that it relies on the application of several Domains of Promising Practice including accountability, system wide engagement, and transparency.



## Exercise 4 <sup>35</sup>

### Guiding Voices

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We have used a variety of quotes throughout the chapters of this manual to help focus the subject matter and summarize content in ways that highlight and illuminate our key concepts. The messages reflected in these quotes come from some of the **Guiding Voices** for the authors of this manual.

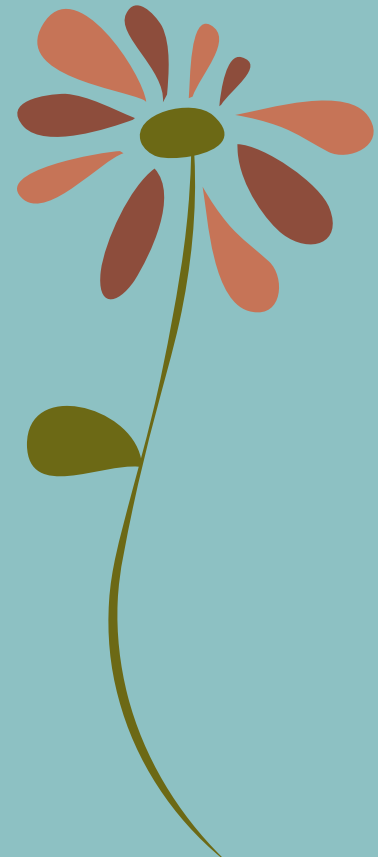
#### Exercise Supplies:

Colored paper, scissors, tape

As you prepare for the final exercise, allow yourself three minutes of quiet time to reflect on what it would look like if our organizations responded well to situations of sexual harm. What could be gained if parties impacted by sexual harm and their organizations were to engage in best practices?

What are some of the positive messages or guiding voices that have offered you wisdom, advice, or courage for this work?

1. Participants will be given several tear-shaped paper cut outs. The tears will be flipped around so that they become flower petals.
2. On the flower petals, write the name of the person, a quote, or a bit of wisdom that has resourced, mentored, or served to illuminate the journey for you.
3. To conclude this exercise, participants may choose one flower petal to name in the presence of the group with one word or a short phrase as they tape their flower petal to a communal flower on a wall that the instructor has identified for this purpose.
4. After each participant has had an opportunity to contribute, there will be a moment of silence in which the group will express gratitude in a form of their choosing for the inspiration and creativity represented by the influences/voices represented in the flower.



## Summary

Institutions engage in perfidy against their members when security, dignity, attachment, structure, and justice needs are not met. When institutions commit to facilitating **safety, choice, empowerment, identity, relationship, reintegration, trustworthiness, collaboration, advocacy, and resilience** for those in their purview, they demonstrate institutional courage. Courageous institutions use their power to demand and ensure structural and cultural change. A comprehensive and system-wide approach to addressing sexual violence is more than window dressing or platitudes. It represents a transformative justice mandate which shifts institutional and community power dynamics, creating environments that promote well-being and allegiance over time. Organizations that commit to leading the way as champions of promising practices will support the change makers in their midst with trauma-informed resources, training, and procedures, while also dismantling historical and structural injustices that perpetuate harm.

PERFIDY, PRINCIPLES, AND PROTOCOL IN TRAUMA-INFORMED ORGANIZATIONS		
PERFIDY	PRINCIPLES	PROTOCOL
SECURITY	SAFETY, CHOICE	PREVENTION, RESPONSE
DIGNITY	EMPOWERMENT, IDENTITY	AGENCY, EQUITY
ATTACHMENT	RELATIONSHIP, REINTEGRATION	REPAIR, RESTORATION
STRUCTURE	TRUSTWORTHINESS, COLLABORATION	ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY
JUSTICE	ADVOCACY, RESILIENCE	EMBODIED PRACTICE, STRUCTURAL, AND CULTURAL SHIFTS

Figure 4:6

## Suggested Readings & Resources

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Perfidy is a term used throughout this chapter to refer to a particular type of betrayal which contains specific elements of covering over or turning away from truth; broken commitment or violation of a connection that is based on certain expectations. Related words include treachery, treason; white wash, cover up. A state of being that is deliberately disloyal. Perfidy denies duty and loyalty of filial obligation.
- <sup>2</sup> Oudshoorn, J. with Jackett, M. & Amstutz, L.S. (2015). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Sexual Abuse: Hope Through Trauma*. (pp. 27-31). New York: Good Books.
- <sup>3</sup> Stauffer, C. (2020). ch 2, pp.50.
- <sup>4</sup> Freyd, J.J. & Birrell, P. (2013). *Blind to Betrayal: Why We Fool Ourselves We Aren't Being Fooled*. (pp.118). Hoboken: Wiley.
- <sup>5</sup> Betrayal blindness. (Freyd & Birrell, 2013, pp.56). "One of the most perplexing aspects of our shared social world relates to our ability to ignore the injustice, oppression, treachery, and betrayal that are all around us. Although the betrayal blindness of bystanders is terrible in its way, it is also understandable. Just as victims [/survivors] may have a need not to see the betrayal they experience, so, too, may bystanders have such a need. We are each designed by eons of evolutionary history and a lifetime of cultural learning to be moral individuals...fairness and caring are central to all known moral systems.



Both fairness and caring can be violated by others, and when that happens, it can create a sense of betrayal not only in the victim but also in the minds of the bystanders, who experience a betrayal of justice, of what is right. Yet, we may remain blind to this betrayal for all of the reasons we have already discussed -- to see the betrayal might risk too much." Omission. (Freyd & Birrell, 2013, pp.579-580). Commission. (Freyd & Birrell, 2013, pp.580). At the macro level, responsibility lies with institutions, when Conspiracies of Silence occur. DARVO. (Freyd & Birrell, 2013, pp.19).

- 6 **1. Betrayal Trauma:** *Some Haitian aid recipients experienced sexual harm perpetrated against them by aid workers from the Oxfam organization. Oxfam was in a position of power vis a vie access to resources in the wake of a natural disaster. In some cases aid was withheld from people in desperate circumstances and only dispensed in exchange for sexual acts.*
- 2. Organizational Dynamics of Betrayal Trauma:**
  - *Response was minimized and mismanaged multiple times over the years.*
  - *Victims/survivors may have felt that they couldn't report the issues for fear of having their aid withheld. Victims/survivors did make reports of their experiences to the Haitian government.*
- 3. Betrayal Blindness:** *The article does not indicate if the victims/survivors experienced betrayal blindness, however, some individuals within Oxfam were guilty of turning a blind eye, while others came forward to blow the whistle.*
- 4. Acts of Omission and Commission:**
  - *Omission - committed by Oxfam in that it conducts an inadequate and limited investigation which results in the termination/resignation of 4 employees, the most senior of which was allowed to move on to another organization with a clean resume.*
  - *Commission - for 7 years the organization aimed to protect their reputation as opposed to being transparent about the extent of the situation and prioritizing the wellbeing of victims/survivors.*
- 5. Conspiracy of Silence:** *Oxfam chose to remain blind to the extent of the situation of betrayal that some of their employees were inflicting on locals in Haiti even when whistleblowers stepped forward with the truth.*

<sup>7</sup> Various authors. Articles tagged: [Roman Catholic Church Sex Abuse Cases](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/roman-catholic-church-sex-abuse-cases). New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/roman-catholic-church-sex-abuse-cases>.

<sup>8</sup> Various authors. Articles tagged: [Campus Sexual Assault](http://nymag.com/tags/campus-sexual-assault/). New York Times Magazine. Retrieved from <http://nymag.com/tags/campus-sexual-assault/>.

<sup>9</sup> Childress, S. (2015, May 18). [How the Military Retaliates Against Sexual Assault Victims](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/how-the-military-retaliates-against-sexual-assault-victims/). PBS Frontline. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/how-the-military-retaliates-against-sexual-assault-victims/>

<sup>10</sup> Smith, C.P. & Freyd, J.J. (2014, September 6). [Institutional Betrayal](https://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/articles/sf2014.pdf). *American Psychologist*, vol. 69 (no. 6), (pp. 575-587). Retrieved from <https://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/articles/sf2014.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> American College Health Association. [Addressing Sexual and Relationship Violence: A Trauma-Informed Approach](https://www.acha.org/documents/resources/Addressing_Sexual_and_Relationship_Violence_A_Trauma_Informed_Approach.pdf). Retrieved from [https://www.acha.org/documents/resources/Addressing\\_Sexual\\_and\\_Relationship\\_Violence\\_A\\_Trauma\\_Informed\\_Approach.pdf](https://www.acha.org/documents/resources/Addressing_Sexual_and_Relationship_Violence_A_Trauma_Informed_Approach.pdf), (pp. 7).

<sup>12</sup> Harris, M. & Falot, R. (Eds.). (2001). Using trauma theory to design service systems. *New Directions for Mental Health Services* (no. 89). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.; and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4884.pdf). HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014. Retrieved from <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4884.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Karjane, H.K., Fisher, B.S., & Cullen, F.T. (2002). *Campus Sexual Assault: How America's Institutions of Higher Education Respond*. Final Report, NIJ Grant # 1999-WA-VX-0008. Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc.

- <sup>14</sup> Collins Center. [Safe Church](https://www.thecollinscenter.org/safe-church). Retrieved from <https://www.thecollinscenter.org/safe-church>.
- <sup>15</sup> Valerie Showalter interview June 7, 2019.
- <sup>16</sup> Freyd, J.J. (2018, January 11). [When sexual assault victims speak out, their institutions often betray them, The Conversation](https://theconversation.com/when-sexual-assault-victims-speak-out-their-institutions-often-betray-them-87050). Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/when-sexual-assault-victims-speak-out-their-institutions-often-betray-them-87050>.
- <sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (Revised 2015, April). [Title IX and Sex Discrimination](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html). Retrieved from [https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix\\_dis.html](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html).
- <sup>18</sup> Joyce, K. (2017, December 5). [The Takedown of Title IX: Inside the Fight Over Federal Rules on Campus Sexual Assault](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/05/magazine/the-takedown-of-title-ix.html). The New York Times Magazine. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/05/magazine/the-takedown-of-title-ix.html>.
- <sup>19</sup> Freyd, J.J. (2014, July 14). [Official campus statistics for sexual violence mislead](http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/7/college-campus-sexualassaultsafetydatawhitehousegender.html), Al Jazeera America. Retrieved from <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/7/college-campus-sexualassaultsafetydatawhitehousegender.html>.
- <sup>20</sup> 1. They fear the consequences, including being stigmatized and not being believed.  
 2. They fear the consequences, including institutional reputation and public safety perceptions.  
 3. By making it difficult to determine how to report. Making life harder for students who do report by shaming, invalidating and even punishing them (institutional betrayal).  
 4. Campus climate deteriorates because sexual violence thrives on secrecy; if students do not feel they can safely report, assaults and harassment will continue unchecked. This leads to institutional betrayal among victims/survivors and resulting higher rates of sexual abuse trauma, anxiety and dissociation.  
 5. Encourage data collection through the mapping of sexual victimization and perpetration on college campuses.  
 6. Retaliation and attempted public shaming.
- <sup>21</sup> Regarding disclosure: It is important to honor victims/survivors' rights not to share their story as well. In the current #MeToo climate where disclosure is becoming more common, the perspective offered in this article should also be considered. Backe, E.L. (2018, April 19). [Letting Silence Have a Voice in #MeToo](https://www.sapiens.org/culture/metoo-silence/). Sapiens. Retrieved from <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/metoo-silence/>.
- <sup>22</sup> Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). Final Report: Volume 4, [Identifying and disclosing child sexual abuse](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/identifying-and-disclosing-child-sexual-abuse). Retrieved from <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/identifying-and-disclosing-child-sexual-abuse>.
- <sup>23</sup> NSVRC. (2015). [Statistics About Sexual Violence](https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications_nsvrc_factsheet_media_packet_statistics-about-sexual-violence_0.pdf). Retrieved from [https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications\\_nsvrc\\_factsheet\\_media\\_packet\\_statistics-about-sexual-violence\\_0.pdf](https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications_nsvrc_factsheet_media_packet_statistics-about-sexual-violence_0.pdf)
- <sup>24</sup> Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource. [Responding to a Disclosure of Sexual Violence](http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/uploads/5/7/6/6/5766610/responding-to-a-disclosure-of-sv.pdf). Retrieved from <http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/uploads/5/7/6/6/5766610/responding-to-a-disclosure-of-sv.pdf>
- <sup>25</sup> As organizations map their principles and protocols, they may find the additional resources that are linked at the end of this section and the criteria previously outlined related to Institutional Courage as helpful reference points.
- <sup>26</sup> NASPA. (2017, February). [The Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence](http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE_Blueprint_2ndEd.pdf), 2nd ed. Retrieved from [http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE\\_Blueprint\\_2ndEd.pdf](http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE_Blueprint_2ndEd.pdf).
- <sup>27</sup> SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. (pp.10).

- <sup>28</sup> Oudshoorn, J. with Jackett, M. & Amstutz, L.S. (2015). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Sexual Abuse: Hope Through Trauma*. (pp.26). New York: Good Books.
- <sup>29</sup> NASPA. (2017, February). [The Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence](http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE_Blueprint_2ndEd.pdf), 2nd ed. Retrieved from [http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE\\_Blueprint\\_2ndEd.pdf](http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE_Blueprint_2ndEd.pdf). (pp.53).
- <sup>30</sup> NASPA (2017), pp. 60.
- <sup>31</sup> [Callisto](https://www.projectcallisto.org/). (Copyright 2019). Retrieved July 15 2019 from <https://www.projectcallisto.org/>.
- <sup>32</sup> Wilson, R. [CoSA](https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/circles-of-support-and-accountability/). (Copyright 2019). Retrieved from <https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/circles-of-support-and-accountability/>.
- <sup>33</sup> We recognize that the framing which the presenter uses in this video - to describe harm-doers - could be offensive or triggering for some participants. Please be judicious in choosing whether or not to view this video, and practice self care.
- <sup>34</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4KIEwZoFTw&list=PLvoZLdtBgik081j7iLd1\\_4HAGcDuWHUXe&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4KIEwZoFTw&list=PLvoZLdtBgik081j7iLd1_4HAGcDuWHUXe&index=3)
- <sup>35</sup> *Instructors may offer this as an optional or supplementary assignment if students are taking the course for credit or want additional opportunities for practical application:*

#### **Section 4, Supplementary Exercise: Creating Leading Practice Models**

Instructions:

Scenario - You are consulting for a local non-profit organization that provides temporary housing for 12 adults who have previously experienced residential instability/homelessness. These residents represent diverse backgrounds, identities, primary languages and life experiences. The group includes some residents who have struggled with physical and mental health challenges and/or substance dependence, and all have experienced moderate to severe trauma at various points in their lives.

Exercise Materials - This activity requires a variety of colorful arts and crafts supplies such as: clay or play dough, rocks and other natural materials, scissors, paper clips, glue, colored construction paper, thumb tacks, different colors of yarn, scotch tape, colored markers, flip-chart paper, pipe cleaners and a variety of post-its.

1. The goal of this exercise is to help you think through organizational (a) principles, and (b) protocols that need to be in place for this group to maintain community life in ways that meet needs related to security, dignity, attachment, structure and justice.
2. Your mandate is to create a 3-dimensional 'visual model' that maps out and guides residents in protocols related specifically to sexual assault. Included in the model should be features that address prevention/response, accountability/transparency, agency/equity, and repair/restoration for all affected parties.
3. Your model should show residents the process they will follow in regards to adherence to the policy, as well as sanctions that result when there is a breach of the this sexual assault policy. Outline safety elements that should be in place from the time that residents officially start living in this residence, until they 'graduate' from the program in one year's time.

## Additional Readings and Resources

AAUP Bulletin. (2016, June). [The History, Uses, and Abuses of Title IX](https://www.aaup.org/file/TitleIX-report.pdf). Retrieved from <https://www.aaup.org/file/TitleIX-report.pdf>.

Freyd, J.J. (2018, January 11). [When sexual assault victims speak out, their institutions often betray them](https://theconversation.com/when-sexual-assault-victims-speak-out-their-institutions-often-betray-them-87050), The Conversation. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/when-sexual-assault-victims-speak-out-their-institutions-often-betray-them-87050>.

Howard, B. (2018). [How Colleges Handle Sexual Assault in the #MeToo Era](https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2018-10-01/how-colleges-handle-sexual-assault-in-the-metoo-era). Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2018-10-01/how-colleges-handle-sexual-assault-in-the-metoo-era>.

### [Institutional Betrayal Questionnaire](#)

Based on Smith & Freyd (2013) and first presented in Rosenthal, M.N., Smidt, A.M., & Freyd, J.J. (2016). Still second class: Sexual harassment of graduate students. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 40, (pp 364-377). Retrieved from <https://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/institutionalbetrayal/ibq.html#ibsq>.

O'Hara, M., & Omer, A. (2013). [Virtue and the organizational shadow: Exploring false innocence and the paradoxes of power](#). In A.C. Bohart, B.S. Held, E. Mendelowitz, & K.J. Schneider (Eds.), *Humanity's dark side: Evil, destructive experience, and psychotherapy* (pp.167-187). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/13941-009>

Oudshoorn, J. with Jackett, M. & Amstutz, L.S. (2015). *The little book of restorative justice for sexual abuse: Hope through trauma*. New York: Good Books.

Smith, C.P. & Freyd, J.J. (2014, September 6). [Institutional Betrayal](#). *American Psychologist*, vol. 69 (no. 6), (pp. 575-587). Retrieved from <https://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/articles/sf2014.pdf>.

Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource. [Responding to a Disclosure of Sexual Violence](#). Retrieved from <http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/uploads/5/7/6/6/5766610/responding-to-a-disclosure-of-sv.pdf>.

Willingham, K. (2016). [Why Harvard Should #JustSaySorry For How It Handled My Sexual Assault](https://www.alternet.org/2016/08/why-harvard-should-just-say-sorry-how-it-handled-my-sexual-assault/). The Establishment. Retrieved from <https://www.alternet.org/2016/08/why-harvard-should-just-say-sorry-how-it-handled-my-sexual-assault/>.

Bein, K. (2011). [Action, engagement, remembering: Services for adult survivors of child sexual abuse](#). National Sexual Assault Coalition: Resource Sharing Project. Retrieved from [https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications\\_RSP\\_Action-engagement-remembering-services-for-adult-survivors-child-sexual-abuse.pdf](https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_RSP_Action-engagement-remembering-services-for-adult-survivors-child-sexual-abuse.pdf).

Aboriginal Peoples Collection. (1997). [The four circles of hollow water](https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/fr-crcls-hllw-wtr/index-en.aspx). Retrieved from <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/fr-crcls-hllw-wtr/index-en.aspx>

*This long document consists of a collection of various materials exploring the experience of the Hollow Water First Nation (the Ojibwa people in Canada) in responding to problems of sexual abuse among its people. More specifically, the Hollow Water Community Holistic Circle Healing (CHCH), an initiative begun in 1985, is a coordinated community response to the sexual abuse in Hollow Water. The holistic healing circle is intended to restore balance by empowering individuals, families, and communities to respond in a constructive and healing way with problems of sexual abuse. The four circles in the title of the document refer to the following scheme for understanding the variety of experiences and for organizing the presentation of the materials in the report: the Ojibwa circle; the offender circle; the victim circle; and the Hollow Water circle. The section on the Ojibwa circle covers Ojibwa tradition and change in interaction with Euro-Canadian culture and government, including Christianity and Indian residential schools. The next section deals with treatment of*

*sexual offenders in relation to non-Aboriginal approaches and Aboriginal offenders. This leads to the section on victims and their traumatization as a result of sexual abuse, as well as examination of treatment of victims, with emphasis on the Hollow Water Community Holistic Circle Healing approach.*

Guarino, K., Soares, P., Konnath, K., Clervil, R., and Bassuk, E. (2009). [Trauma-Informed Organizational Toolkit](#). Rockville, MD: Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Daniels Fund, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Retrieved from [https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Trauma-Informed\\_Organizational\\_Toolkit\\_0.pdf](https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Trauma-Informed_Organizational_Toolkit_0.pdf).

*A very practical how-to manual with ready to apply evaluation tools for any organization, and written from the perspective of working with people who face housing insecurity. Tools include:*

1. *The Trauma-Informed Organizational Self Assessment, designed to help programs evaluate their practices and based on their findings, adapt their programming to support recovery and healing among their clients*
2. *A User's Guide, designed to assist programs in implementing the Self Assessment and containing additional information about this assessment tool and what it means to provide trauma-informed care*
3. *A How-To Manual for Creating Organizational Change, which identifies concrete steps that organizations can take if they are interested in becoming trauma-informed*

Klinic Community Health Center. (2008). [The Trauma-informed Toolkit](#). Retrieved from [https://www.cenpatointegrated-careaz.com/content/dam/centene/cenpaticoaz/Documents/Trauma-informed\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.cenpatointegrated-careaz.com/content/dam/centene/cenpaticoaz/Documents/Trauma-informed_Toolkit.pdf)

*A user friendly guide that provides with a basic explanation of what trauma is and how it affects individuals, a Service Provider Checklist, Organizational Checklist, a consideration of cultural and structural issues that impact trauma, issues for male survivors of sexual abuse, and excellent practical tips and best practices for interacting with impacted parties in trauma-informed ways.*

NASPA. (2017, February). [The Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence](#), 2nd ed. Retrieved from [http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE\\_Blueprint\\_2ndEd.pdf](http://archive.naspa.org/files/CORE_Blueprint_2ndEd.pdf).

*A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence, 2nd ed. - a comprehensive guide to addressing campus sexual violence in the United States with special attention given to Title IX compliance and guidance implementation.*

Phillips, H., Lyon, E., Fabri, M., & Warshaw, C. (2015, September). National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (2015). [Promising practices and model programs: Trauma-informed approaches to working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence and other trauma](#). Retrieved from [http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/NCDVTMH\\_PromisingPracticesReport\\_2015.pdf](http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/NCDVTMH_PromisingPracticesReport_2015.pdf).

*A very readable guide with specific and actionable suggestions for any organization seeking to become trauma-informed, and with specific attention given to work with survivors of domestic violence.*

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](#). HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014. Retrieved from <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4884.pdf>

*Accessible for readers and featuring a list of 10 Implementation Domains on page 12. These domains speak to keeping the victim/survivor voice central to organizational processes, which is both trauma-informed and a justice consideration.*

Trauma Informed Oregon. (2016). [Standards of practice for trauma informed care - healthcare settings](#). Retrieved from [https://traumainformedoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/TIO-Standards-of-Practice-for-Trauma-Informed-Care-Healthcare-Settings\\_2018update.pdf](https://traumainformedoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/TIO-Standards-of-Practice-for-Trauma-Informed-Care-Healthcare-Settings_2018update.pdf).

*Offers a comprehensive assessment tool for health care organizations with a special emphasis given to on-boarding, training and supporting employees.*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [PROTECT: Promoting Resiliency of Trauma Exposed Communities Together](#). Ten Implementation Domains. Retrieved from <http://illinoisap.org/wp-content/uploads/Ten-Domains.pdf>.

*An example of a set of Domains of Promising Practice.*



# CHAPTER 5

# JUSTICE



I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.

- Audrey Lourde

Chapter 5 explores a process for creating a culture of collaborative change. We examine the intersection between sexual harm and historical trauma. The unhealed pain from generations of unspoken acts of sexual violence perpetrated against Black bodies is acknowledged. **Our purpose is to engage in a transformative experience of self-healing and self-justice through circle processes, storytelling, mindfulness, drumming, dance, and drama as a system of restorative practices.** Using a community-based approach, we cultivate “safe space” for deep listening as well as open and honest dialogue – honoring all voices – where trust is established. This approach provides us with an opportunity to address past and ongoing harms without fear of rejection.

This chapter concludes with a challenge and promise of change. **Our primary goal in this chapter is to embody a community-based approach for healing and resilience.** We challenge traditional assumptions about victimization and intervention. We embark on a journey of profound acceptance in which individual acts of forgiveness are critical to fulfilling the need for broader structural and cultural transformation.

## Chapter Overview

In the previous chapters, we focused on the physical and social effects of trauma caused by sexual harms, the importance of identity, the role of healthy relational attachments, and the impact of institutions on prevention, advocacy, and restoration. We constructed a conceptual framework with the foundational concepts necessary to develop a process-oriented approach for self-healing and massive resilience. In this final chapter our concentration revolves upward and spirals outward.

Chapter 5 explores the Cascade Model's fifth wave, by building sacred space to unpack individual and community level responses to sexual and historical harms. **We focus specifically on creating a culture of collaborative change through holistic practices that tap into inner-spirit and collective wisdom.** We employ culturally responsive circle processes, along with mindfulness practices, creative expression through performance art, and courageous dialogue about truth, mercy, peace, and justice.

The processes identified above reflect indigenous beliefs of self-determination, as a liberating response to sexual violence. When institutions and circumstances produce ongoing trauma because of the improbability of any acknowledgment or acceptance of responsibility for the harm caused, then self-justice becomes a viable act of transformative forgiveness. **Establishing “safe and brave” environments for individual and community healing is therefore key to addressing sexual harm and historical trauma when reconciliation and the possibility of reparations is unlikely.** In this chapter, we synthesize core principles of STAR for Sexual Harms into a consciousness of collaboration, based on our critical synthesis of the following sections:

1. Historical Harm
2. Social Arrhythmia
3. Self-Justice
4. Massive Resilience

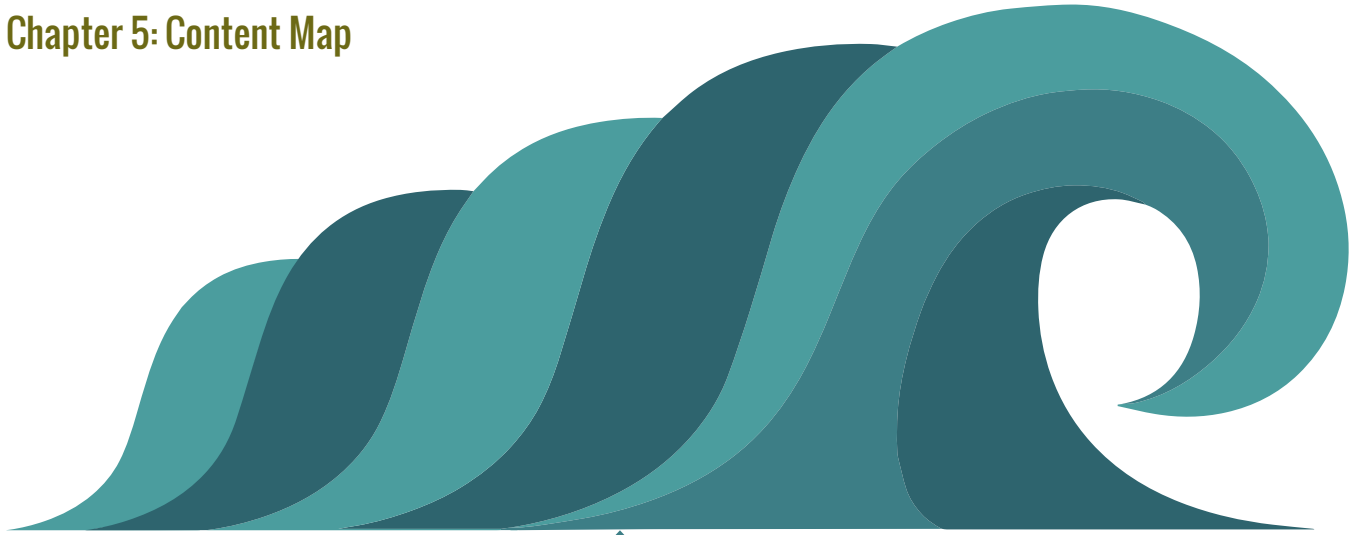
## Chapter Objectives

The overarching goal of this chapter is to cultivate sacred awareness in order to understand how individuals and communities can actively support the dignity and power of persons affected by sexual harm. We do so by prioritizing these objectives:

- Demonstrate proficiency in the practice of self-justice.
- Develop an understanding of the vicissitudes of racial trauma.
- Discover how to transcend the fear and guilt of sexual-cultural harm.



## Chapter 5: Content Map



### CASCADE FEATURES

- Individual Transformation
- Structural Transformation

### CHAPTER SEGMENTS

- Historical Trauma
- Social Arrhythmia
- Self-Justice
- Massive Resilience

### KEY NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Justice
- System Change

grown up in a chauvinistic and misogynistic culture of global sexism. According to national data, there is a high likelihood that one of them will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> However, the devastating impact of sexual harm defies statistics. Three of my daughters have survived this epidemic of sexual violence. Both of my spouses (two marriages) experienced sexual harm during childhood. Too many friends and acquaintances have been traumatized because of this interpersonal violence. One of my close friends, who identifies as female, is a survivor of sexual violence. She says, “because my father chose not to believe what a family member did to me, it was like being sexually abused all over again.” I blocked out of my mind for thirty years that two teen-age girls fondled me as a young boy. Besides denial, often the act of keeping silent can cover up sexual harm.

**This wave in the Cascade Model personifies the rhythm of liberation in the way it addresses the transformative power of forgiveness, healing, and resilience.** At its crest is the interrelationship between individual and community justice, rising from the waters of dignity and compassion. These ideas are reflective of a Southern African philosophical precept that speaks to our Ancestral connections with one another, or “We see you, yes, we see you too.” This is known as sawubona,<sup>2</sup> which infers that by acknowledging you, I bring you into existence, just as your acknowledgment of me brings me into existence.

This chapter offers a transformative embodiment activity that invokes deep compassion, a trauma sensitive circle process called *MeFirst*, and a mindfulness practice to embody self-justice. The chapter concludes with an examination of an equity model for structural transformation.

## Cascade Features Explained

### Reflexive Authorship

The fifth wave of the Cascade Model examines the intersectionality of racial trauma and sexual harm from my perspective as an African-American, heterosexual middle-class male, college educated teacher, father, and prostate cancer survivor. I have four daughters. They have

Appallingly few women can claim that they have not been victims, at one time in their lives, of either attempted or accomplished sexual attacks.

- Angela Davis

## Introduction

### \*\* Content Forecast \*\*

Imagine the experiences of women and young girls in the hull of a slave ship, chained to constant fear and uncertainty. When is the next attack going to happen? Why is this happening to me? Who can make this stop? What did I do to deserve this?

Where are the memorials to the souls of these African mothers and daughters? Can they be found on the bottom of the Atlantic ocean, dissociated from their bodies? My great-great-great-great-great-great-grandmother could have been one of those tormented souls, liberated from a broken body thrown overboard. As a grandson, father, husband, brother, son, cousin, and friend, the realization that my loved ones have been or will be “victims of either attempted or accomplished sexual attacks,” is the most difficult pill I’ve ever had to swallow.

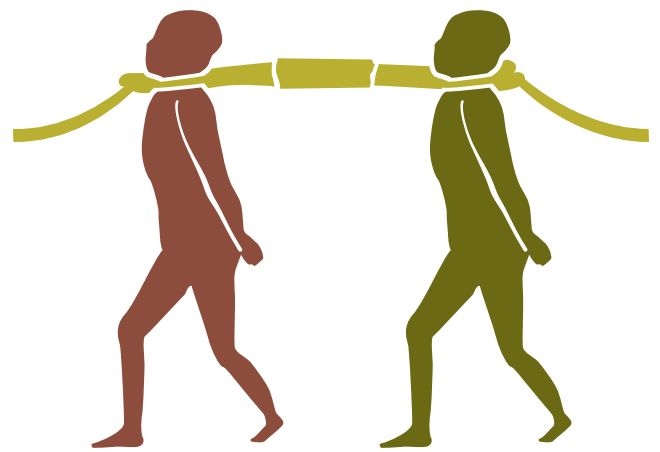
In the darkness of this horrific journey, millions of human beings were shipped from Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas. Joy DuGruy has conceptualized the aftermath of this global system of human trafficking based on White supremacist ideology, sadomasochism, narcissism, and greed as Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome.<sup>3</sup> **Thirteen generations (1490-1880) of racial brutality, economic oppression, and sexual violence permeated with religious indoctrination has produced an insidious social hierarchy of human value in the United States and across the world.**

This racial caste system still exists five generations (1880-2030) after the prohibition of selling African people for profit.

Some symptoms of this generational trauma inherited from the adverse cultural experiences of the Maafa<sup>4</sup> – or what some scholars have called the “African Holocaust”<sup>5</sup> – are cultural misorientation, social arrhythmia, family devastation, and emotional slavery.

**When deep emotional wounds caused by collective and historical harm are not addressed within the safety of a trauma-sensitive environment, the effects can be detrimental and re-traumatizing.** Too often, the souls of Black people, particularly Black women, are not afforded the space nor given permission to address the “traumagenic” effects of racism and sexual harm.<sup>6</sup>

This collective and unhealed trauma continues to adversely impact women of African Ancestry and society as a whole. **“Black women” need a safe space to physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually unpack the traumatic effects of racism and sexual violence.** More African women were raped on slave ships and plantations than any data accurately reveals and the crisis continues. Black and Brown bodies are disproportionately violated and vandalized. It “makes me wanna holler.”<sup>7</sup>



“There are, forever, swamps to be drained. This continent

Not everything that is faced  
can be changed, but nothing  
can be changed that is not  
faced.

- James Baldwin

## Section 1: Historical Trauma

now is conquered, but our habits and our fears remain. And, **in the same way that to become a social human being one modifies and suppresses and, ultimately, and without great courage, lies to oneself about all one's interior, uncharted chaos, so have we, as a nation, modified or suppressed and lied about all the darker forces in our history...** a higher level of consciousness among the people is the only hope we have, now or in the future, of minimizing human damage.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart coined

the term “historical trauma.” When we speak of “historical trauma,” it is not simply a trauma from a historical period. **Rather, historical trauma refers to an event or complex set of events that affected a significant segment of society or the entire populace.** The trauma responses to the event or events were then transmitted to the following generation. The modern-day impacts are what we call historical harms.<sup>9</sup>

**Trauma caused by centuries of sexual harm will persist until a massive effort to understand its collective impact compels us to transform society.** Figure 5.1, based on the work of Marie Dugan, indicates the path to change the following groups over time: the individual, the family, the community and the nation, and/or the world.<sup>10</sup>

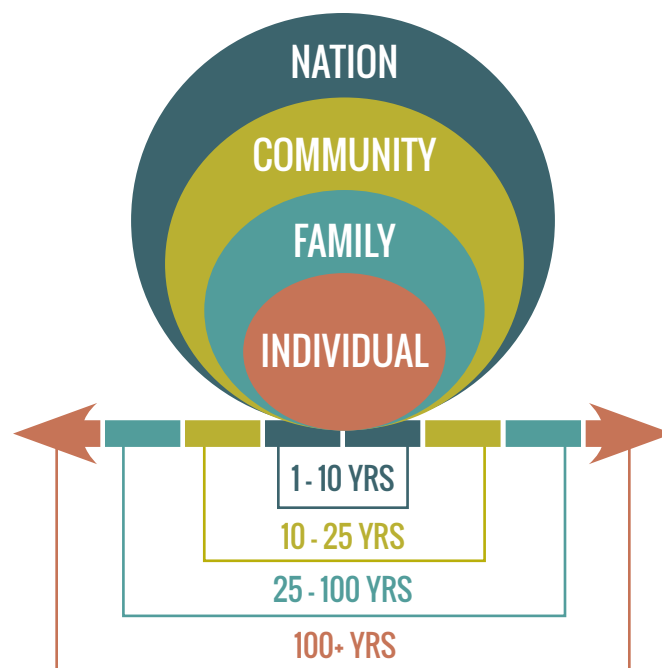


Figure 5.1: Nested Model Showing the Path to Change Individuals/Groups Over Time, adapted from Dugan & Lederach (n.d.)<sup>11</sup>

As previously mentioned, historical trauma refers to an event or complex set of events that affected a significant segment of society or the entire populace. The word trauma comes from the Greek “traumat” which means wound. Dr. Peter Levine’s definition in the book, *Waking the Tiger*, is helpful in differentiating between ordinary stress (e.g. eustress and dis-stress) and traumatic stress: Traumatic stress occurs when our ability to respond to threat is overwhelmed.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates defines trauma as a state of great distress and shock, usually around a significant event or ordeal of great calamity or suffering.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, Dr. David Anderson-Hooker, who coined the term traumagenic, contends that trauma causing events have the potential to produce a traumatic response; yet, people may respond differently to the same event.<sup>14</sup>

**According to Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways in which multiple forms of inequality and disadvantage converge; it’s a prism for thinking about racism and sexism in a historical context.**<sup>15</sup>

With this in mind, review the conceptual model of Figure 5.1 and the following descriptions of trauma types. Then, contemplate the intersectionality of sexual harm and historical trauma for Women of Color in the reflection box provided.



**Purpose:**

The purpose of this healing circle is to acknowledge the intersectionality of sexual harm and historical trauma, to raise awareness of social hierarchies based on race and gender, and to recognize the harm caused by this hierarchy of oppression. “In any society or group with structured inequality, those who are privileged by the society enjoy benefits and advantages that are often taken for granted and are invisible to them, while those with less power and privilege face obstacles and deprivations that are very obvious and painful to them.”<sup>19</sup> **This circle is intended to create a safe and brave space where the sexual harm and historical trauma of People of Color will be prioritized.** Ultimately, this emphasis on MeFirst for Black and Brown people will promote a sense of individual and collective resilience.

**Exercise Supplies:**

Centerpiece, talking piece, plant, candle, fidgets, chime

**Preparation:**

Arrange a circle of chairs with no other furniture. Place a symbolic piece in the center of the chairs. Put plant, candle(s), vessel with water, talking piece(s) and fidgets on the centerpiece. Invite everyone into the space. Welcome everyone to the Circle.

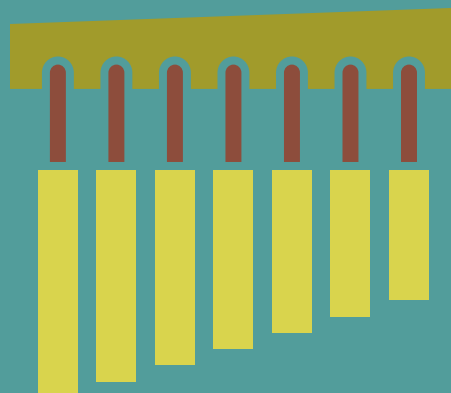
**Mindful Moment:**

Pause. Invite everyone to breathe in and breathe out. Repeat three times, letting out an audible sigh on the third exhalation. Ask everyone to listen to the sound (gently tap the chime) and raise their hand when they no longer hear it.

**After the last person raises their hand, recite this:**

If you have come  
to help me, you are  
wasting your time.  
But if you have  
come because your  
liberation is bound  
up with mine, then  
let us work together.

- Aboriginal Activist Group, Queensland, 1970<sup>20</sup>



## Exercise 2 Acting In/Acting Out <sup>21</sup>

“Those who are victims of the harm often act inwardly by harming themselves (e.g. drug and alcohol abuse, depression, low self-esteem, promiscuous behavior, etc.) or act out (harming others through violence, neglect, abuse, etc.) against the aggressor or people within their own families and communities. Another significant impact of unhealed trauma is that it can then send a person or group into cycles of violence. People who have been hurt often hurt other people or themselves.”<sup>22</sup> Figure 5.2 illustrates some internal and external impacts of trauma.

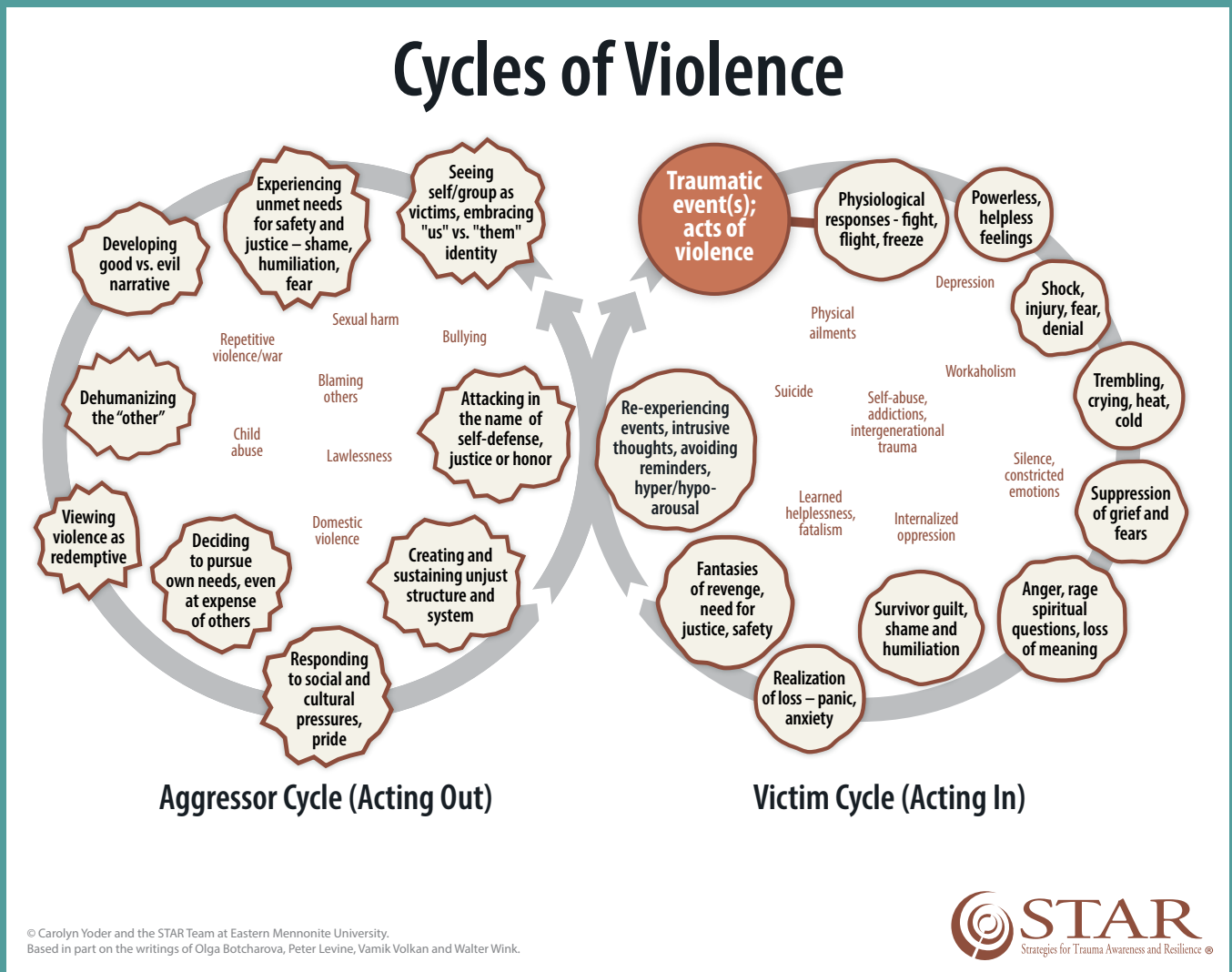


Figure 5.2: Cycles of Violence, Yoder & STAR Team

## Guidelines for the Instructor/Circle Keeper

### **Elements of the circle:**

- **Introduce the centerpiece.** Describe the purpose of how the centerpiece works and explain the story of its meaning along with any objects on the centerpiece.
- **Introduce the talking piece.** Explain how the talking piece works and the story of its meaning.
- **Introduce a “round.”** A “round” is the passing of the talking piece one time around the Circle. The keeper poses a question and, as a participant, may answer first. The keeper then passes the talking piece to the person to their left or right, indicating which direction the talking piece will continue to move around the Circle. Remember, it’s always okay to pass.

**CHECK-IN ROUND:** How are you doing on a scale of 1-10? When the talking piece circulates all the way back to keeper, invite everyone to share why they chose their number. As a participant, the keeper may answer first or choose to wait until last. The keeper passes the talking piece again to their left or to their right.

**REVIEW FIGURE 5.2:** Ask participants to give examples of acting in and acting out. Invite participants to think or write about a time when they or someone they know experienced sexual harm. Then invite participants to think or write about a time when they or someone they know experienced sexual harm because of their racial identity. Ask them to journal about the feelings and/or actions that resulted from the harm. What was it like to experience sexual harm because of race or to know someone who has experienced it?

**ROUND 1:** Name a value that helps you participate in a genuine way when you are talking about a very difficult topic? (Pass the talking piece to your left or right)

**ROUND 2:** When are you most conscious of your race?

**ROUND 3:** Share whatever you feel comfortable sharing about the experience(s) you wrote in your journal and what feelings came up for you.

**ROUND 4:** We all have wisdom from our own life experience. What wisdom do you have about sexual harm and race based on your own life experience that you would want to share with a young person of color?

**CHECK-OUT ROUND:** What are you leaving with and taking away from the circle today?

**CLOSING:** Passing the talking piece, invite each person to take a deep breath as they hold the talking piece and then in a word or phrase say something that expresses how they are feeling.

*\* Adapted for STAR for Sexual Harms from Circle Forward (Boyes-Watson & Pranis, 2015)*

I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it.

- Maya Angelou

## Section 2: Social Arrhythmia

American chattel slavery is the root cause of the dehumanization of Black people in the United States. This type of slavery was “very different from most varieties of enslavement that preceded it. It differed in the manner in which a person became enslaved; it differed in the treatment of the enslaved; it differed in the length of servitude; most of all, it differed in the way owners viewed those they enslaved.”<sup>23</sup>

**Despite the prevalence of sexual harm in slave dungeons, on slave ships and plantations, on streets in the Jim Crow south, and in projects and prisons, Black people, and in particular, Black women, refuse to accept *social arrhythmia* – where disconnection, mistrust, and alienation prevail – as their manifest destiny.**

Being Black equates to so much more than a pathos of oppression or skin color bondage. It’s an ethos and worldview

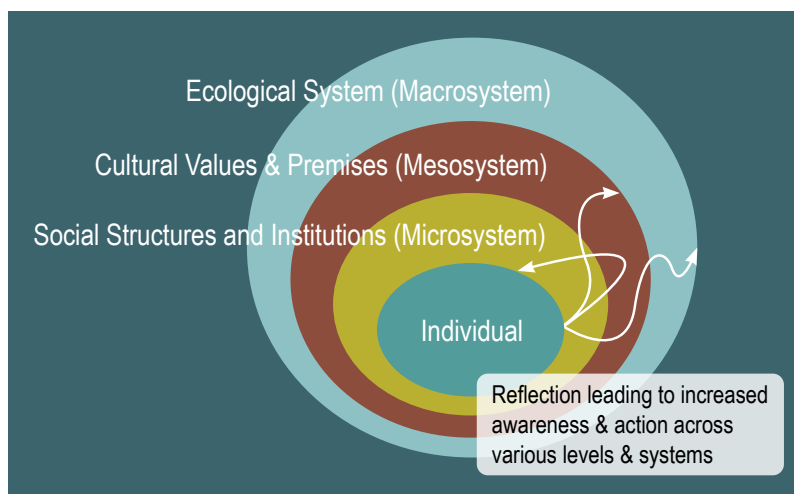


Figure 5.3: Modified Version of Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory Model, Adapted from Ferreira (2017)

“that refer[s] to essential aspects of human group experience. Ethos and worldview are intimately related to creating culture. **One of the things that culture does for its members is to provide a systematic way of ordering their experiences.**”<sup>24</sup> Being Black in the cultural sense is to acknowledge and accept a state of spiritual consciousness. Hence, it’s considered a small revolutionary act to capitalize the word Black when referring to people of African ancestry.

This type of approach to critical consciousness highlights the nested nature of ecological systems (see Figure 5.3), while demonstrating how conscientization is a process of reflection and action.<sup>25</sup>

Sexual harm and historical trauma impacts individuals, families, communities, and society as a whole. **When social structures, gender inequality, and poverty are concentrated together, the incidence of toxic stress, racial trauma, and sexual violence increases.**<sup>26</sup> These conditions are indicative of social arrhythmia, a term describing communities out of balance, where disconnection, mistrust, and alienation prevail.<sup>27</sup>

**Disconnection – A disruption in a person’s thoughts, sense of self, relationships, physical reactions, emotions, and attitudes.** During a traumatic experience, a person may disconnect or dissociate as a survival mechanism in an attempt to “escape” from the pain, horror, and fear of the overwhelming event.<sup>28</sup>

**Mistrust – A feeling of suspicion, lack of confidence, and doubt in someone or something** based on previous experiences that have shaped expectations and perceptions of likely and unlikely outcomes of potentially harmful relationships.

**Alienation – A state of being separated, isolated, disconnected or socially rejected by a person or group of people,** which produces feelings of shame, fear, and anger, in addition to a sense of powerlessness and helplessness.



**Reflection**

How might a conscious individual act create cultural change within a system?

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## Exercise 3

### Mindfulness for Self-Healing

**Overview:**

This loving kindness meditation is specifically designed for self-care and self-healing. An individual act by a conscious person can create ripples of change within a larger system.

**Recite, using a call and response style:**

**LEADER:** I can be changed by what happens to me,

**GROUP:** but I refuse to be reduced by it.

**Reflection** - How does saying this quote make you feel?  
How does it feel saying it as a group?



When looking at sexual harm and massive group trauma, all relational levels are impacted (see figure 5.4). An individual can exhibit trauma indicators, which can impact a family, a community, and consequently, society. However, the process can work in reverse. A society can impact a community, which can impact a family, and subsequently, an individual. As you have explored this material, it may have caused you to ask questions about how you acknowledge sexual harm and historical trauma or how you can work to address it in your community. Before working at the community level, it is essential to do your own inner-work in relation to historical trauma and sexual harm.”<sup>29</sup>

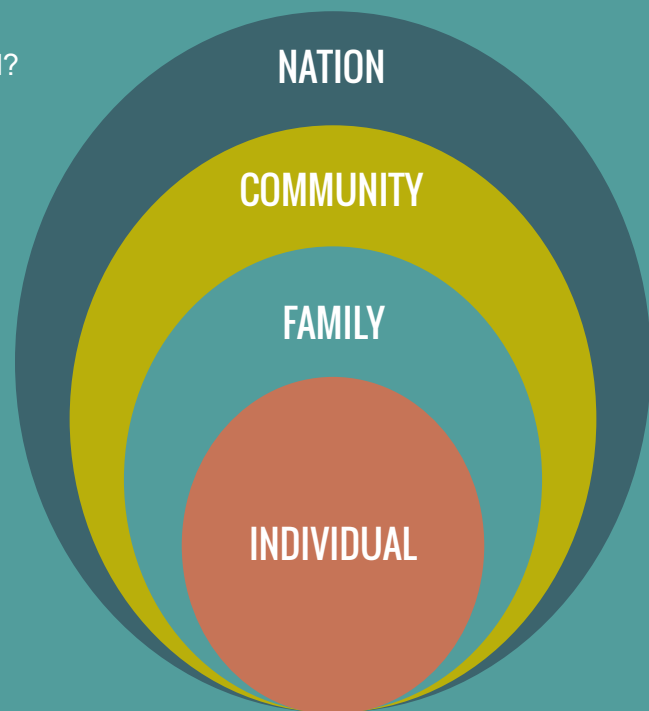




Figure 5.4: Dugan's Nested Model

**Guidelines:**

In order to build a safe and brave space to engage in a loving kindness meditation on self-healing, remember all activities are optional, do only what you feel comfortable with, take care of yourself, trust your instincts, own the process, take what you need, and leave the rest.

**Guidelines for the Instructor/Circle Keeper and Facilitator Script:**

-  Invite all participants to find a comfortable seated position and offer the following instructions:<sup>30</sup>
-  When you're ready, pay attention to your breathing. Notice how the air is coming in and leaving your body. Take a deep breath, filling your stomach with air. As you exhale, push all of the air out. As you inhale again, imagine your stomach and chest are a balloon. Inhale deeply, filling your stomach with air and expanding your chest. Slowly exhale, pushing all of the air out, as if you are deflating a balloon. Inhale deeply one more time, filling the stomach with air and expanding the chest, bringing in more air. Now, exhaling, push all that air out.
-  Now, simply notice your breathing and perhaps inhale and exhale at your own natural breathing pace, noticing how you feel as you inhale and exhale, putting no extra effort into it, just breathing naturally in and out of your nose.
-  Using your imagination, inhale and imagine you are bringing in positivity from the earth to your body with a deep in-breath. Feel and see positive energy coming in with the breath. Notice how your body feels or perhaps just observe how the air feels coming in through your nose.
-  With each exhalation, push out any negativity from your body with the out-breath. Imagine stress, anger, jealousy, sickness, and ailments leaving your body with the out-breath. Emotions are rooted in the body. With each exhalation, push out all the negativity stored up in your body.
-  Just as in life, distractions may arise, whether it be a thought or a sound. It is normal to slip out of practice when distractions are present. Acknowledge the thought or sound that distracted you, accept it, and redirect yourself back to the breath. This is one way we can practice self-justice. Again, using your imagination, inhale the positivity from the Earth into your body with the in-breath and exhale negativity from your body with the out-breath.
-  Now, use your imagination to breathe in healing oxygen from the trees, plants, and bodies of water. Feel it replenishing and energizing your internal muscles, bones, and organs. Notice what this feels like in your body. Notice how the air is coming in and leaving your body. With your exhalation, perhaps push out the carbon dioxide from your body, and maybe feed the trees, plants, and the bodies of water that recycle and give us oxygen. Notice it leaving your body with the breath, whatever that feels like to you.
-  The point of this practice is to extend the time you can keep your mind focused. If you can only stay focused for three breaths before becoming distracted, acknowledge the distraction, accept it, and maybe redirect yourself back to the breath. Then, try to stay focused for four breaths, then five breaths. Keep trying to extend the time that you can keep the mind focused. Perhaps focus on pulling in healing oxygen with the in-breath, replenishing and energizing your internal muscles, bones, and organs, and maybe pushing out carbon dioxide, feeding the trees and plants that give us oxygen.

-  Now, with our breath, perhaps try to send love to planet Earth/Mother Earth and all its inhabitants in whatever way that looks and feels like for you.
-  If distractions arise, acknowledge that thought, sound, sensation or feeling, then maybe redirect yourself back to the breath, maybe sending love to planet Earth/Mother Earth, and all its inhabitants.
-  Now, maybe imagine someone or something that makes you mad, angry, upset, or stressed out, maybe a family member, partner or spouse, friend, teacher, classmate, or perhaps someone else in your world. Now, with your collective breath, maybe send love to the person or thing. This is a possibility. Send love to someone or something with every breath.
-  Remember that this practice is about extending the time you can keep your mind focused. If you can only stay focused for three breaths, perhaps acknowledge the distraction, accept it, and maybe redirect yourself back to the breath. Perhaps, try to get four breaths, then five breaths. Perhaps send love out with every breath.
-  Using your imagination, maybe embrace the truth of Black humanity. Maybe with each exhalation, release the lie of White superiority and Black inferiority. Perhaps with each inhalation, absorb emotional emancipation – self-love, dignity, empathy, courage, and Black-on-Black healing. Maybe exhale the lie of Black inferiority. Perhaps inhale resistance to stress and self-doubt. This is a choice. You can inhale the truth of Black humanity and exhale the lie of Black inferiority. When you are ready, perhaps reflect on this quote: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed that is not faced.”<sup>31</sup>
-  Another possibility is to imagine someone or something that loves you. Perhaps a family member, friend, or maybe another significant person in your life, regardless of their location or if they are still living. Love knows no boundaries. With your breath, maybe send love to this person, place, or thing, whatever that feels like for you. Perhaps notice how it feels in your body.
-  Now that you have sent love to people you care about and to planet Earth/Mother Earth, all its inhabitants, and to those things that stress you out, perhaps you can send love to the most important person in your life – You. When you begin by loving and taking care of yourself, it may become easier to love and care for others and practice self-justice without draining yourself. Using your imagination, maybe send yourself love. Perhaps with every breath, send yourself love, whatever it looks and feels like for you. As you breathe in love, you are invited to repeat the following phrase to yourself: “I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it.”
-  Noticing your breath, perhaps imagine each inhalation flowing into your body and maybe each exhalation flowing out of your body. Maybe bring your awareness to your body, perhaps start wiggling your toes or fingers, if this is available to you. Maybe roll your wrists and ankles or move in a way that makes sense to you. Blink your eyes, if that feels right to you. Then when you are ready, open your eyes. Looking to your left and looking to your right is a choice you can make. Perhaps notice a person in your gaze. Maybe return to a centered position, when you are ready and it makes sense to you.

The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.

- Audre Lorde

### Section 3: Self-Justice

Historically, many indigenous peoples have prioritized “a connection with The Creator, as well as an understanding of one’s place and purpose in the Universe.”<sup>32</sup> “The ultimate expression of the indigenous African worldview is the experience or phenomenon of ritual. Out of the chaos and trauma of slavery, the spirit of Africa was reborn in the form of the African-American ethos,”<sup>33</sup> particularly ritual poetic

drama. This methodology “addresses and acts upon systems of racism and oppression that are woven into the fabric of our communities, our cultures, and our country. Ritual poetic drama empowers individuals and communities through social revelation, transformation, and change.”<sup>34</sup>

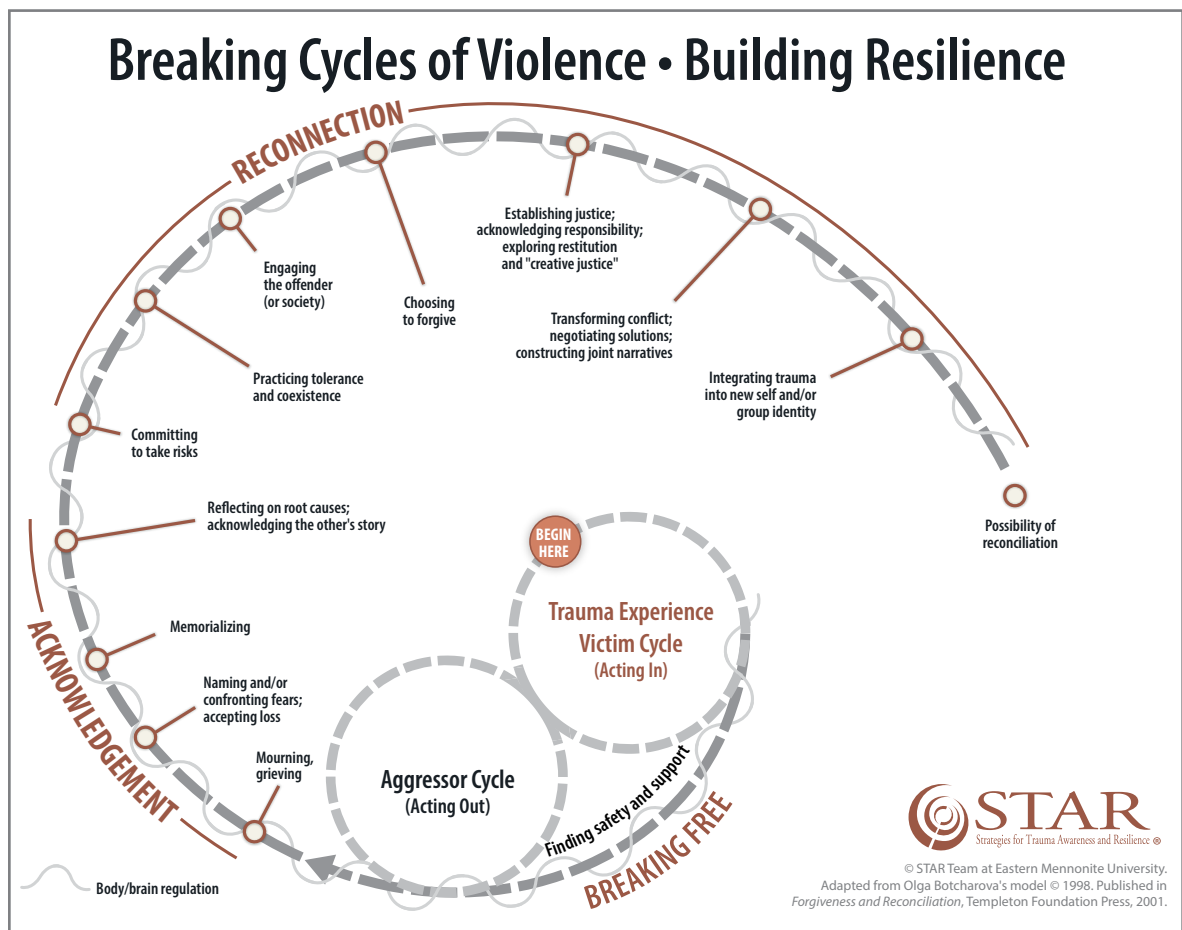


Figure 5.5: *Breaking Cycles of Violence • Building Resilience*, Yoder & STAR Team (2001)



## Exercise 4

### I Am The Work

#### Overview:

The primary purpose of this meditation is to cultivate self-justice, to enhance our capacity to see ourselves and each other in the fullness of our humanity, and to experience the nature of sawubona for healing trauma.<sup>40</sup> “Sawubona Seeing” requires being fully present in heart, mind, and soul so that we can see “beneath, behind, and beyond” appearances. Sawubona is an affirmation of our connectedness with each other, our community, our ancestors, and the spiritual life force within all things.

#### Guidelines and Instructor/Circle Keeper Facilitator Script<sup>41</sup>

- Invite the group to form two circles with equal numbers of people in each circle. The inner circle will turn and face the outer circle so that pairs are facing each other.
- Do three rounds of “settling-breath” with the group (inhale to the count of two and exhale to the count of four) to become more present and grounded.
- Start soothing background music. Instrumental is preferable (e.g. soft drumming).

This is our chance to really see each other (i.e. sawubona) because too often we see ourselves and each other through the lies, biases, and stereotypes that take our humanity away in the eyes of others. This is a relational experience to sawubona “beneath, behind, and beyond” appearances, to SEE...HEAR...and FEEL each other.

#### **I invite you to look into the eyes of your partner and listen to these words:**

I see you...I see you through eyes that transcend my own sight.  
 I see you beneath superficial impressions, beneath stereotypes, projections, and expectations, beneath ego and reputation.  
 I see you beyond your conditions and circumstances.  
 I see you behind the walls you have put up and the masks you have put on.

#### **Outside circle, please rotate one person to the left. Now look into the eyes of your new partner.**

I see your humanity and your humanness.  
 I see your divinity, the radiance of who you really are.  
 I see you at your best, manifesting your greatest purpose and soul’s calling.

#### **EVERYONE, PLEASE REPEAT AFTER ME:**

“I see the soul of who you are. I see you.”

#### **Outside circle, please rotate one person to the left. Now look into the eyes of your new partner.**

I hear you...I hear you through ears tuned into the whisperings of soul and Spirit. I hear you beneath what you say, beneath the words you use and language you speak. I hear you behind what has been silenced and hidden.

**Outside circle, please rotate one person to the left. Now look into the eyes of your new partner.**

I hear you beyond what I want to hear.

I hear your truth, the truth of your lived experience.

I hear the voice of your deepest intentions, who you really want to be and how you really want to act. I hear your dreams and highest aspirations.

**EVERYONE, PLEASE REPEAT AFTER ME:**

“I hear the soul of who you are. I hear you.”

**Outside circle, please rotate one person to the left. Now look into the eyes of your new partner.**

I feel you...I feel you from the vibration of our oneness where our souls recognize each other.

I feel you beneath our differences, in that space of our interconnectedness with each other and all life. I feel you behind the visible and invisible barriers that separate us.

I feel you beyond any mental, emotional, or soul bondage. I feel your freedom and your liberation.

I feel the power of your ancestors flowing through you, over generations, across space and time.

**Outside circle, please rotate one person to the left. Now look into the eyes of your new partner.**

I feel your rhythm, your unique expression and energy in the world.

I feel your vulnerability and your victories, your struggles and your strengths, your tears and your triumphs, your regrets and your risings.

I feel the love within you, I feel your heart.

**EVERYONE, PLEASE REPEAT AFTER ME:**

“I feel the soul of who you are. I feel you.”

If it moves you to do so, and permission is granted, share some love with the folks in our circle with a hug, a caring gaze, a smile. Perhaps turn the music up a little louder and follow with a different song while folks connect in a deeper, more purposeful way.

Debrief with folks once people have returned to their seats. Suggested questions:

1. What was it like “to see” others (and yourself)? What was it like to be fully present with another person?
2. What was it like “to hear” and “to feel” others (and yourself)?
3. What was it like to have someone bear witness to another person’s humanity and to have someone bear witness to your humanity – Heart to Heart, Soul to Soul?

If we carry intergenerational trauma (and we do), then we also carry intergenerational wisdom. It's in our genes and in our DNA.

- Kazu Haga

### Section 4: Massive Resilience

The four elements of Massive Resilience are art, culture, education, and health, which when combined, build strong, resilient, and healthy communities. This synergistic approach, referred to as the Massive Resilience Equation (MRE), is based on freedom and justice. The four arcs of this approach are trauma healing, restorative practices, mindfulness, and artfulness. The nucleus of Massive Resilience is equity!

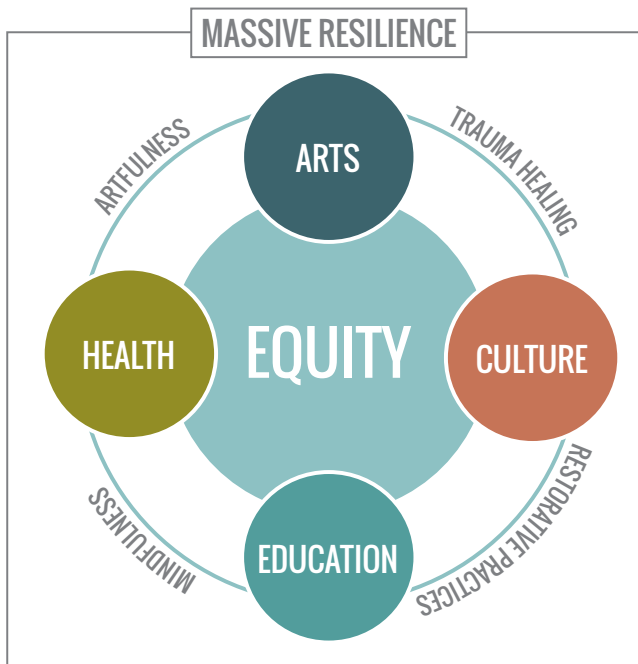


Figure 5.6: Massive Resilience Equation, Ram Bhagat

Massive Resilience is based upon the principle of Ubuntu – “I am, because we are.” This Indigenous African concept promotes human dignity, love, and respect in order to create pathways to self-healing and community resilience. This principle of interconnectedness is reflected in the motto *I Am the Work*, which implies that we are products of our experiences. This belief invokes the spirit of self-justice – the essence of equity.<sup>42</sup>

Recall the deeply meaningful quote by Dr. King, used in the “MeFirst” circle process earlier in this chapter. Because of our universal connection, I contend that, “**Equity is more than access to resources; it’s a deep commitment to liberation predicated on self-love, self-healing, self-justice, and compassion for others.**”<sup>43</sup>

The following approaches and strategies are some practical ways to implement the arcs of Massive Resilience\*:

- Trauma Healing
- Restorative Practices
- Mindfulness
- Artfulness

\*See additional resources at the end of the chapter for more information on these topics.

#### Reflection

What is one action or approach you can add to the Massive Resilience Equation?

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## Exercise 5

### Arcs of Action

#### Collective Wisdom:

The ultimate goal of this chapter is individual and community transformation, which requires commitment; It's "a long walk to freedom."<sup>44</sup>

#### Guidelines and Instructor/Circle Keeper Facilitator Script

1. Participants are invited to consider the quote by Tubman as they collaborate on the following exercise: Arcs of Action.
2. Form small groups of three to four. Ask each group member to discuss in a few minutes the action or approach they described in the previous reflection.
3. Ask each group to collectively evaluate all of the recommendations and come up with one specific action for each arc using the table below.
4. Bring the small groups together and ask a representative from each group to share the four actions that they agreed upon.

**Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.**

**- Harriet Tubman**

ARCS	ACTIONS

**What arc (specify one) and action can you start working on right away?**

## Summary

Sexual harm defies statistics like a virus disregards boundaries. It affects individuals, families, communities, and societies. “To really transform our society, we will need to make justice one of the most meaningful experiences we can have.”<sup>45</sup> This chapter explored the intersectionality of racial trauma and sexual harm through healing circles, indigenous healing philosophy, and mindfulness based restorative practices. Using a trauma responsive approach, a ‘safe and brave’ learning environment was established to engage participants. The principle of collaboration – a core component in STAR for Sexual Harm – was delineated in four main sections: historical harm, social arrhythmia, self-justice, and massive resilience. A transformative embodiment activity was employed to invoke deep compassion and self-healing. The chapter concluded with a brief examination of an equity model for structural transformation.

Trauma caused by centuries of sexual harm will persist until a massive effort to understand its collective impact compels us to protect the dignity of women in general and Black women in particular. According to Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, it is imperative for all sectors of society to understand the intersectionality of racial trauma and sexual harm. One of the primary goals of Chapter 5 was to actively promote a culture of collaborative change and hopefully, inspire individuals and communities to honor the dignity and power of persons affected by sexual harm. This chapter concludes

with a challenge and a promise. The challenge is to defy traditional assumptions about victimization and intervention. On the other hand, a promise of self-justice and cultural transformation revolves around community healing and resilience. Paulo Freire, the renowned Brazilian educator and social justice activist concluded, “the community must be uplifted by the oppressed [the victims of trauma], who must not become perpetrators, but who, through a process of self-healing, uplift the community.”<sup>46</sup>



## Suggested Readings & Resources

1. Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th ed.). New York, NY: Continuum.
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## Endnotes

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- <sup>4</sup> Ani, M. (1980). *Let the circle be unbroken: The implications of African spirituality in the diaspora*. New York: Nkonimfo Publications.
- <sup>5</sup> Anderson, S. E. (1995). *The Black holocaust For beginners*. Danbury, CT: Writers & Readers, Inc.
- <sup>6</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.), pp.10.
- <sup>7</sup> McCall, N. (1994). *Makes me wanna holler: A young Black man in America*. New York, NY: Random House.
- <sup>8</sup> Baldwin, J. (1962). *Creative America: The creative process*. New York, NY: Ridge Press.
- <sup>9</sup> Anderson-Hooker, D. & Czajkowski, A. P., (n.d.). *Transforming Historical Harms*. Harrisonburg, VA: Eastern Mennonite University, Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.
- <sup>10</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.).
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- <sup>13</sup> Pettiford-Wates, T. & Bhagat, R. (2013, July 2). [The Color Line](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZfQ0RFkedc). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZfQ0RFkedc>
- <sup>14</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.), pp.10.
- <sup>15</sup> Crenshaw, K. (2018, June 22). [What is intersectionality?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc) Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc>
- <sup>16</sup> Author (n.d.). *STAR Level I Participant Manual*. Harrisonburg, VA: Eastern Mennonite University, Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.
- <sup>17</sup> King, M.L. (1964). *Why we can't wait*. New York, NY: Signet Classics.
- <sup>18</sup> Boyes-Watson, C. & Pranis, K. (2015). *Circle forward*. St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press, pp.172.
- <sup>19</sup> Boyes-Watson, C. & Pranis, K. (2015). pp.172.
- <sup>20</sup> This quote has served as a motto for many activist groups in Australia and elsewhere. A possible origin for the quote is a speech given by Lilla Watson at the 1985 United Nations Decade for Women Conference in Nairobi. Watson has said that she is not willing to accept credit for a concept that has its origins in a "collective process" and would rather have credit given to "Aboriginal Activist Group, Queensland, 1970."
- <sup>21</sup> Boyes-Watson, C. & Pranis, K. (2015).
- <sup>22</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski. (n.d.).
- <sup>23</sup> DeGruy, J. (2005), pp.33.

- <sup>24</sup> Ani, M. (1980), pp.2-3.
- <sup>25</sup> Ferreira, F. (2017). Critical sustainability studies: A holistic and visionary conception of socio-ecological conscientization. *Journal of Sustainability Education*. April 7, 2017.
- <sup>26</sup> Akbar, M. (2017). *Urban trauma: A legacy of racism*. Hartford, CT: Purpose Driven Publishing.
- <sup>27</sup> The phrase social arrhythmia has been coined by Ram Bhagat.
- <sup>28</sup> American Psychiatric Association. [Help With Dissociative Disorders](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/dissociative-disorders). Retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/dissociative-disorders>
- <sup>29</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.), pp.62.
- <sup>30</sup> Adapted from [Offering Loving Kindness to Yourself](https://www.mindful.org/offering-loving-kindness-to-yourself/) by Holistic Life Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.mindful.org/offering-loving-kindness-to-yourself/>
- <sup>31</sup> Baldwin (1979). *Remember This House*, unfinished manuscript.
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- <sup>34</sup> [The Conciliation Project](https://www.theconciliationproject.org/). (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.theconciliationproject.org/>
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- <sup>37</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.).
- <sup>38</sup> Anderson-Hooker & Czajkowski (n.d.).
- <sup>39</sup> Dr. Pettiford-Wates, [The Conciliation Project](https://www.theconciliationproject.org): <https://www.theconciliationproject.org>
- <sup>40</sup> Recall, sawubona means “we see you,” often interpreted as “I see you,” but spoken from the collective “I”.
- <sup>41</sup> Adapted from Harrell, S.P. (2019). Sawubona meditation: An African-Centered Experiential. The Soulfulness Collective, LLC. Soulfulness4Life.
- <sup>42</sup> [Drums No Guns](https://www.rambhagat.com/): <https://www.rambhagat.com/>
- <sup>43</sup> Dr. Ram Bhagat
- <sup>44</sup> Mandela, N. (1994). *Long walk to freedom: The autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
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## Additional Resources

### Trauma Healing

- **Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR):** <https://emu.edu/cjp/star/>
- **Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC):** <https://friendspeaceteams.org/hroc/>
- **Emotional Emancipation Circles (EECs):** <https://www.communityhealingnet.org/emotional-emancipation-circle/>
- **Urban Trauma (UT):** Akbar, M. (2017). *Urban trauma: A legacy of racism*. Purpose Driven Publishing.

### Restorative Practices

- **Building Resilience for Challenging Systemic Racism:** <https://www.rpec.org>
- **Culturally Responsive Circle Processes:** <https://rjoyoakland.org/>
- **Community Conferencing Circles:** <https://www.restorativeresponse.org/>
- **Building Resilience for Challenging Systemic Racism:** <https://emu.edu/spi/courses/>
- **Junkyard Jam: The Rhythm of Restorative Practices:** <https://www.rambhagat.com>

The Junk Yard Jam is a transformative arts-based approach to restorative justice for school and community settings. JYJ brings together yoga and mindfulness practices, performance art, and culturally responsive circle processes. This innovative workshop integrates junk yard percussion – a potent blend of street drumming that combines 5-gallon plastic buckets, recycled metal cans, pots, pans, 5-gallon water jugs, and trash can tops – with ritual poetic drama, social dance, spoken word poetry, visual art, and world percussion instruments (e.g. congas djembes, doumbeks, surdos, etc.). JYJ is a trauma sensitive restorative practice developed by Drums No Guns, Foundation in Richmond, Virginia as a response to rampant gun violence and school shootings across the United States. JYJ has been presented in Washington, DC; New Haven, Ct; Chicago, IL; and Oakland, CA to promote community health and wellbeing. JYJ is currently being employed in schools and communities throughout Denver. This facilitated workshop – a collaboration between Drums No Guns and The Conciliation Project – was presented at the 2017 National Conference on Community and Restorative Justice. JYJ was also presented at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding in Harrisonburg, VA. It involves the power of sound, rhythmic vibration, drumming, creative movement, call & response, words, images, circle processes, mindfulness, and other strategies for trauma awareness and resilience in order to restore hearts and minds.

### Mindfulness

- **Holistic Life Foundation:** <https://hlfinc.org/>
- **Kripalu Yoga in Schools:** <https://kripalu.org/>
- **Inward Bound Mindfulness Education:** <https://ibme.com>
- **Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga:** <https://www.traumasensitiveyoga.com>

### Artfulness

“The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions which have been hidden by the answers, while artists are here to disturb the peace.” – James Baldwin

- **Interpreting the “Trail of Enslaved Africans” through drumming, dance, drama, and digital storytelling:** <https://www.facebook.com/31750765863/videos/401792657034873>
- **Richmond Peace Education Center | Generation Dream:** <https://www.rpec.org/programs/hipp-67p6f?rq=Generation%20Dream>
- **The Conciliation Project | Global SeXXXism: Unwrapped:** <https://www.theconciliationproject.org/copy-4-of-uncle-tom-de-constructed>
- **Initiatives of Change | Children of the Sun:** <https://m.facebook.com/InitiativesofChangeUSA/photos/a.502664956434231/2706483862718985/?type=3>



# CONCLUSION



At the start of this manual we began by introducing the metaphor of a cascade. In nature, cascades are created when pooling occurs and as overflows spill into surrounding areas. **As we now wrap up, we revisit pooled areas where we concentrated our attention as well as spillover areas which invite further expansion.**

## Cascade Concentrations and Potential Expansions

### Chapter 1: Safety

In this manual's five main chapters, we developed the scaffolding for the Cascade Model. **Chapter One concentrated on trauma and more specifically on how sexual harm impacts body, brain, behavior, and belief.** We explored common responses to sexual harm that can trigger disconnections between body and mind. We looked at the Window of Tolerance and ways that hyper and hypo reactions occur. We also investigated the roles that brain structures and functions (amygdala and prefrontal cortex) play in instinctual responses such as fight, flight, freeze, or fawn. Cycles of "Acting In" and "Acting Out" were examined as ways of understanding typical behaviors and beliefs in the aftermath of sexual harm. Epigenetic changes were also noted as possible aftereffects of unresolved trauma.



Areas for further expansion include investigating differential impacts between acute, intermittent, or chronic experiences of sexual harm. **Understanding the cumulative bodily effects of multiple discrete events is important.** Research on [Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience](#)<sup>1</sup> may be instructive here, with its focus on prevention and equity as cornerstones to wellbeing. The field of polyvictimization also offers important insights on the prevalence of co-occurring harms. As many service provision systems are based on single-issue models, care should be given to highlight work that addresses the complexity of multiple co-occurring forms of personal and structural trauma. The *Creating Pathways to Justice, Hope and Healing* resource booklet provides a useful tool at the end of their manual, [Polyvictimization Assessment Tool and Resource Guidebook](#).<sup>2</sup> Other holistic approaches are included in the work of Indigenous practitioners such as Renee Linklater<sup>3</sup>.

### Chapter 2: Dignity



**In Chapter Two we investigated the ways that privilege, power, positionality, and patriarchy intersect and mutually reinforce how institutions can enact and be complicit with sexual harm.** Practices that enhance "voice and choice" were emphasized as ways to establish (and reinstate) mores of dignity and self-empowerment. Dynamics of gendered and racial privilege were looked at as platforms for abuses of sexualized power. Experiences of Power Wounding and Historical Harm were featured as outcomes of oppression, discrimination, racism, and other forms of structural violence. Social location and intersectionality dynamics punctuated this discussion, concentrating attention on the ways that identity/ies and structural power shape disclosure decisions, the availability of prevention and support services, and the handling of sexual misconduct cases.

**Voices that query and critique carceral responses to domestic and relationship violence are important expansions to this conversation.** These Transformative Justice voices highlight the role of multiple forms of state-sanctioned violence based on race, class, ableism, sexuality, and immigration status. A seminal blog entitled [Against Carceral Feminism](#)<sup>4</sup> speaks directly to these issues:



*“Relying on state violence to curb domestic violence only ends up harming the most marginalized women. ... Casting policing and prisons as the solution to domestic violence both justifies increases to police and prison budgets and diverts attention from the cuts to programs that enable survivors to escape ... Positioning police and prisons as the principal antidote discourages seeking other responses, including community interventions and long-term organizing. ... But others, especially Women of Color activists, scholars, and organizers, have been speaking out.”*

Important contributions to this activist work have been made by initiatives such as [GenerationFIVE](#),<sup>5</sup> [Creative Interventions](#),<sup>6</sup> [INCITE!](#),<sup>7</sup> and [Critical Resistance](#).<sup>8</sup> These groups advocate for approaches that consider how the prison industrial complex perpetuates oppression through its racialized carceral system. These organizers also recognize (and embody) the indivisibility of individual justice work and community justice work.

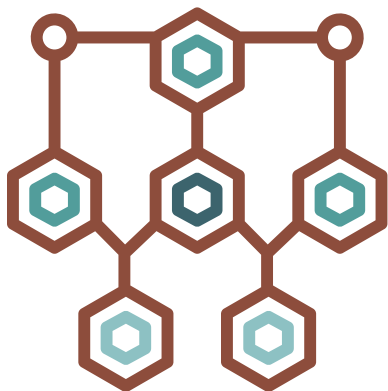
### Chapter 3: Attachment

**In Chapter Three readers were invited to reflect on how sexual harm might impact primary relationships: in regards to themselves, support persons, and other affected parties. We addressed the topics of relationships, risks, resilience and renewal, and responsibility for harms done.** Through these lenses we considered how sexual harm can breach primary attachments and enact moral injury. We also looked at the hazards of secondary exposure and compassion fatigue along with learning about trauma stewardship. Practices of self-care and resilience were framed as strategic acts of agency and resistance. Lastly, we discussed Circles of Accountability and Support (CoSA) for harm-doers, as well as options for restorative justice as a survivor-centered approach.

**Expansions for this chapter could include further work on protocols for harm-doer accountability and healing, as well as a more comprehensive evaluation of the value of restorative justice for victims/survivors.** With regards to the first item, giving concerted attention to approaches that center communities in the work of harm-doer answerability and rehabilitation is key. See for instance the work of the Chrysalis Collective in [The Revolution Starts at Home](#)<sup>9</sup> and the role of therapeutic communities for transgender survivors in [A Self Help Guide to Healing and Understanding](#).<sup>10</sup> Resources that highlight the potential activism role of faith communities include the work of [Faith Trust Institute](#)<sup>11</sup>, and victim advocacy initiatives such as [GRACE](#).<sup>12</sup> Organizations and resources addressing the use of restorative justice practices in instances of sexual harm range from judicial post-sentencing (hybrid) approaches ([Project Restore](#)<sup>13</sup>), to restorative justice as a victim-centered alternative resolution opportunity ([Campus PRISM](#)<sup>14</sup>). All of these organizations consider the primary role that relationships play in the work of prevention as well as post-harm accountability.



### Chapter 4: Structure



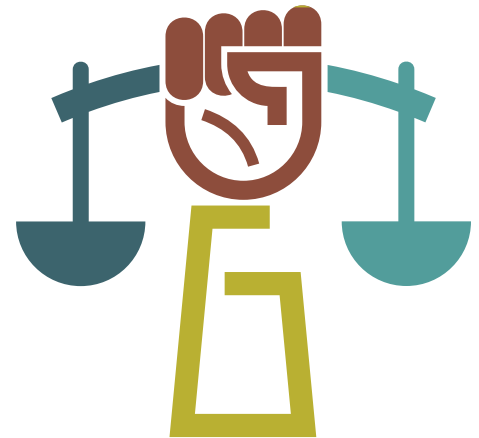
Chapter Four opened with a discussion on how organizations promote either fidelity (institutional trustworthiness) or perfidy (institutional betrayal) for their members' safety. Organizations play a key social guardianship role – when they condone or are silent about sexual violence, they amplify the trauma that victims/survivors experience. This form of Institutional Betrayal gives impunity to harm-doers, delegitimizes survivors, and silences disclosures of abuse. **In order to address these dynamics, we asked: what can organizations do to create environments free of sexual harm and how can they respond effectively when such harm occurs?** In response, we identified ten Just Principles and delved into various case studies of best practice. We highlighted trauma-informed protocols, noted metrics for the institutional

courage scorecard, and ended with a discussion of Models of Promise.

What expansions could add value to this chapter's content? **Advocacy initiatives that explicitly address the power differentials between individuals and organizations are key to establishing just institutional protocols.** This would include addressing the unique institutional policy needs of underrepresented communities such as disability groups, sexual minorities, the elderly, undocumented, incarcerated, etc. Research on [unconscious bias](#)<sup>15</sup> would also be useful here, particularly in terms of the ways that institutional identity and affiliation can create bias. The work of [SNAP](#)<sup>16</sup> (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), [IICSA](#),<sup>17</sup> and revisiting [Dr. Marie Keenan's](#)<sup>18</sup> seminal study on clergy sexual abuse would all be instructive additions here. Balancing these emphases with the creation of systems that track harm recidivism would also be of value.

## Chapter 5: Justice

Chapter Five serves as the culmination of the manual, drawing our attention back to the importance of creating cultures of change. **This included examining the intersection between sexual harm and historical trauma, addressing social arrhythmia, and practicing massive resilience.** This chapter challenged readers to explore how personal healing can be a byproduct of generating both resistance and resilience. Resistance to traditional assumptions about victimization and intervention, and massive resilience by means of embodying community-activated practices of self-justice. The connection between individual action and collective mobilization represent the agency and justice needs that drive cultures of collaborative advocacy.



**Chapter Five offers two key themes for further examination: namely, an even deeper**

**dive into the subjects of resistance and resilience.** In the field of sexual violence, resistance can take many forms on individual or collective levels. On the individual level, victim allyship and advocacy are key, while resistance on the collective level can take the form of community activism. The leadership of [Tarana Burke](#)<sup>19</sup> in global movements such as the [#MeToo](#) (and galvanizing [Time's Up](#)) has been instrumental in focusing international attention on resistance to sexual harm, while many [community-based justice](#)<sup>20</sup> initiatives have worked at this on the local level.

**Perhaps the most important observation that Chapter Five drives home is that the work of resistance can become a platform for building resilience.** Pioneers of [Impact Justice](#)<sup>21</sup> and initiatives such as the [Ahimsa Collective](#)<sup>22</sup> have long understood this truth. And, while it is important to reframe resistance work as an act of self-healing, this does not ignore the costs of activism. Alleviating these costs requires that we integrate [self-care and community care](#)<sup>23</sup> into our activism for change. As colleagues from [GenerationFive](#)<sup>24</sup> suggest, "Taking action together changes people individually and collectively."

In closing, we end with the poignant words of Indian activist Arundhati Roy, in her address entitled [Confronting Empire](#).<sup>25</sup>

Another world is not only possible,  
she is on her way.

On a quiet day,  
I can hear her breathing.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>15</sup> [Subversive Thread](https://subversivethread.bigcartel.com/product/coded-language-vol-i?fbclid=IwAR1ITIS0VgeNuagVmdr2Ublm3L1nXbxWPIBRw7beK4paZu-F8MtwCE-cXDSc). (2019). A Guide to Coded Language in Education Vol. I. Retrieved from <https://subversivethread.bigcartel.com/product/coded-language-vol-i?fbclid=IwAR1ITIS0VgeNuagVmdr2Ublm3L1nXbxWPIBRw7beK4paZu-F8MtwCE-cXDSc>
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