Beyond PTSD

# Healing Centered Operational Frameworks

Many community-based nonprofits have adopted trauma-informed practice, healing-centered engagement, and/ or restorative justice practice as an operative framework for their employees. These frameworks not only inform how programs are developed and implemented, but also how staff work together within the organization. For example, trauma-informed care should inform how a youth mentoring program develops a curriculum for young people currently involved in juvenile probation services. It should also inform how those youth mentors are treated by their supervisors when they are struggling with burnout or secondary trauma. Shawn Ginwright’s framework of healing-centered engagement encourages practitioners to move beyond individualistic frameworks isolating indicators of trauma to embrace a holistic, collective understanding of healing following a traumatic experience[[1]](#footnote-1).

*So, when you think about the type of, uh, circles, [there are] healing circles, trauma-informed circles, there's peace circles, uh, there's grief circles. So, there's this particular type of training that's definitely needed when you're in communities that suffer from so many lacks. Lack of affordable housing, access to good health or reasonable healthcare, lack of access to reasonable education. So, when you're dealing with this and how all these different things intersect, it's important to have the training to meet and respond to these. And I think the ongoing training that I've been receiving thus far has done just that…*

*So, we've also engaged in circles … The process that with the staff and some of them shared their own life experience at the moment, right? So it became impactful when we treated this incident like we would treat it with our participants … Our staff felt supported at that moment.*

The positive experiences reflected in study participants’ narratives around trauma-informed care, healing-centered engagement, and/ or restorative justice practices suggest that the implementation of such frameworks should be widespread among community-based nonprofits. These frameworks provide nonprofit organizations with the opportunity to center micro-level and macro-level practice to empower staff, community partners, and community residents in their own healing process as the respond to violence. Not only do these frameworks provide guidelines related to healing following a traumatic incident, but also pathways to sustain their healing and a holistic sense of wellbeing.

# Food for Thought

* + Does our organization have an operative framework that centers the wellbeing and healing of staff, program participants, and community members?
  + Could our organization benefit from learning more about healing centered engagement, trauma informed care, or restorative justice practice (among others)? Where is there the most need for healing within our organization (i.e. areas with high levels of staff turnover, performance issues, grievances, etc.)?
  + Are we using one of these frameworks partially, i.e. only with our program participants but not work our staff (or vice versa)?

1. Ginwright, S. (2018). The future of healing: Shifting from trauma informed care to healing centered engagement. *Occasional Paper*, *25*, 25-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)