Healing Centered Engagement: Addressing Trauma by a focus on Assets

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The Challenge to Healing

Social Determinants of Trauma

Mental Health Risks
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Panic
- Compulsive
- Hyperactivity

Behavioral Health Risks
- Substance abuse
- Violence
- Sexual behavior
- Poor Nutrition

Social Determinants of Trauma
- Racial bias
- Class
- Sexual orientation
- Immigration status

Institutional Inequities
- Corporations and industries
- Government
- Education
- Non-profit organizations

Living Conditions
- Physical environment
- Social environment
- Economic environment
- Service environment

Medical Model
- Substance abuse
- Violence
- Sexual behavior

Social toxicity

A Model To Understand
Social Toxicity
The Future of Healing…

“I am more than what happened to me. I’m not just my trauma.”

Trauma informed care is important, but it is incomplete.
Doesn’t acknowledge that trauma is experienced **collectively** not just **individually**

Fails to address the root causes of trauma that exist in the **environment**, not the **individual**

Focuses on coping with symptoms rather than healing from them
A Shift to Healing Centered Engagement
Detoxified the environment and created a thriving community.

Healing centered engagement is a non-clinical, strength based approach that advances a holistic view of healing and re-centers culture and identity as a central feature in well-being.
Healing centered engagement is explicitly political, rather than clinical.

A shift to healing centered engagement is culturally grounded and views healing as the restoration of identity.


How political engagement heals…
Healing centered engagement is *asset driven* and focuses on the well-being we want to foster, rather than symptoms we want to suppress.

- Snyder's Hope Theory
  1. Individual experience vs collective one
  2. Fails to address the root causes of trauma.
  3. Focus on coping rather than healing.

Healing centered engagement is *important*, but it is *incomplete*. Healing centered engagement supports adult providers with their own healing.

Healing Centered Principles
Healing centered approach involves fostering well-being at three levels:

- **INDIVIDUAL**
- **INTERPERSONAL**
- **INSTITUTIONAL**

**Principle**
Youth and adults are actively engaged in learning and discovering their respective cultural identities.

**Effective Practice**
- Actively engage with youth in conversations about identity.
- Share experiences with youth about harm and healing from aspects of your identity.
- Identify and integrate culturally appropriate procedures, and processes.
**Principle**
Youth and adults are identifying root causes of community issues.

**Effective Practice**
- Actively engage with youth in ongoing political education
- Provide opportunities for civic engagement
- Engage youth strengths-based approach to community problem solving

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**Principle**
Youth and adults are actively engaged in cultivating transformative relationships

**Effective Practice**
- Cultivate connections with young people beyond professional title
- Share your story
- Practice empathy
- Recognize the value of inclusivity and belonging in your institution
- Foster a culture of connectedness

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**Principle**
Young people and adults are learning to cultivate positive meaning making about themselves.

**Effective Practice**
- Create opportunities for young people to identify their own assets
- Explicitly communicate their assets into projects, and group interactions
- Actively seek and incorporate young people’s perspectives about social issues
- Build systems of support for adult social emotional growth and well-being

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Agency
The individual and collective ability to act, create, and change the root causes of personal, social, and community challenges

Relationship
The capacity to create, sustain, and grow healthy connections with others

Meaning
The profound discovery of who we are, where we are going, and what purpose we were born to serve
## Aspirations

**Principle**
Young people are creating a positive vision of their future.

**Effective Practice**
- Regularly engage young people in positive discussions about their future.
- Create opportunities for dreaming and imagination building.
- Build opportunities for goals setting.
- Embed opportunities that reinforce asset-driven language.

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**This is not simply a legal problem, or a political problem, or a policy problem. At its core America’s [problems] raises profound moral, and spiritual questions about who we are, who we aim to become, and what we are willing to do now…**