

Healing Complex Trauma 1



First Nations Health Authority
Interior and Northern Regions
2018 -2019



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Interior and Northern Regions of First Nation Health Authority for assisting with the training programs by providing the ceremonial supports and referring participants to the training program. We also acknowledge the 32 participants of the training program who come from Indigenous nations in British Columbia, others from the nations east of the Rocky Mountains, for their willingness to face intergenerational and complex PTSD in their personal lives and the support each gave to the process.

Ancestral Teachings & Trauma

Our ancestral teachings clearly direct us to the belief that when a traumatic event happens a part of the soul is lost in the geographical location of the event. Healing occurs when the facilitator works with the 'patient' to retrieve the lost part of their soul.

Trauma in our Bodies

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD is the existence of energy that silenced and constricted generations of Indigenous peoples. Parents and grandparents unintentionally passed on shame and self-degradation, not because they wanted to, but because silence or violence changed the individual and collective brain of Indigenous peoples. The purpose of the training is to come to a true understanding of trauma rather than continuing to live in the conditioned belief that we are inferior because we are 'Indians.'

Intergenerational Trauma and Sexual Violence

Research validates that those who have sexually offended also have a history of childhood sexual abuse.

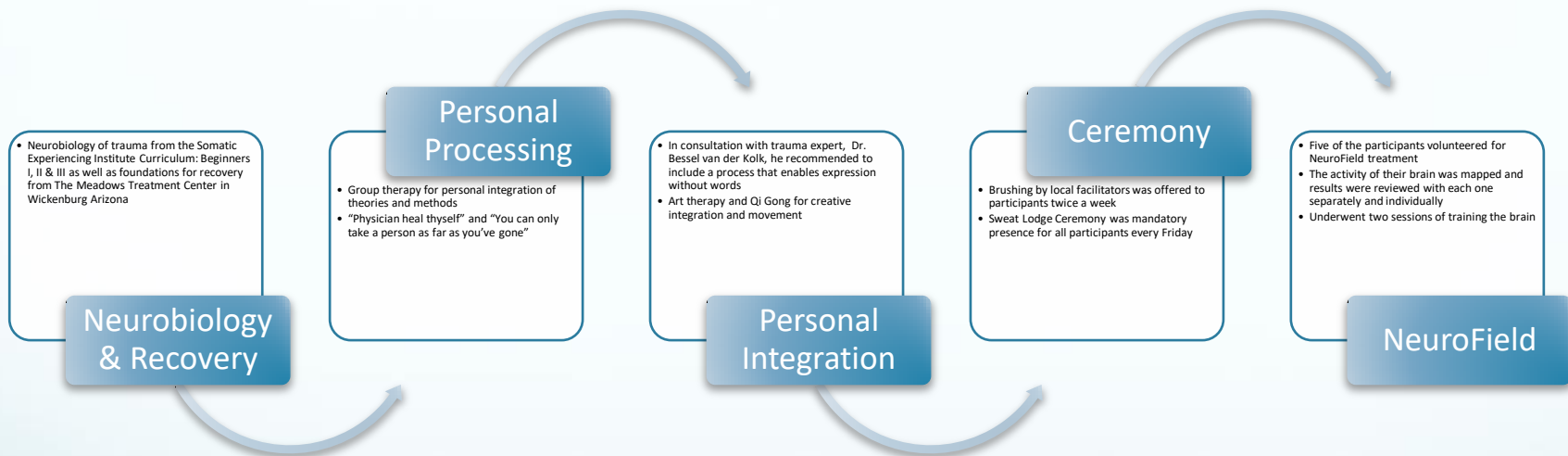
Locating a response to sex offence solely within the criminal justice system is not only “unlikely to offer an adequate or holistic approach to sexual offenders,” the current solution is not addressing the change in the brain that trauma induces or emotional paralysis that shame creates for individuals. An understanding of trauma will assist with developing programs that meet the need of participants.

Models for Healing


In the mid 1990s, Hollow Water, an Ojibway community, went through a treatment program in Alkalai Lake. The core group of Hollow Water community members gained a collective understanding of sexual trauma and conditioning through cultural oppression and violence through colonization. They identified that the conditioning dated back three generations and approximately 66-80 percent of the community were victims of sexual violence and 35-50 percent of the community had initiated sexually violent acts themselves. They gained an understanding of the normalization of trauma through violence and moved onto a healing pathway.

Program Model

Brief Treatment and Training



Culture and Training



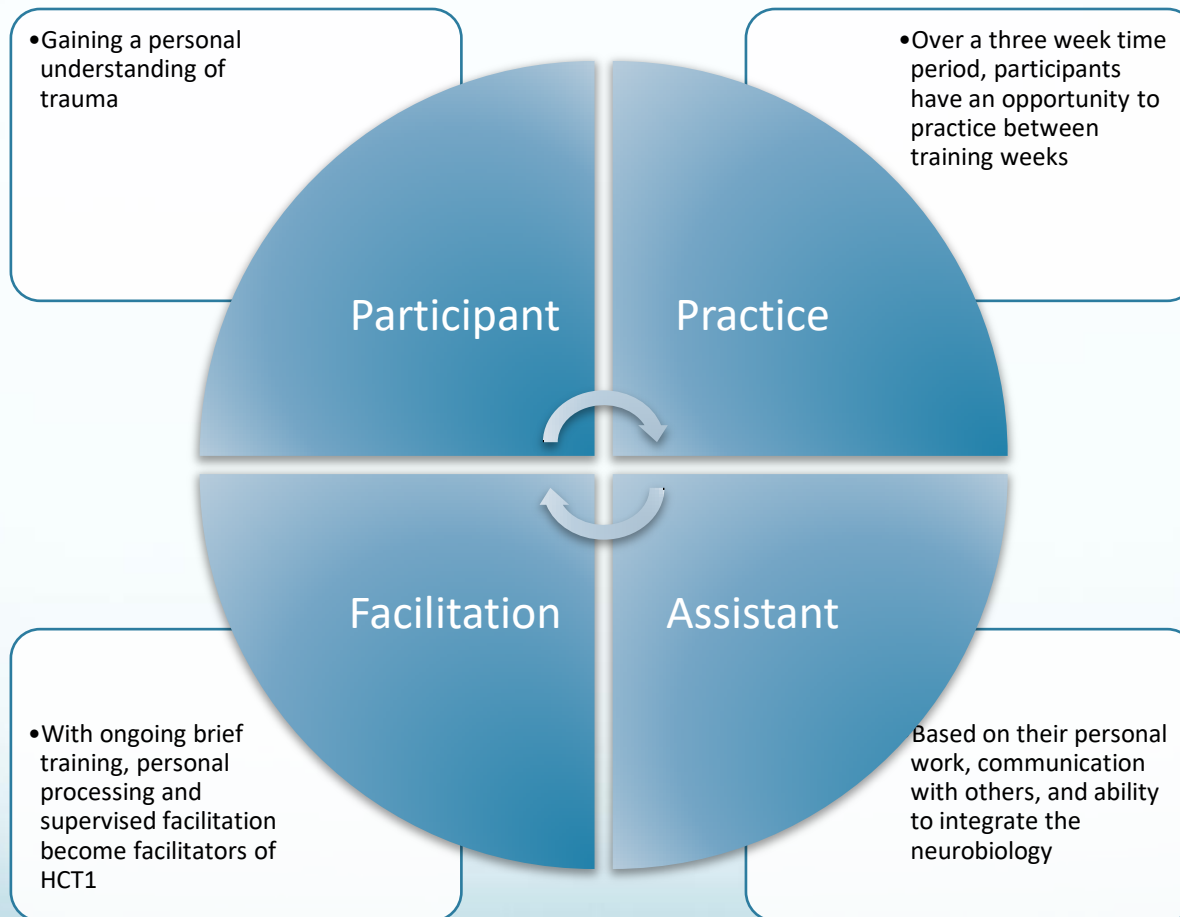
<h2>Sweat Lodge</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone was invited to participate in the Sweat Lodge Ceremony at the end of each week
<h2>Brushing</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regions assisted by proving contacts for brushing twice a week
<h2>Culture</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process of program comes from common values and principles of First Nations providing safety and a sense of familiarity and belonging. All were invited to speak their language and sing their traditional song for the benefit of all

PARTICIPANTS

Organization	How many
Community	19/16
Treatment Centre	6/16
Cultural Support	2/16
IRS	5/16

8 of the 32 were fluent speakers of their language
6 of the 32 were considered elders

Training for Change



RECOMMENDATIONS and COMMENTS

- Expansion of the training experience across BC First Nations
- Invest in 2nd level of training: HCT2
- Training on sexual trauma needs to be more than half a day—it needs to be a separate training
- We need this information geared for grandparents, simplify medical language
- We need the training in community and schools
- Curriculum helps deepen understanding of root causes of addiction
- Inclusion of more self-care options (reiki, massage, cranial sacral)
- More use of role play and other experiential methods
- Visuals for physiology/neurobiology

PARTICIPANT

“The flow of each day, information, group therapy, art integration...enabled me to connect more to myself to do some more personal healing. As a class, we all moved forward together in a good way.”



PARTICIPANT

“This is finding the voice. Taking the duct tape off the soul’s mouth, the spirit’s mouth.

This is spitting out the freeze. Defreezing, antifreezing the past memories. Once you defreeze all the sacred colours, the feathers come out. The necklace is celebrating the freedom.

The necklace of freedom. This is the healing sound of the voice.

When I cried, it stayed small, it wouldn’t come out. The cry stays in the head and you don’t feel nothing and it’s a disappointment.

Moving from the lie to the truth.”

