

ANZAPPL

Sydney- 2014

Helping Families Heal

bringing together psychotherapy and traditional forms
of healing within Aboriginal communities

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ABSTRACT

Helping Families Heal

A program offered to Aboriginal community members by the Family Violence Prevention Legal Unit in Fitzroy Crossing and the Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service in Halls Creek. The program brings together concepts from psychotherapy and traditional Aboriginal healing practice in order to address problems of violence, sexual abuse and suicide, and trace their origins in childhood adversity.

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BACKGROUND

- 10 years – Fremantle prison
 - Where I first met and made friends with Aboriginal people
- 20 years – SafeCare group treatment of all family members where CSA is a risk
- 44 years – Individual and group therapy
- Past 18 months - 2 weeks/month in Halls Creek and Fitzroy Crossing with Helping Families Heal

Helping Families Heal

Presenter: Christabel Chamarette M.Psych

AIMS OF PROGRAM

- To help women, men and young people to develop a sense of safety and security and support one another.
- To learn to express our feelings creatively and positively about difficult life experiences.
- To build up personal and parenting skills to help family members in distress and crisis.
- To learn new ways of building emotional strength and personal skills to cope with stress, grief and loss.
- To enable people to overcome barriers that obstruct their life and work .

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Community Development Philosophy

Helping Families Heal provides culturally appropriate group programs for adult community members who want to learn about healing from childhood trauma to assist their family members.

Indigenous mentors and consultants assist in the facilitation of the program to ensure that skills developed by participants will allow them to continue similar work into the future.

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METHOD

Feelings Jar and Favourite Place Exercises:

- Help us understand problems in our lives
- Get us in touch with our feelings – positive and negative
- Encourage releasing of emotion
- Help us learn to listen to others / share feelings
- Find new ways of responding to difficult situations
- Provide alternatives to bottling up feelings or fighting or substance use
- Help us to cope with pressures in our lives and community

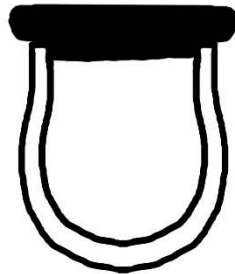
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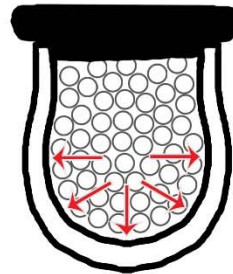
Program ...continued

FEELINGS JAR

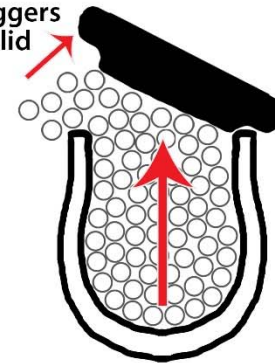
Empty at birth



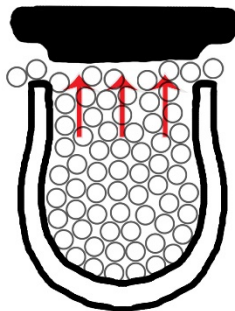
Fills up - pressure on sides
physical symptoms



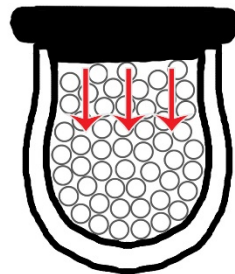
Triggers
lift lid



Some addictions lift lid
ease pressure temporarily



Some addictions tighten lid
dull the pain temporarily



Make openings in lid
go fishing for feelings

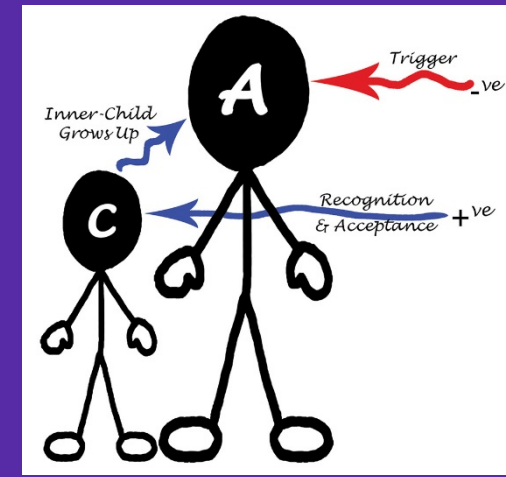
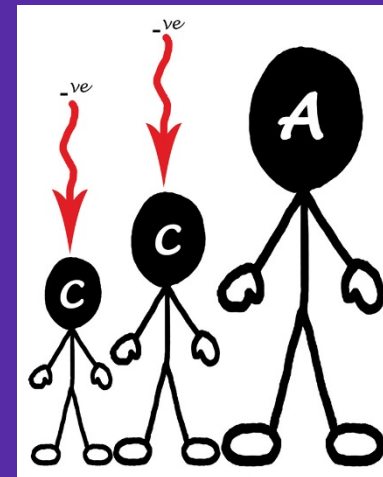
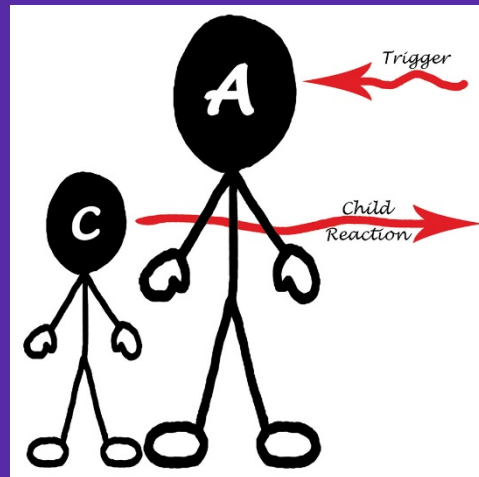
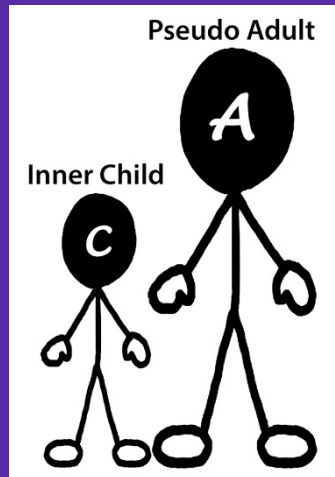


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Program ...continued

Child – Adult Diagrams

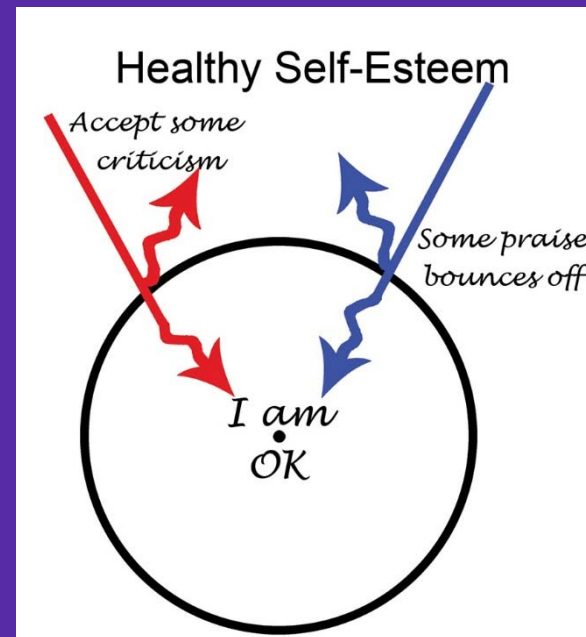
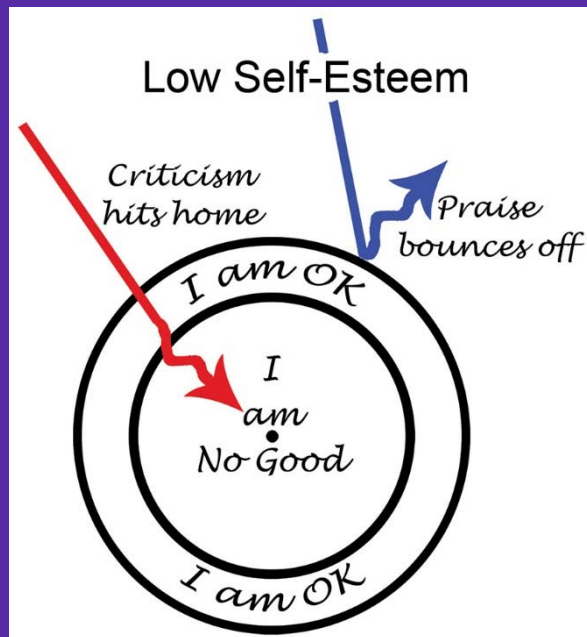


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Program ...continued

Self-Esteem

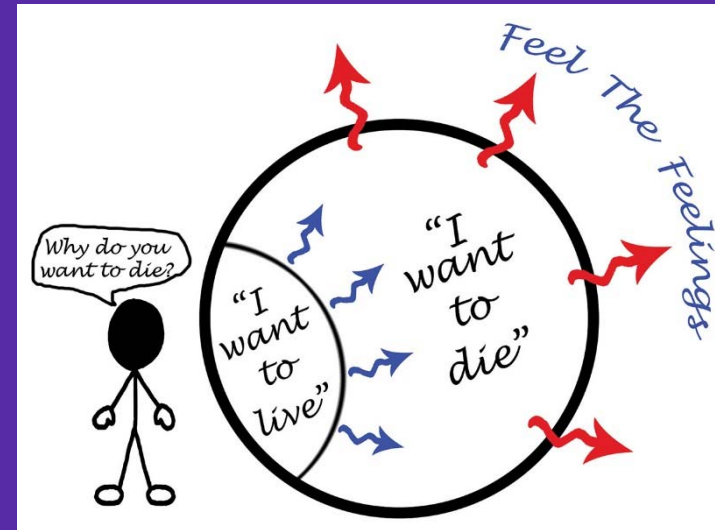
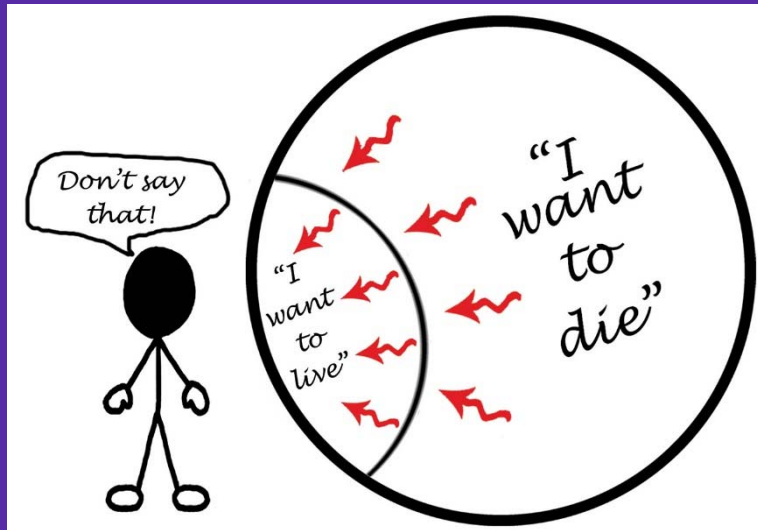


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Program ...continued

Suicide

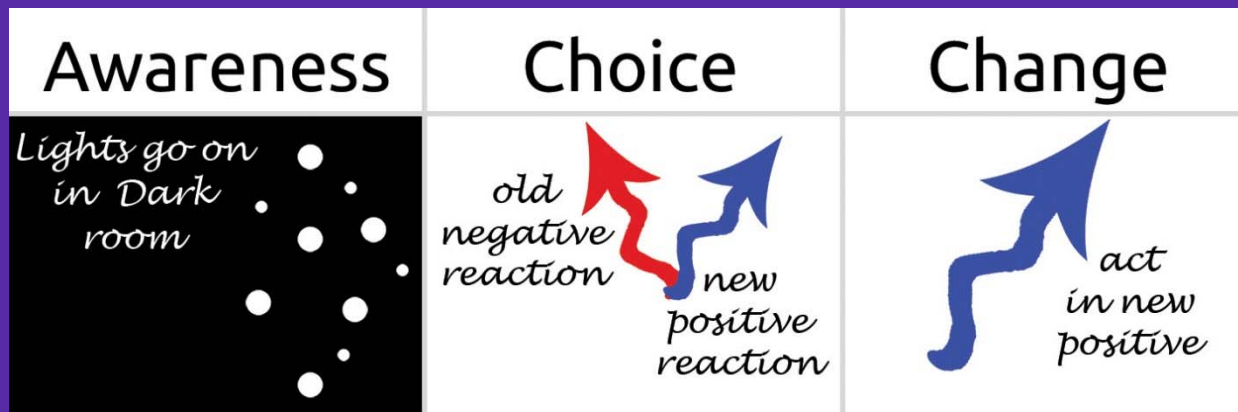


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Program ...continued

Change is a 3-Stage Process



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Program ...continued

Child-Adult Diagram

- helps us recognise buried memories of trauma in childhood when they re-surface in our adult life and relationships

Self-Esteem, Suicide and Change Process

- Simple ways of understanding and learning to grow personally and in relationships

Life Stories

- Community mentors provide supportive role models
- No one is under pressure to share.

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RESPONSE

Fitzroy Crossing:

- 37 men, 35 women and 24 boys (11 – 17 years)
 - participated in between 1 and 5 days of groups

Halls Creek:

- 107 women, 4 men, 43 boys and 10 girls (11 – 17 years)
 - participated in between 1 and 5 days of groups

Also considerable attendance from local service providers at information sessions

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Evaluation

Evaluation Phase just commenced

- Continues over the next 6 months
- Only 20% interviewed so far
- 100% want refresher course in the future

Net Promoter Score Question

How likely are you to recommend the workshop to others?

- Scale of 0 to 10: Negative 0–6, Neutral 7–8, Positive 9–10
- 84 % Positive, 16% Neutral

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Further info & copy of Presentation or Resource Booklet:

Christabel Chamarette

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NOTE: Presentation at the ANZAAPL Conference contained program participant drawings that, for IP reasons, have been replaced with the diagrams.

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REFERENCES

- Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre Aboriginal Corporation: Violence Free Valley Strategy
- www.mwrc.net.au
- Halls Creek Healing Strategy – a community owned solution
- www.chuffed.org/project/halls-creek-healing-taskforce-the-search/

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