

Holistic Practices



Beyond Borders

Holistic Practices is an interdisciplinary and reflexive way of practicing a profession.

Our Identity

Developing and promoting holistic, coherent and relevant practices of conflict resolution and peacemaking within Australia and beyond. Appreciating the awesomeness of life, complexity, diversity of culture and values, forgiveness, gratitude, healing, justice, understanding, and wisdom. Enhancing the autonomy, dignity and, well-being of all those involved in the practices. Holistic Practices Beyond Borders is made up of Lawyers, Academics, Mediators, Psychologists and Teachers. Our professional organization grew from a need in the professional community to support and encourage holistic practices within the professional world.

Our Mission

To promote a range of discussions, forums, training programs and workshops to increase awareness of the value of holistic practices within Australia and beyond. HPBB¹ is committed to providing Holistic Practice education and ongoing training, mentoring, practice revision and research within a holistic context and framework.

“The tendency in the scientific age has been more and more toward specialization.

Conflict Resolution seeks to deal with problems of conflict and conflict prevention by bringing together both behavioural and institutional influences and each of these areas must be treated in a comprehensive way...Holism...becomes, as a consequence, a challenge to traditional disciplines. Holism is not necessarily less scientific or reliable, though it may not be as statistical in its approach, its analysis of a total situation may be more reliable.”²

¹ Contact Holistic Practices Beyond Borders; brennermichelle@hotmail.com

² John Burton 1996 Conflict Resolution Its Language and Processes p29 The Scarecrow Press London

Endorsement
Holistic Law and Conflict Resolution:
Cultural Cognitive Restructuring Program;
O Lono/O Rongo

Context

For decades, programs within the prison and justice institutions have offered inmates and offender's ways and means, for reintegration and rehabilitation. Indigenous people are disproportionately represented in the justice system all over the world, yet the programs that are designed for inmates and offenders often overlook this significant cultural identity factor. In Aotearoa (New Zealand), culturally specific programs, such as the Maori Focus Units, designed for Maori (indigenous people of Aotearoa) inmates, have been implemented since 1992. This program is funded by the Department of Corrections as a privilege program due to The Treaty of Waitangi which is a founding document between the English or Settler Government and the Tangata Whenua (Indigenous people).

During the past 20 years, indigenous communities have met to address poor health, housing, education and employment statistics. These gatherings provide opportunities for indigenous solutions to address indigenous problems. In 2006 The Healing Our Spirit World Wide Gathering for Addictions was held in Edmonton Alberta. O'Lono/O'Rongo, a Maori cultural program for offenders and their families, was presented at this conference. Following this presentation, invitations to the presenters were extended from indigenous communities from North America and Hawaii.

Responding to the invitation by Papa Ola Lokahi (Hawaiian Health Organization) and Oha (The Office of Hawaiian Affairs) representatives, O'Lono/O'Rongo program was presented to Kupuna (elders) from the Ahu Pua'a (tribal authority) at Hau'ula district in Oahu Hawaii. This group of Kupuna (elders) supported this program and gave their blessing with the hope that O'Lono/O'Rongo would be delivered not only to the incarcerated Hawaiian people, but extended to their families and communities for a sustainable holistic conflict resolution approach.

Under the direction of the Ahu Pua'a (tribal authority), a subsequent presentation was given to the then director of Public Safety, Eva Lani White, who gave her total support for a pilot to be run within Hawaiian prisons. In September 2010 the findings of this pilot program will be presented as a case study at the Healing Our Spirit Worldwide Conference to be held on Oahu Hawaii, hosted by Papa Ola Lokahi (Health Organization).

The significance of this program is its authenticity and cultural relevance as a genuine empowerment tool. This holistic model is designed to restructure inmates' meaning of life and self worth by drawing the parallels between indigenous law and contemporary law. By reconnecting people to their ancestral knowledge and responsibilities, drawing on the legacies and great examples left by their ancestors, this program guides the participants through a clear pathway of understanding their noble birthright, that 'no action' is a violation of their sacredness.

Evidence Based Practice Research

This program is an example of form following function. As indigenous people involved in traditional heritage practices such as Ho'oponopono/Hohourongo within their own community, the practitioners are very familiar with the needs for healing both the indigenous people and the surrounding community. They have been at the heart of the Holistic Practice Model theory base and practice. As indigenous people, they are the most effective facilitators for delivering Kanaka Maoli cultural cognitive restructuring programs within the prison system.

Evidence based research notes that a relationship of trust is critical for any therapeutic intervention to be successful, and the relational paradigm of relationship building that recognizes authentic care based practice is of more value than the curriculum. Given the high proportion of indigenous people per capita within the prison system, the conflict resolution research recognizes that in deep-rooted and value conflict, *“the conceptual lenses we use to bring into focus the world around us, and give meaning to events, largely determines how we act.”*³

In order to have an effective program that reduces recidivism and empowers participants to reach their true potential, there is a critical need for this same knowledge to be provided to their families and extended family. This holistic approach has in practice provided a cultural shift in communities towards healing, peace and social harmony.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Programs and Psychological Assessment models, currently used in the Justice system, address these key areas: Identity – Low Self Esteem; Domestic and Family Violence, Anger Management; Alcohol and Drug Addictions; Community Connections and Health, Housing Education and Employment. The following cultural cognitive restructuring framework addresses these key areas holistically.

³ Harold Sander Religion and Security The New Nexus In International Relations Edited by Robert A Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover pub. Rowman and Littlefield 2004 p 165

Cultural Cognitive Restructuring Framework

1. Identity:

1. Mo'okuauhau/Hekemokoroa: Genealogy/ Rights of Succession

Genealogy is not just a choice of interest for Kanaka Maoli for research, it is the invisible web that underpins the dignity of Kanaka Maoli., “ *The knowledge that we are sons and daughters of a supreme creator.*” To Kanaka Maoli, genealogy clearly identifies the lines of authority connecting them to their ancestors and to the supreme creator. This also creates a significant link to the future generations. Personal identity from an indigenous perspective includes the sense of family, community and nation. Ancestral ties link them to a knowledge of where they come from spiritually, what their purpose is here on earth and where they go after life. Identity lays the critical foundation for the cultural cognitive restructuring program.

2. Domestic Violence and Anger Management::

2. Mana Tane/ Wahine: Roles and Responsibilities

Exposing participants to the knowledge of the sacred gift of procreation places women at the same status as the supreme creator. This redefines the roles and responsibilities that men and women have to keep sacred things, sacred. By providing a cultural/spiritual connection to pay heed to the dignity of women and man. Respecting ancestors' teachings, through the stories that challenged their lives, broadens and builds options for responding to frustrating and challenging situations⁴. This lies at the heart of kuleana 'responsibility given to fulfill the law given by the creator as custodians of eternal truths'⁵.and gives meaning that resonates to the core of Hawaiian heritage.

3. Alcohol and Drug Addictions:

3. Pa Kini Alamihi/ Pa Tuwatawata: Principles and Values

Once the right of succession, and the roles and responsibilities are firmly connected to the participants, drawn from their own ancestors, a clearer picture of the non-negotiables comes into focus. Guiding values and principles are inherent in being true to one 's self. Using the paradigm of high contextual self, that is seeing self as being transcendent in time, before birth and continuing on in name and in spirit eternally, brings with it a wider sense of appreciating consequences and impacts that carve out pathways for living peaceful lives. This holistic approach has as its foundation a connection to a world of symbolism that gives an abundance of meaning, and clearly defines boundaries for protection, safety and sustainability.

4. Connections and Community Harmony:

4. Te Ara Pourtama: Self Empowerment Change Management Strategy

Using the staircase model of progression that starts from the physical senses of looking and listening and then moving up towards discerning the spirit within creates an awakening to a clearer understanding of self. This supports and validates the genealogy, roles and responsibilities, and the principles and values. Participants experience a resonance of truth motivating them to put into practice a traditional pathway of personal development and self governance.

⁴ Barbara Fredrickson Broaden and Build Theory

⁵ Kahuna Kauila Clark personal communication

References:

The source of this course is directly from indigenous active bearers and their knowledge passed down from generations via protocols, symbolism and oratory.. Part of this knowledge has been drawn on to create the Restorative Justice Circles, Family Group Conferencing and counseling use of Ho'oponopono/Hohourongo (Hawaiian/Maori Conflict Resolution).

Holistic Practices Beyond Borders Inc. (HPBB) is a professional, registered association based in Sydney Australia. We, as the members of the executive committee of HPBB have been a part of the O'Lono/O Rongo training program, reflective peer revision and International Peer Presentations at International Conferences (Non-Adversarial Justice Melbourne Australia May 2010, and IPRA - Peace and Research Sydney Australia July 2010), we endorse this course with full support for its use in education, justice and communities.

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