



Nunavut Healing Working Group

March 20 – 22, 2013

Agenda

Day 1: March 20	2PM to 5PM	Define terms
Day 2: March 21	9AM to 4PM	Understand current psychotherapy resources and approaches
Day 3: March 22	9AM to Noon	Determine next steps

Objectives of the Nunavut Psychotherapy Working Group (NPWG):

- To respond to the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Plan's mandate to provide culturally appropriate grief counseling to all Nunavummiut
- To create links between various community mental health and wellness organizations and resources
- To facilitate access to culturally appropriate psychotherapy resources
- To consider current best practices in psychotherapy for grief and psychological trauma

Purpose of the Meeting: The goal of our first meeting was to survey current psychotherapy resources across Nunavut, in order to understand available resources and gaps that exist in current resources. We wanted to create meaningful links between existing programs. Our objective was to determine next steps in the creation of a psychotherapy resource to meet the needs of Nunavummiut with unresolved grief and/ or psychological trauma.

Participants:

Isaksimgagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council, a nonprofit suicide prevention group <http://inuusiq.com/>

Government of Nunavut, Department of Health and Social Services
www.hss.gov.nu.ca

Ikayugatigiit Society, a community-based intervention program for men who have been sexually abused

Ilisaqsavik Society, a non-profit community-initiated and community-based Inuit organization in Clyde River, Nunavut, dedicated to promoting community wellness. <http://ilisaqsivik.ca/>

Mamisarvik Healing Centre, an Inuit-specific treatment program in Ottawa, for the treatment of addictions and the effects of psychological trauma, physical and sexual abuse. www.tungasuvvingatinuit.ca

Nunavut Tunngavik, NTI coordinates and manages Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and ensures that the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations. www.tunngavik.com

Thomas Ootuk, Elder and counselor, Pond Inlet

Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, Rankin Inlet. The centre offers programs designed to serve the needs of the community in a variety of ways, from offering counseling to teaching traditional skills to offering essential services like the school bus service. www.pulaarvik.ca

Society for a Building a Healthier Kugluktuk, offers confidential healing and reconciliation services. www.healthykugluktuk.ca

University of Toronto, Northern Psychiatric Outreach Program at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Dr. Allison Crawford. NPOP-C has been providing psychiatric outreach services to communities in the Qikiqtani region of Nunavut since the 1970s.
http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/care_program_and_services/Outreach_Services/Pages/guide_psychiatric_outreach.aspx

Laval University, Dr. Christopher Fletcher,
http://www2.ulaval.ca/fileadmin/ulaval_ca/Images/recherche/bd/chercheur/fiche/3000191.html

Participants were also surveyed using a pre-meeting questionnaire – see Appendix A

Day 1

Wednesday March 20, 2013 2PM to 5PM

Defining terms...what do we mean when we say...?



Therapy/ Healing

What is therapy? Why does it happen? Where does it happen? How does it happen? How do we know when therapy or healing has worked?

- Diamond metaphor – there are many different sides of a person – once people are labeled as having a mental illness they don't change easily
- I've always had the urge to go back on the land, with the air, the sky, the water. It's very healing for me. Going on the land is a turning point for many clients, a magical touch. They come back a lot more sure of what they are and what they want. We sometimes use a bonfire, for letters, papers, drawings they want to let go of.
- When I was healing I used elders, traditional healers. Just being heard, believed, was so important. I did a lot of crying in the first stages.
- [translated from Inuktitut] The word "healing" started out negatively among elders. Maybe if we had a different term, maybe 'letting things go'. Healing sounds very physical like 'did you cut yourself'?
- We are advocates for a new way of thinking about healing, mostly to non-Inuit who have the power to make it possible. We have the right terms and the right knowledge. When people are on a healing journey we want to make sure they have the right resources. We often run into limiting concepts [in conventional mental health]
- [translated from Inuktitut] Becoming whole, improving yourself
- serenity *samatseaniq, salinaq* – to be at peace, at peace with yourself
- it is security – that feeling as a child when there was unity of the family; we really cared for one another; sharing and just being there. We were sheltered and protected. There was no drugs, alcohol or violence. It is important for us to remember. Once we were forcefully relocated to settlement it was never the same again. We are still feeling a lot of those changes that happened so rapidly. Why did they say yes [to residential school] my parents. They felt they had no choice. Inuit were not always the way we are today, we were independent, powerful, in control. They functioned well even if it was harsh. With trauma and abuse you are living with something that is horrible. Make them understand we matter like everyone else on this earth. It's like the whole world is not accepting. When I feel hopeless or helpless those wonderful memories come back.



Therapist...
Helper

Who are we as therapists? What brought us to this work? What is our story? What makes a good therapist? What is expected of a therapist? What makes it difficult to be a therapist?

- I like to look at a person plus an illness, rather than person as an illness
- I like to ask clients "how come you are in such good shape?" [considering the difficult circumstances]
- We are put in their [client's] heart to make that difference. I teach them what I have learned and what I know. A lot of them have forgotten that because of trauma.
- The land is therapy on it's own. I re-introduce culture. They just forgot it because of hurt, anger, pain. Being myself and reaching out to what they already have; in that too I get healed.
- Giving tools and knowledge in a place or time that is set aside for healing
- *Ipigusutsianiq* – you care for something; you treasure something; you inquire if everything is ok
- Being engaged with someone wherever they are, whenever they are ready'
- Sometimes I ask myself, am I making a difference. You can't always tell, but you can plant a seed of change.
- [Importance of] Inuit leadership...if I didn't choose to be a therapist, if someone didn't believe in me, I wouldn't be here. Someone believed in me as an Inuk. We need to keep empowering Inuit to work. We're the ones that stay up here. We know them. They are our brothers, cousins, sisters. Inuit knew what to do back then. Why do we need to be retrained?



Elder

Who is an elder? What can elders offer for healing/ therapy? How do we currently use elders? How should we involve elders?

- There is a real change to elders since the 1950s and 1960s. Many of them went through residential school. Children don't want to listen to their parents or grandparents because of all that pain.
- We have to help our young people understand that connecting is what counts.
- Once youth have heard the life history and life stories they are able to understand their parents and grandparents.
- Just because someone is older doesn't make them an elder or wise.
- If no one asks you [as an elder] for help you will not help, but you will reply if you are asked.
- [translated from Inuktitut] [As an elder] I start with questions. He's a fellow human being and based on that there is a job I'm doing. It doesn't matter what I'm doing day or night. I am always prepared.



Traditional Approach

When is a “traditional approach”? What can Inuit tradition offer for healing? What would therapy that incorporates tradition look like? How do you currently incorporate tradition? Can anyone use tradition?

- In the land-based program, most people don't want to talk about their trauma on the land, they want to live in a holistic manner
- [translated from Inuktitut] From the mother to the oldest sibling, they were on one pillow; they were much tighter. Community life is much different now. With little kids you try to help them and they get angry.
- [translated from Inuktitut] In most of the communities there is a concept of healing. I try to explain using concepts they already know.
- [translated from Inuktitut] There is the importance of talking, or bringing it forward in words; and also sometimes not needing words. The importance of quietness and quietness shared, and to feel safety.
- The policies [of healthcare] were made without my people's input.
- The importance of being equal, and of owning it [the program], whether you are working with a Qallunaat or an Inuit.



Grief

What is grief? How are people affected by grief? When does someone need treatment for grief? How do we know when grief is resolved or better? Are there healthy forms of grief?

- [translated from Inuktitut] My whole body can feel the pain [of trauma]. It can eat away at your body.
- We have to be careful not to pathologize grief
- Culture can complicate grief; people express it differently, but every culture knows what kind of grief is pathological
- Cultures have patterned ways of dealing with grief
- Is it also possible that because of injustice against our people that grief becomes nonsensical – you can't situate it or assign meaning to it
- [translated from Inuktitut] is there an end? Is there a closure? I'm not saying there is a difference. We have two types of crying, two levels. One is coming from internal, from in the body, and the grieving will be stronger; it is hard for grief to leave the body. There should be grieving but there should be closure.
- Something I have observed that shows people are not grieving well is when the loss opens up other losses and people are uncontrollably distraught
- There isn't just one right way to grieve.

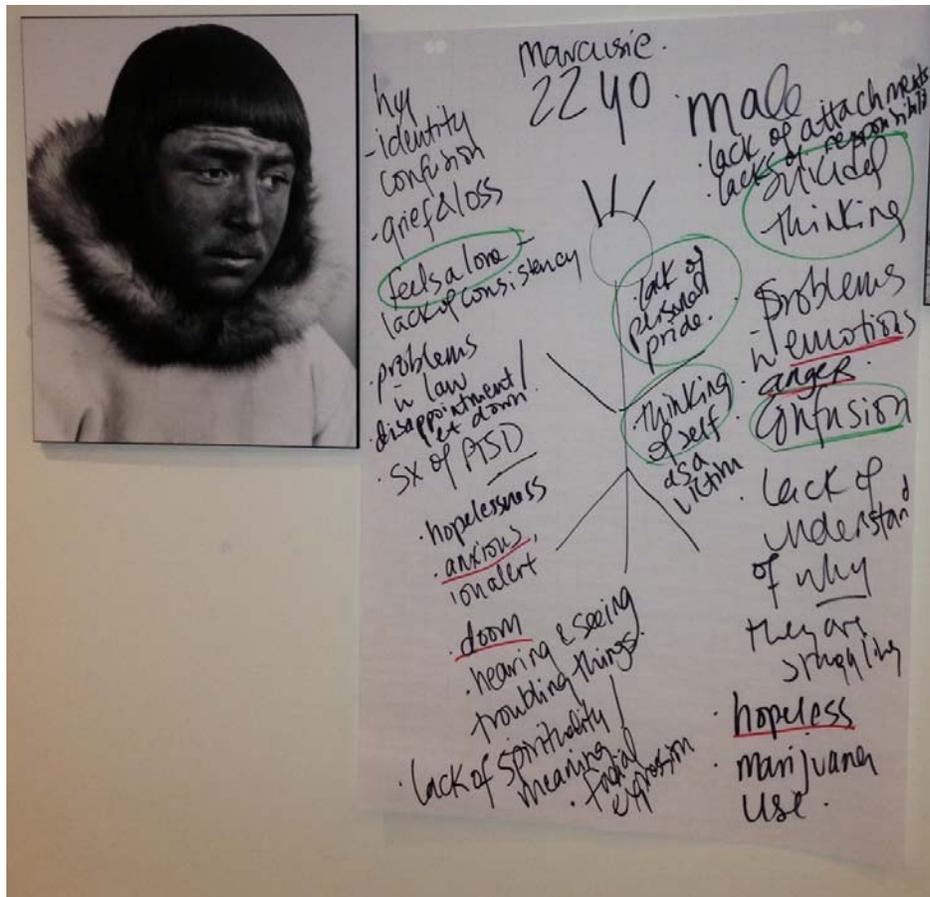


Trauma

What is trauma? What causes it? How does it affect people? Is it different at different ages? How does it affect families? Communities?

- Kids now don't understand where their anger comes from. The energy of hate and anger is passed on, but they do not understand what their parents went through [historical trauma]
- Last year there were 7 youth suicides – that is trauma and grief
- There should be a place in communities where people can congregate, especially when they are dealing with trauma and grief

As a group we created a case example that exemplified the elements of psychological trauma that we all identified. We then used this example to discuss treatment approaches available in each program (see Day 2, below).

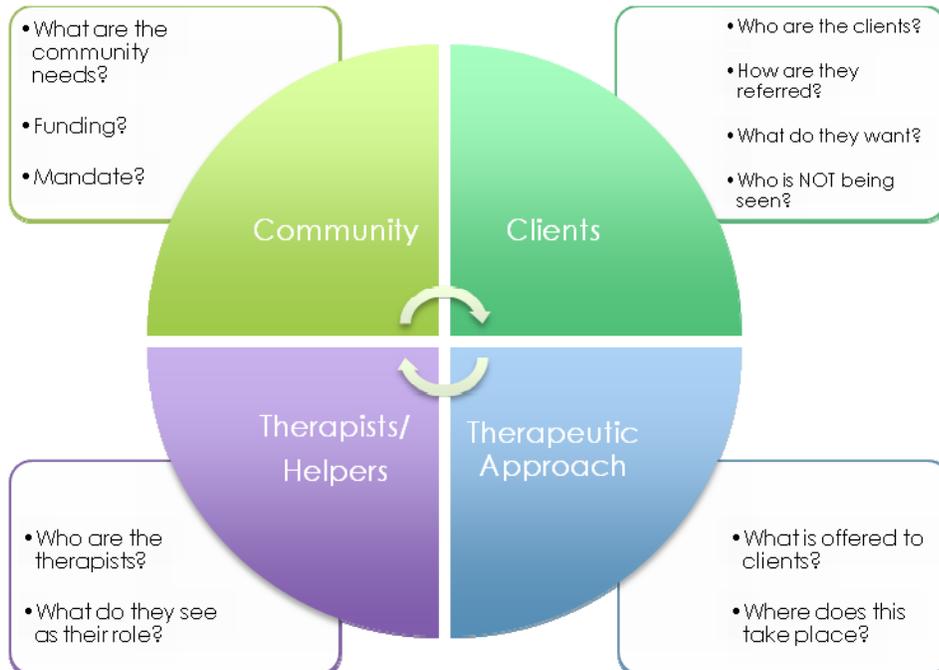


Marcusie is a 22-year-old man who comes to our clinic feeling hopeless, but does not know why. When you talk with him you discover that he has suicidal thoughts. He experienced grief and loss from the suicides of several close family members and friends throughout his teenage years. There were problems in his home from an early age, and he did not think anyone was available for him (attachment problems and neglect). He had "trouble with the law" throughout his teens, and is confused about his identity, about who he is or what he wants from life. Currently he struggles on every level. His emotions include hopelessness, anxiety, a feeling of doom, and anger. He carries this in his body, with sensations of 'being on alert', and having a flat facial expression. He has thoughts that he is alone, that he is a victim, and that he is without pride. He tries to cope by smoking marijuana every day. He lacks close relationships, and has no spiritual connections or sense of meaning.

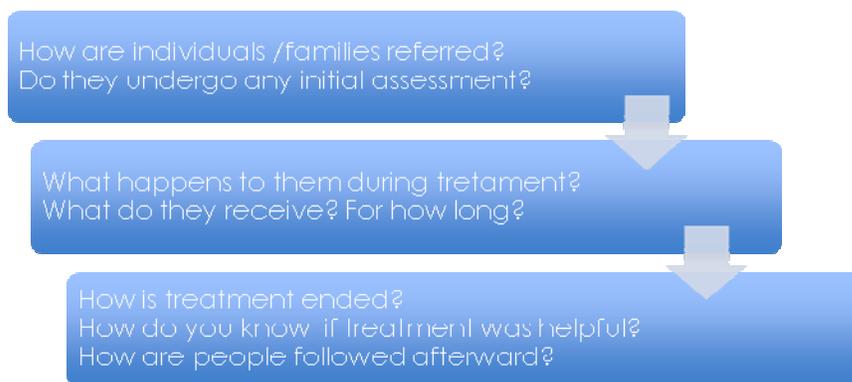
What services and approaches does your organization have to meet the needs of Marcusie, and what are the challenges to meeting his needs?

Thursday March 21, 2013 9AM to 4PM
Understanding current therapy approaches and resources

Each individual/ group will give an overview of:



Using the case of Marcusie, we reviewed how individuals and families flow through each group and/or between groups:



Program	Groups Served	Traditional Components	Services Offered	Outcomes
Embrace Life	All Ages Based in Iqaluit Services across Nunavut	Provides resources and services in Inuktitut	Supports programming and suicide-related activities offered in communities Provides educational resources related to suicide Provides community training and education Soon will offer grief groups	
GN H&SS Mental Health	All ages Offices in community Health Centres	Few Inuit staff No traditional programming Community involvement varies across sites	Crisis management Mental Health assessment Psychiatric referral Psychoeducation (e.g. teaching coping skills) Counseling (brief) Medication monitoring Community involvement (e.g. organizing special events, participating in wellness programs)	Varies between health centres Usually individual assessment tools that track symptoms and clinical change (e.g. Beck Depression Inventory) Client charting
Ikayughatigiit	Males Affected by Childhood Sexual Abuse Cape Dorset, Kimmirut, Iqaluit, Sanikiluaq	Yes Land-based activities and traditional skills (drum making, tool making, etc)	Staged psychological trauma treatment (psychoeducation; safety skills; harm reduction; relaxation; emotion regulation; narrative exposure; cognitive skills) This is combined with land-based activities led by cultural mentors Programming for families.	Initial assessment

Program	Groups Served	Traditional Components	Services Offered	Outcomes
Ilisagsavik	All ages (in Clyde River) Training for counselors across Nunavut	Inuit-run, community-initiated Inuit counselors and elders Land-based programming Promote <i>Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit</i> (Inuit Knowledge) and <i>Inuuqatigiittiarniq</i> (the healthy inter-connection of mind, body, spirit, and the environment) as a path to healing Training manual and clinical approach incorporates mainstream mental health concepts and methods	Counseling services Education and training for counselors across Nunavut Crisis Team that is deployed to communities Work-ready program to Mining employees	Collect individual stories Track statistics (volumes)
Mamisarvik	Inuit men and women ages 18 yrs and older Located in Ottawa	Culturally-specific treatment Country food Cultural education and Inuit history Use of Elders Some land-based programming	53-day, residential and day, addiction and trauma treatment Treatment is offered in a group setting Opportunity to “work through” by telling your story Draws on mainstream therapy: Anger management; trauma therapy; AA Also uses <i>Iceberg Healing Manual</i> developed by Elder in Pangnirtung	Detailed intake and assessment with standardized measures (daily living; PTSD symptoms; addiction symptoms)
Northern Psychiatric Outreach Program University of Toronto	All ages Qikiqtaaluk region Contract to GN H&SS	Use of interpreters Bridging with community health initiatives and groups	Psychiatric assessment and treatment planning Medication management Psychotherapy and psychotherapy training	Use of individual assessment tools and clinical measures

Program	Groups Served	Traditional Components	Services Offered	Track statistics Outcomes
Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre	All ages Rankin Inlet but also place cultural support workers in communities	Teaching traditional skills Sewing programs	13 programs designed to serve the needs of the community in a variety of ways, from offering counseling to teaching traditional skills to offering essential services like the school bus service Main counseling program is a spousal abuse founded by victims in community. Offers 10 modules over 12 sessions that draw on mainstream counseling techniques (psychoeducation and cognitive behavior therapy) Individual counseling using emotion-focused therapy model	
Society for Building a Healthier Kugluktuk	All ages in Kugluktuk Primarily residential school survivors (250 clients) and their families	Sewing classes for women Meditation (Copper-Inuit form) Story-telling Community gatherings	Drop-in centre for community Individual counseling – Fly in counselors from Yellowknife and Treaty 6 Groups for families Fresh cooked food for home visits	Initiated the program with a house-to-house needs assessment
Thomas Ootuk	All ages	Elder provides counseling in any setting in Pond Inlet Provides education by invitation in various communities across Nunavut	Primarily listening or talking incorporates mainstream techniques (choice theory) but has adapted it for use with Inuit clients	

Day 3
Friday March 22, 2013 9AM to Noon
Next steps

Summary of common themes

- participants valued the opportunity to connect with each other and hear about initiatives across Nunavut; many cited the feeling of **isolation** that can occur in their work
- creating a **network** and continued **communication** across the territory and between groups was identified as important
- people cited a number of **obstacles** to establishing and sustaining community initiatives, including: protected community **space** (i.e., a building); lack of paid positions to support this work; turn over of staff
- there was a great deal of interest in further understanding and nurturing traditional approaches – participants took a broad approach to tradition, and understood it as changing, rather than static, and open to incorporating more mainstream approaches
- two key features of a traditional approach that need to be advocated for are the importance of the **land** to culture, wellness and healing; and, the importance of **sharing experience and story**, and of having one's story heard
- there is interest in **documenting** the traditional approaches currently being used by elders
- there was discussion about the **lack of utilization of elders**
- we need to hear more from **youth** and to elicit their participation
- healing needs to be at both the **individual and community level**
- we have to find ways to determine whether our approaches are working
- we have to strengthen **partnerships between research and traditional knowledge users**

Next Steps

1. Create a network of people engaged in healing and counseling services across Nunavut, by sharing contact information and hosting regular forums for exchange of ideas. Based on feedback during the workshop, the name of the working group has been changed to Nunavut Healing Working Group. Next meeting by teleconference Fall 2013. See Appendix B for contact List.
2. Identify elders who can be interviewed about their approaches to healing
3. Include youth in our working group.

4. Allison, Chris and Jenny to explore grant and funding opportunities to create a web-based psychotherapy resource for community members and wellness professionals with information on grief, psychological trauma, and tools for dealing with these issues, including narrative and land-based activities
5. Consider educational and training opportunities that would bring together people engaged in wellness / healing/ counseling services across Nunavut.
6. Create a 'toolkit' that organizations can use to assess the effectiveness of their programs,

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Crawford

and



Jenny Tierney

Appendix A: Pre-meeting Survey

1. What is your name or the *name* of your organization?
2. *When* did you or your organization start doing this work? (year)
3. *Why* did you or your organization start doing this work?
4. Do you or your organization have a *description of what you do* (for example a *mandate*)?
5. Who provides your *funding*?
6. Which groups of people do you and/or your organization work with?
7. Do you use specific techniques or models of healing/ wellness/ therapy?
8. Do you do any work related to grief, loss or trauma?
9. In what ways is Inuit culture important to what you do?
10. How are these aspects of culture important to the healing or therapy process?
11. Do you or your organization use Elders or other community members in your work?
How do you involve them?
12. What do you think needs to happen in Nunavut to help individuals and families to deal with grief and trauma?
13. What do you think needs to happen for communities in Nunavut to respond to grief and trauma?
14. Do you or your organization provide training for other therapists, counselors, or people who help?
 YES NO

If yes, what kind of training?

Appendix B: Participant and Organization Contact List

Isaksimgagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council

Participant: Jenny Tierney
Phone Number: 867-975-3233 ext. 226
Fax Number: 867-975-3234
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Website: <http://inuusiq.com/>

Government of Nunavut, Department of Health and Social Services

Participant: Candice Waddell
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Website: www.hss.gov.nu.ca

Ikayugatigiit Society

Participant: Cindy Parsons
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Participant: Patricia Smith
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Participant: Johnny Issaluk
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Ilisaqsavik Society

Participant: Jakob Gearhead
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Mamisarvik Healing Centre

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Nunavut Tunngavik, NTI

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Participant: Shylah Elliott
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Website: www.tunngavik.com

Elder and Counselor

Participant: Thomas Ootuk
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Fax Number: 867-899-6332

Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre

Participant: Mary Fredlund
Phone Number: 867-645-3785 (work) or 867-645-2646 (home)
Fax Number: 867-645-2538
Email: pkfcsap1@gmail.com
Website: www.pulaarvik.ca

Society for a Building a Healthier Kugluktuk

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University of Toronto, Northern Psychiatric Outreach Program at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health,

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Laval University

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