

“Consciousness raising” as a tool in domestic violence work

The personal is still political



Introductions

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And you....



What is Liberation Health?

Most basic idea

Personal troubles reflect
cultural/political/social issues;
therefore, individual problems
are also collective problems.



Second big idea

Critical consciousness
changes people's perspective on
their own pain/suffering/trouble;
e.g. awareness of being part of a
larger group,
ability to see the larger issues
shaping their own trouble



Third big idea:

Action to change the world is
“therapeutic;” individual change
and social change are intrinsically
connected.



Roots in Latin America and in feminist psychology and radical social work.

- Each sees individual suffering as shaped by oppression in a hierarchical social structure (social structures inevitably hierarchical).
- Each emphasizes three levels of change: personal, interpersonal and social/cultural.
- Each works against the assumption of micro OR macro; social action OR clinical practice.

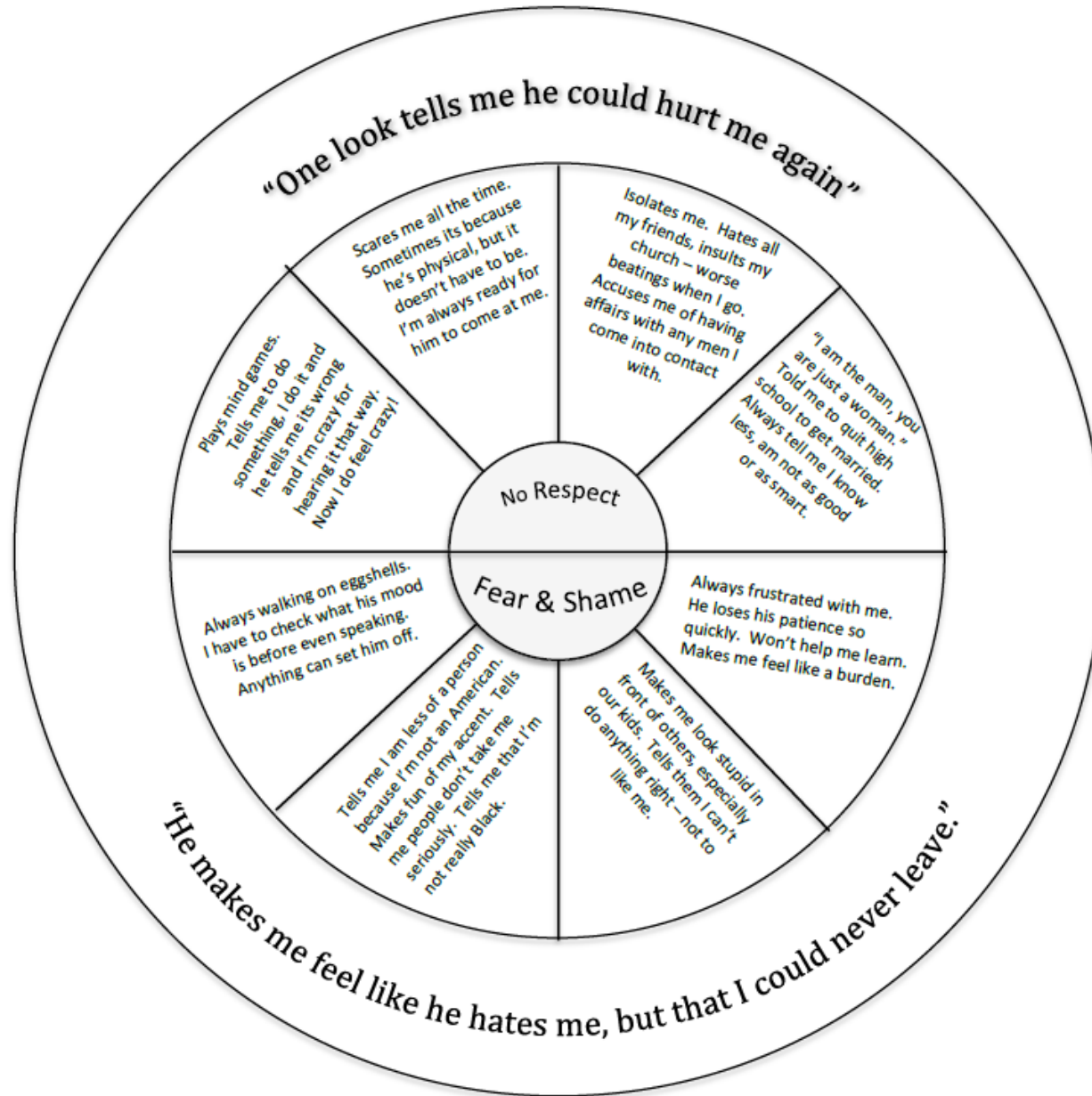
Alyce

- 59 yr old Jamaican woman, came to US at age 12
- Formal education ended at grade 9, low literacy level
- Married at age 18 to Black US born man
- Describes entirety of marriage as abusive

“Traditional”

Interventions and Support

- Individual education and information
- Concept of internalized abuse
- Power and Control Wheels
- Attention to power differential in Advocate-Client relationship





Influence of Liberation Health

- Potency of group modality
- Collection of Writings- *Passages*
- Importance of action-taking
 - *Courtroom Experience
- Value of addressing whatever cultural and social forces the client finds important

Alyce's Triangle

personal

Years of marital abuse,
low literacy & education
accented English,
minimal employment,
isolation

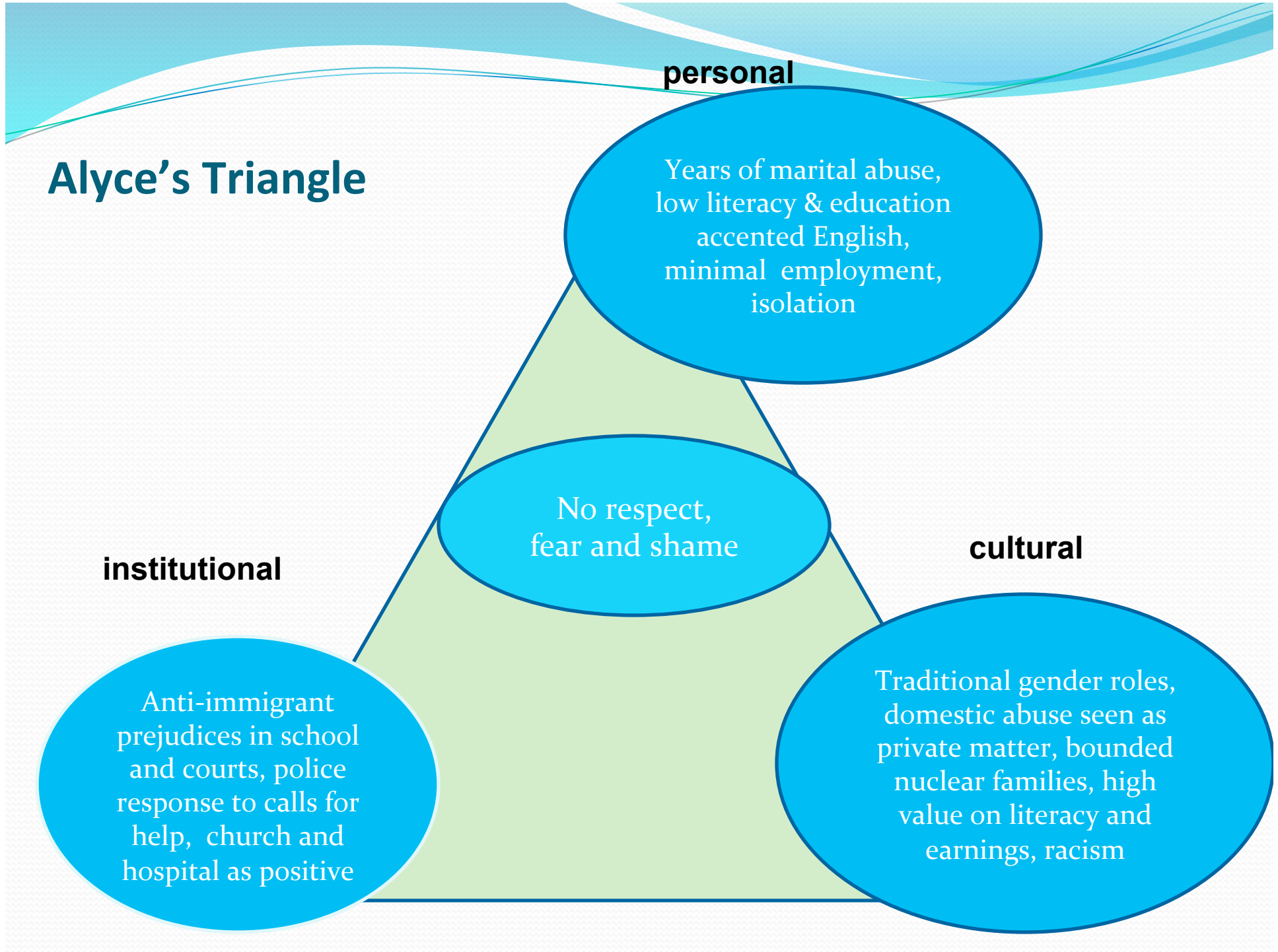
No respect,
fear and shame

institutional

Anti-immigrant
prejudices in school
and courts, police
response to calls for
help, church and
hospital as positive

cultural

Traditional gender roles,
domestic abuse seen as
private matter, bounded
nuclear families, high
value on literacy and
earnings, racism





In your own advocacy work...

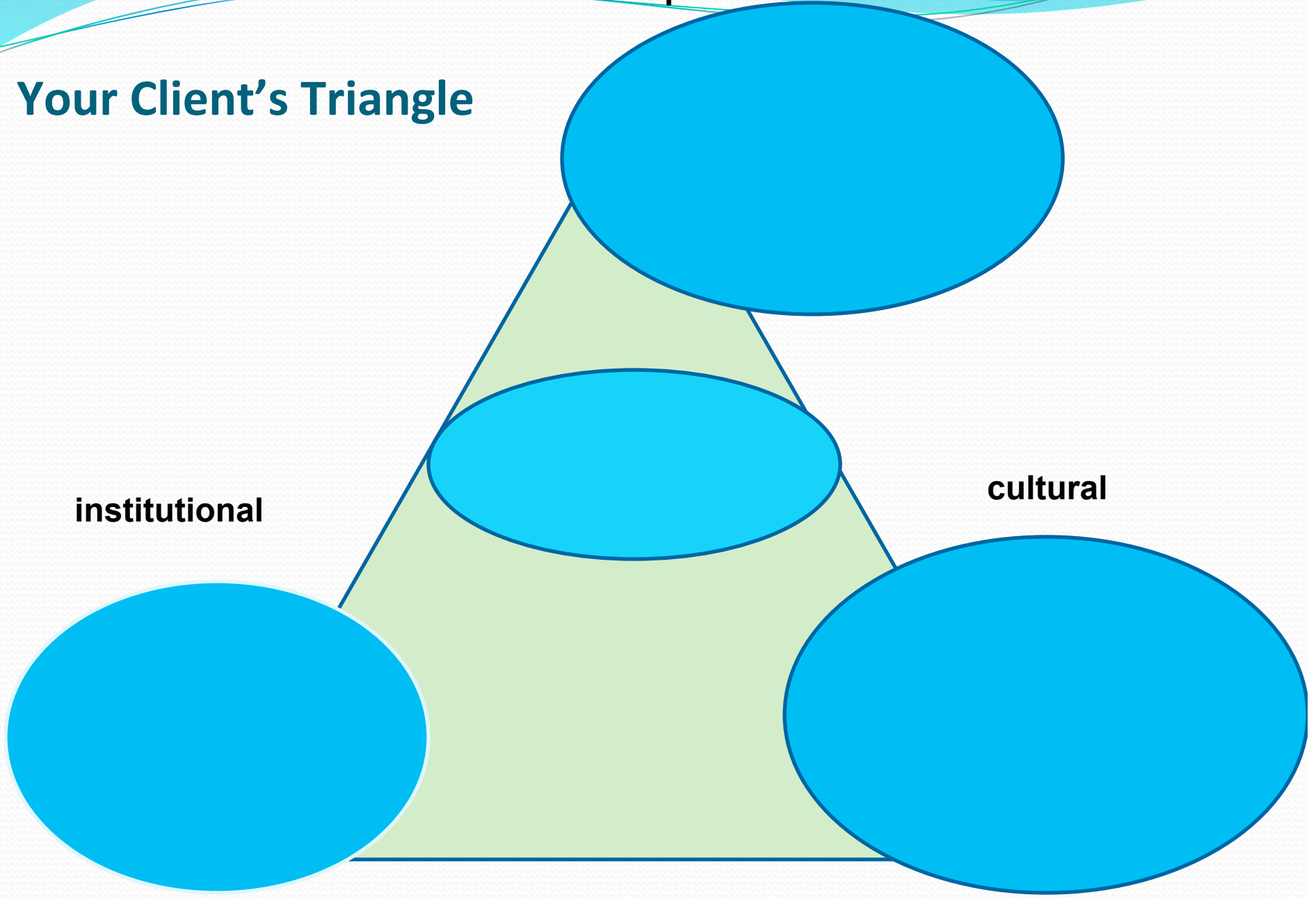
- Think of a client you have worked with experiencing oppression (racial, gender...)
- **How could the triangle be helpful in identifying the social and cultural forces at play in your client's life?**

Your Client's Triangle

personal

institutional

cultural





Discussion

Questions?

Thoughts?

Reflections?



References

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