Integrating Responses to DV: Moving to %22Survivor-defined%22 Success

Anna Melbin – anna@fullframeinitiative.org

The Full Frame Initiative

www.fullframeinitiative.org

Futures Without Violence

Health and Domestic Violence Conference

Washington, DC ~ March 21, 2015
Who We Are

The mission of the Full Frame Initiative is to change systems so that people and communities experiencing poverty, violence and trauma have the tools, supports and resources they need to thrive.

- Organizations effective with highly marginalized people share a common DNA: Full Frame practice.

- Full Frame practice includes: focusing on people, not problems; supporting Five Domains of Wellbeing; and recognizing and addressing tradeoffs.

- Through many partnerships, we document, support and make the case for Full Frame practice.
What We’ll Do Today

Share methodology and findings from multi-year project in CA, documenting how different stakeholders understand survivor success.

1. Learn more about how survivors ‘define’ success for themselves.

2. Better understand how survivors get to personal success.

3. Begin to explore how these findings can be used to strengthen system response for survivors.
What is Success to You?

Which of these best describes success in your own life?

1. **Minimizing problems** and challenges

2. **Having rewarding relationships** with friends, family, community – feeling connected, a sense of belonging

3. ‘**Giving back**’ – creating **value for others**

4. **Being physically and/or emotionally ‘safe’**

5. **Achieving** something for myself – e.g., getting a good job, buying a house, staying sober, learning to change a car tire
How Do Survivors Define Success for Themselves?

A new project to address a commonly overlooked question.

Goals:

• Help fill knowledge gap.

• Learn from success, not just crisis.

• Identify opportunities for change.

• Create cultural and linguistic access.
Project Approach

• Significant Moment Reflection and Appreciative Inquiry.

• Focus on exploration, learning and innovation, not traditional evaluation of program effectiveness.

• Did not collect demographic or personally-identifying information from workshop participants.

Guided by a National Advisory Council - 21 experts from diverse disciplines and communities, representing CA-specific and national perspectives.
# Project Nuts and Bolts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature review</th>
<th>27 sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase I:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with 151 survivors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with 186 practitioners</td>
<td>(incl. 5 Pilot)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in DV and other service settings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy advocates and funders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and Linguistic Access Pilot (Pilot)</td>
<td>12 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5 workshops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase II:</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community conversations with ~90 stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultural and Linguistic Access Pilot

• One-day Train-the-Trainer to build capacity to use our workshop process.

• 12 participants representing Latina, Native American, and seven Asian communities.

• First experienced the workshop process; then customized process and content to be culturally relevant.

• 5 “Pilot” workshops conducted:
  • 2 Native American in English, 1 ฿ (Thai), 1 普通话 (Mandarin), 1 Español (Spanish).
Focusing on Success

Survivor Workshops:
1. Single moment when it felt right for you (and your family).

2. Who/what made that moment possible? What did you do?

3. What do you do in between these great moments? Who/what helps you keep going?

Practitioner Workshops:
1. Single moment when it felt right for a survivor you work(ed) with.

2. What did s/he do or others do to make the moment possible?

3. What happens in between these great moments? Who/what helps him/her keep going?
# What We Heard: Survivor Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survivors define success for themselves</th>
<th>Practitioners define success for survivors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Connection not separation!</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Moments of survivor success</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 55%</td>
<td>&gt; 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Achieving something of value</strong></td>
<td>- Characterized by <strong>breakthrough insights</strong>, shifts in personal agency, and <strong>transformation</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for self and others (&quot;I did it!&quot;).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Calm and ‘normalcy’</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of DV was not central to</td>
<td><strong>2. Moments of practitioner or</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moments of success.</td>
<td>survivor &amp; practitioner success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“I did it!” ≠ “I left”</strong>. Only 7%</td>
<td>~30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of moments related to changes in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship.</td>
<td><strong>90%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Findings held true across all</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>geographic, mainstream</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>and culturally specific communities.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survivor’s Moments of Success

Graduating from college. It was huge for me. I felt like I had never completed anything in my life, and this felt like something I had accomplished for myself.

DV was always the predominant issue in my life until this moment with my daughter. She didn’t like to touch people. [But that day,] holding her hand, for the length of time, was extraordinary... I felt a joy I had never experienced ... [And it was after that that] I left my abuser for the last time and never went back.

[I was] in my kitchen at our house in Arkansas with my husband, and he was taking the day off work just to stay home with me, and we were dancing in the kitchen.
Practitioner’s Moments of Survivor Success

I was sitting in my office and she [client] said “I’m not going to let him control me anymore” and she stood firmly when she said it.

She lifted her head, unfolded her body. She looked strong and coming back into herself. She had been frail before. Now she looked like she had her hands back on the wheel.

The common theme in getting to success is various services leading to empowering that individual, so you see the transition from being a victim to a survivor ...
## What We Heard: Getting to Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survivors say they get to success</th>
<th>Practitioners say survivors get to success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Pilot</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Self.</strong></td>
<td>1. Survivor’s actions/personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Friends and family.</td>
<td>2. Practitioner’s actions (and program resources).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professionals (most often a <em>specific</em> person).</td>
<td>3. Survivor’s friends and family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pilot</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Friends and family.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>God/faith.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only notable difference across geographic, mainstream and culturally specific communities.

Recognize survivors’ efforts and informal connections, but **overemphasize role of formal systems**.
Policy and Funder Perspectives

• Survivor success is about autonomy and personal control, achieved through access to services.

• Funders typically not guided by explicit definitions of success; rely on measures of program success generated by grantees.
  • Measurement and documentation of program outputs/outcomes is not consistent across funding sources.

• Funders interested in knowing more about what works and how to get to it, including measuring grant-giving effectiveness.

• Policy advocates: interested in survivor-centered success measures.
What We Learned

• Significant *disconnect* between how survivors and practitioners define survivor success.

• Success for survivors is *not traditionally* held ideas of safety through separation and services.

• Culturally specific programming has *wide-reaching* relevance.

• The field is ready for change!
  • Survivors are *buried* under ‘victim’ and ‘survivor’ labels.
  • Practitioners are constrained and frustrated by systems, and eager to *translate project findings* into improved response for survivors.
  • Both groups are hungry for time, space, and tools to *learn from what goes well*. 
## Integrating the Project Findings

1. **Ask different questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of (or in addition):</th>
<th>How about:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- What is your presenting problem? What are your challenges?</td>
<td>- What are you most worried about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What do you need?</td>
<td>- What do you have? What’s working really well? What’s a great day look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Where else are you getting services?</td>
<td>- Who helps you? Who do you help? Who is most important to you? Where do you belong?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What are your goals?</td>
<td>- What’s most important to you? How do you get it? Who or what helps?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Learn about positive deviance** - [www.positivedeviance.org](http://www.positivedeviance.org)

3. **Collaborate** with and learn from culturally specific organizations and communities, to better **bridge those at the margins and at the center**.
Opportunities for Action

Recommendations identified in Phase II

1. Create a Taskforce of diverse stakeholders to translate project findings into shared definition of program success and related metrics.

2. * Develop a Train-the-Trainer to equip the field and communities to systematically learn from what goes well. *

3. Provide skill development for practitioners to more explicitly support survivors’ informal connections and identify assets/resources outside of formal services.
Download Full Report for Free!

HOW DO SURVIVORS DEFINE SUCCESS?
A NEW PROJECT TO ADDRESS AN OVERLOOKED QUESTION

When you start with problems you get programs.
When you start with strengths you get possibilities.
—Lupe Serrano,
former Executive Director of Casa de Esperanza

October 2014

bit.ly/survivorsuccessreport
What is Success to You?

1. Minimizing problems and challenges

2. Having rewarding relationships with friends, family, community – feeling connected, a sense of belonging

3. ‘Giving back’ – creating value for others

4. Being physically and/or emotionally ‘safe’

5. Achieving something for myself – e.g., getting a good job, buying a house, staying sober, learning to change a car tire

We can learn to see each other and see ourselves in each other and recognize that human beings are more alike than we are unalike.

- Maya Angelou
Thoughts? Reactions? Questions?

- Findings **affirm** what you already know?
- Spark **new ideas** or thoughts for working with survivors?
- **Challenge** what you believe or have heard?
- Ideas for **integrating findings** into your daily work?
Thank you!

Anna Melbin
Director of Network Growth & Strategy
anna@fullframeinitiative.org
413-695-3994