



Professional Facilitator's Guide

The Youth Initiative Curriculum

*A Trauma-focused Approach for
Justice-Involved Youth*



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“Getting really good at not being ok - I’m not okay, but I’m going to be.” -FPI Participant



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“If I had only received this information earlier!” is a comment often shared by participants in our Family Peace Initiative programming for adults. Understanding that the lives of those we serve could have been very different had they received our services earlier motivated us to implement the Family Peace Initiative approach in a program for youth.

Finalizing this trauma-focused program for youth did not happen in a bubble. There are many individuals and agencies who have impacted this Youth Initiative, that gave us insights and opportunities. There are some we want to especially acknowledge who not only trusted and believed in our vision, but opened the doors for us to pursue service to the youth population. Without their efforts, we clearly would not have learned the lessons needed to write this curriculum, or provide effective services to the youth population. We are forever indebted to you:

Deputy Director Angela McHardie and the staff of Shawnee County Department of Corrections opened the first door for us to bring our unique brand of trauma-focused programming to the youth residing at the Shawnee County Juvenile Detention Center. With the support of her facility staff, we brought our “River of Cruelty” model to this younger population. The Family Peace Initiative will always be indebted to her visionary leadership to create a space for us to apply our approach with those they serve. It has been a wonderful setting to make a difference in young lives while learning how to be better at what we do.

Dr. Joy Grimes of USD 501 in Topeka, Kansas, has also offered so much in the effort to expand our work beyond the detention center to the alternative school setting. Her invitation and support to create a community program for justice-involved youth has expanded the boundaries of our work. Her dedication to her staff and students, and her quest for new and different ways to help students succeed is infectious. Her belief and support of our vision has motivated us to stay dedicated to becoming better for the youth we serve.

Lastly, this statement of acknowledgement would be incomplete without a shout-out regarding the Family Peace Initiative’s Assistant Director Tish Taylor. Her passion for this work is contagious and her undying belief in youth has had an impact well beyond what she may ever know. This program, this curriculum, and the well-being of so many would be far less without her. It has been an honor to work alongside her, as it has provided a birds-eye view into what is possible as we walk through our own fear to bring hope to youth stuck in the River of Cruelty.

In Peace,

Steve Halley & Dorothy Stucky Halley

INTRODUCTION

A MESSAGE FOR FACILITATORS

Welcome to FPI's *Youth Initiative Curriculum*. This trauma-focused curriculum is an adaptation of the Family Peace Initiative's *Professional Facilitator's Guide*. It is adapted specifically for application with youth. In order for this curriculum to be most effective, there are certain foundational concepts that will need to be understood and established.

The first concept that facilitators must understand is how to effectively pursue connection. Connection allows us to build safety, and safety is critical for achieving lasting change. Youth in a safe environment will do amazing things - youth who are not safe will be guarded and unable to take essential life-changing steps. The youth we serve have all too often lived in unsafe spaces. They have learned to protect themselves by sharing the bare minimum, and deflecting the truer parts of their own story. Creating a *safe* place for youth to examine, explore and heal themselves is vital for this curriculum to have the impact we desire.

While related to safety, trust and integrity are the words used to describe the second concept that facilitators must pursue. Having previous life experiences that have proven to them that adults should not be trusted, troubled youth have every reason to not trust facilitators. However, youth are often hungry for a trusting relationship and will respond positively when trustworthiness is clear. Facilitators do not deserve the trust of the youth they serve, it must be earned. It will be earned by leading through example and living with integrity. Once trust is established, a world of possibilities opens.

The third concept is the sense of sacred ground. Each young person who participates in this program has a story; a story that they will protect with an elaborate array of defense systems. The processes contained in these pages are designed to help participants learn to share the parts of themselves that they commonly hide, protect and defend from others. Understand and honor the sacredness of their stories. The more we respect their sacred ground, the more they will share with us.

Alice Miller, in her writings, discusses the Enlightened Witness. She recognized the power of a single, connected relationship on a troubled life. This program is designed to help facilitators become one of the most powerful change agents for youth known at this time: a professional enlightened witness. It provides the opportunity for facilitators to build amazing relationships in order to help youth build a lifetime of peaceful relationships. We wish you the best on your journey.

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THE CHANGE PROCESS: FROM CRUELTY TO FAMILY PEACE

DOMINATION AND CONTROL (Pre-Painful Shift)

CRUELTY

- ___ Imposing one's will on another; the blatant disregard for another
- ___ Using physical violence
- ___ Threatening behaviors that create fear of harm to:
 - another
 - their family member/loved one
 - their pet
 - the person's identity/reputation
 - the person's things

MINIMIZATION, DENIAL, BLAME

- ___ Avoids personal responsibility
- ___ Says abuse did not happen, or it was someone else's fault (pass the football)
- ___ Believes that their stated intentions rather than behavior should count
- ___ Believes if says "I'm sorry", others should forgive and forget
- ___ Colluding with others who are violent

PROJECTION

- ___ Critical of others and/or self
- ___ Negative self-soothing
- ___ Highly judgmental
- ___ Avoiding feelings and self-disclosure
- ___ Hiding perceived weakness/vulnerabilities
- ___ Focus on others, ignore/avoid needs of self

COERCION, CRITICISM AND FORCE

- ___ Resolving conflict through control
- ___ Winning at all cost
- ___ Unwilling to compromise
- ___ Resistant to, and sabotaging change
- ___ Using aggressive or passive aggressive behavior; violating others' rights
- ___ Disregarding interests of our partner
- ___ Too rigid or no boundary setting

PEACEFUL INTERACTION (Post-Painful Shift)

RESPECT

- ___ Acceptance of the right of others to have their own opinions, thoughts, and choices
- ___ Validating the rights, thoughts, feelings of others
- ___ Using peaceful means to get needs/wants met.
- ___ Knowing physical triggers & taking responsibility for remaining peaceful
- ___ Talking and behaving in a way that creates safety for others

INTEGRITY, HONESTY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ___ Doing what you say you are going to do
- ___ Accepting responsibility for your own Behavior
- ___ Accepting responsibility for changing your own behavior
- ___ Does not support others' dishonesty, minimization, denial, or blame

PERSONAL INTROSPECTION

- ___ Understanding & accepting self & others
- ___ Positive self-soothing
- ___ Examining adverse emotions
- ___ Honest & open; allowing others in
- ___ Accept impact of our cruelty to others/self
- ___ Acknowledging the impact of the cruelty done to us

NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS

- ___ Seeking mutually satisfying resolution to conflict
- ___ Willingness to compromise
- ___ Considering our partner's interests
- ___ Accepting of requests for change
- ___ Using assertive behavior; standing up for own wants/needs/rights without violating others
- ___ Communicating and setting healthy boundaries in a nonthreatening way

EMOTIONAL CRUELTY

- ___ Putting others down, degrading them
- ___ Calling them names
- ___ Humiliation
- ___ Playing mind games
- ___ Using guilt, fear, and blame to get our way
- ___ Isolation
- ___ Criticism and defensiveness
- ___ Using jealousy to justify actions

TRUST & PARTNERSHIP

- ___ Valuing our partner's interests
- ___ Accepting our and our partner's strengths and weaknesses
- ___ Supporting dreams of partner
- ___ Owning insecurities
- ___ Embracing independence

SELF-CENTERED PARENTING

- ___ Using fear tactics to have control
- ___ Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- ___ Vicarious parenting
- ___ Dehumanizing our kids
- ___ Using our kids:
 - to get what we want
 - as a weapon against partner
 - as a co-conspirator
 - as a spy
- ___ Escaping responsibilities regarding nurturance
- ___ Modeling violent behaviors & intolerance

PARENTING WITH RESPECT

- ___ Ensuring safety and security for child
- ___ Interactions with child are focused on the child's needs/wants; not adult's
- ___ Supporting other parent's parenting
- ___ Separates children issues from partner issues
- ___ Uses respectful discipline
- ___ Sharing equally in nurturance responsibilities
- ___ Being a positive nonviolent role model
- ___ Acceptance of child

SEXUAL DISRESPECT

- ___ Measuring a person's worth by their sexual appeal/willingness to sexually gratify
- ___ Discriminating against others due to their sexual orientation or gender identity
- ___ Using sexual gestures or terms to attract attention, degrade, or humiliate
- ___ Using force or coercion to obtain sexual interaction
- ___ Not letting potential partner know of safety risk

SEXUAL RESPECT

- ___ Valuing social and sexual intimacy in relationship
- ___ Treating people with respect regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity
- ___ Valuing the rights, thoughts, and feelings of others
- ___ Engaging in only consensual sexual activity
- ___ Informing partner of safety risks
- ___ Understanding the harmful impact of objectification, sexism & homophobia

PRIVILEGE AND MIND GAMES

- ___ Using privilege/power to avoid certain duties and assign roles
- ___ Using privilege/power to make money decisions to benefit self, at the expense of partner
- ___ Expecting partner's perfection in fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities
- ___ Use Entitlement
- ___ Use Sadistic behaviors
- ___ Demanding perfection of partner

HEALTHY FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- ___ Agreed fair distribution of responsibilities
- ___ Shared decision-making
- ___ Valuing partner as your equal
- ___ Making financial decisions with equal consideration
- ___ Making family decisions together
- ___ Recognizes role conflicts for self and partner
- ___ Respectful problem solving