

Community Intervention in the Face of Gun Violence: Fostering Resilience via Creative Engagement

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Violence in America One Case Study: Leon, age 17

In June 2003, Leon, a 17-year-old African American youngster was fatally shot at a bus stop near the housing development where he grew up. Across the street several children were playing in a nearby playground—some who knew Leon fairly well and some who had witnessed the shooting. Supervising the children was a young mother who had experienced both sexual and physical abuse in childhood and in early adulthood. Within earshot of the shooting, employees and customers of a Latinx grocery store were terrified by the chaos that followed, including a small group of undocumented immigrants who had fled violence in their homelands seeking refuge in the U.S. Also affected were Leon's many high school friends, teachers, coaches and school personnel as well as a group of six Harvard students who'd been preparing to staff a summer camp for these kids but who now felt worried that they might cause harm.

	<p>Just One Case among Many: But what do we need to know in order to help?</p>
	<p><i>Fact:</i> Exposure to violence and its traumatic impact is widespread in our society and indeed around the world. <i>As Michael from Cities United shared with us the other day: Leon is sadly but one of many!</i></p> <p><i>Fact:</i> Responses to traumatic events vary greatly across individuals exposed to such events. <i>Who is affected here ... and how?</i></p> <p><i>Fact:</i> The majority of trauma survivors never seek or receive clinical care. Yet, despite sometimes severe traumatic exposure, many are able to access remarkable resilience. <i>What services are needed now, for whom?</i></p> <p><i>Fact:</i> Leon's family, friends, classmates and school personnel, children who witnessed, mother with a trauma history, immigrant neighbors, etc. <i>will all need assistance from a caring community!</i></p>

	<p>In this Case: Who is affected and how? And what kind of interventions are needed?</p>
	<p>First Responders (Police, EMTs, Ambulance?) <i>Needed: stress management support and anti-racist training.</i></p> <p>Community-Based Crisis Response and Intervention? <i>Needed: Community-based crisis programs ...e.g. "Cahoots"</i></p> <p>Victim Advocacy and Support? <i>e.g. MOVA, DA & Community-Based Victim Advocacy Resources</i></p> <p>Homicide Bereavement Services? <i>e.g. Center for Homicide Bereavement, The Peace Institute</i></p> <p>Community Crisis Response for School & Community groups <i>e.g. The CCRT and similar programs</i></p> <p>Community Outreach to and Engagement with Communities at Risk <i>e.g. Violence Transformed and other Community Programs</i></p>

Violence Transformed

www.violencetransformed.com



Launched in 2007 at VOV, VT transitioned in 2015 to become the first arts and public health initiative of the Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI) at Northeastern University School of Law.

What is Violence Transformed?

- *A Celebration of the Power of Art, Artists & Art-making to Confront, Challenge & Imagine Alternatives to Violence*
- *An Annual and Annually Expanding Series of Visual & Performing Arts Events and Accompanying Community Conversations with Individuals and Groups affected by violence.*
- *A Collaboration of Socially Engaged Artists, Curators, Activists, Health & Mental Health Service Providers & Diverse Community Partners*
- *A provider of grant-sponsored victim-service and training initiatives to communities throughout Greater Boston*
- *Visit: www.violencetransformed.org to view VT exhibits 2007 - 2020.*

And Why Art?

Because sometimes words alone can't do it!



"I Cant Breathe" From "The Surge"

A Virtual Exhibit by
Boston Photographer
Hakim Raquib

*From VT's 2020: Virtual Exhibit Series
"In the Time of COVID-19"
co-curated by VT Artists
Hakim Raquib & Walter Crump*

Addressing The Dual Pandemics of Covid & Systemic Racism in the US

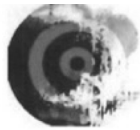
From the VT Exhibit: Guns & Gun Violence in America
A painting by Boston Artist Beverly Rippel emphasizes the role that guns play in American lives from childhood forward.



	<p>What are at risk youth able to tell us about the impact of gun violence on their lives? And how?</p>
	<p>They are aware of the violence and they are afraid for their lives <i>From young artists at Raw: STEEL T-SHIRTS WITH THE WORDS: "Ambition, Ambition ... my ambition is to live!"</i></p> <p>They are in need of protection but are afraid of police: <i>From young BLM protesters across the country: "HANDS UP! DON'T SHOOT!"</i></p> <p>They want the grownups to act <i>After Sandy Hook & Parkland: "We call B.S." & "We March for Our Lives!"</i></p> <p>Their tattoos broadcast their feelings and their needs! <i>As seen in images shared with us by Dr. Thea James in Part 1.</i></p> <p>And as emphasized by Michael, they want RESPECT <i>And value their inclusion at programs like Cities United</i></p>

	<p>A Sample of Community Programs Fostering Creative Engagement among our Youth:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Medicine Wheel (Michael Dowling) ❖ Ubuntu at Boston University (Ann Tobey) ❖ Urbano in Jamaica Plain (Stella Aguirre McGregor) ❖ SPARCC (Ekua Holmes) ❖ Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry ❖ The RAW Program. and ❖ The Violence Transformed Program & the Transformative Action Proproject of PHAI

Youth are Ubuntu: From the Violence Transformed and Ubuntu Arts Exhibit at the Massachusetts State House



Spaggit

"Some People are Gay, Get Over It

And here, the young artists
Of Ubuntu take a look at
intolerance, . .

Creating from color puzzle pieces, a
single human being able to represent
the full diversity of the human race
and the human community.



Guns to Shovels: Palos por Pistolas The Urbano Project

Too many children die as a result of gun violence. Here, the young artists of
The Urbano Project in Jamaica Plain use Shovels made from Guns to plant trees
In remembrance of peers who have died in their neighborhoods.



The Transformative Action Project ("TAP")
Community-Based Victim Service
www.tap.violencetransformed.org



***A Victim Service Initiative funded by federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA)
funds awarded by the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA)***

TAP: Who We Are and What We Do
www.tap.violencetransformed.org

Who We Are



L'Merchie Frazier
TAP Director of Creative Engagement



Barbara Hamm, Psy.D.
TAP Director of Mindful Practice & Trauma-Informed Interventions



Mary Harvey, Ph.D.
Director, Violence Transformed & TAP's primary Contributing Artist and Community Psychologist



Mark Gottlieb
Executive Director, The Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI) & TAP Legal System Advisor



Keena Banda
TAP Administrative Assistant & Outreach Coordinator

How to Reach TAP

Interested in bringing a TAP intervention to your community group or organization? Please give a call or email

Email:

tap@violencetransformed.org

Tel:

617-373-8625

Physical Address:

102 The Fenway, Cushing Hall
Boston, MA

Mailing Address:

360 Huntington, Ave, Suite #117 CU
Boston, MA 02115-5004

Website:

www.tap.violencetransformed.org

TAP is an initiative of Violence Transformed and the Public Health Advocacy Institute at Northeastern School of Law

TAP is supported by funds from the Federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984. These VOCA funds are awarded by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance



Transformative Action Project



"In all forms of art, part of you is in the trauma, and part of you is a step away from it." "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

— Maya Angelou

www.tap.violencetransformed.org
info@violencetransformed.org

The Community Based Services of TAP
email: tap@violencetransformed.org

- *Free of charge, trauma informed, community-based interventions integrating mindful practice, creative engagement & legal empowerment*
- *Interventions hosted by & co-designed with diverse clinical programs and community organizations & settings*
- *Interventions offered to community groups and organizations serving crime victims in Massachusetts --- including young people affected by and at risk of violence And service providers at risk of secondary trauma*
- *Weekly "ADAPT TAP" meetings of TAP staff with prospective community partners: Mondays from 11-12*

**TAP Workshops: "I AM" Poems and Collage
Transforming Violence with Mindful Artmaking**



A TAP “Sampler”

Community-Based Mindful Artmaking



Trauma, Resilience & Community Intervention: Premises for Effective Action

1. ***Attention to cultural context and cultural nuance is an important determinant of intervention efficacy.***
 - *Cultural awareness and respect for diversity is crucial to effective community intervention*
2. ***Culture challenge may be an important component of meaningful intervention.***
 - *Interventions that challenge systemic racism, police brutality,*
 - *Sexism, homophobia, ethnic biases and race-related health and healthcare disparities are examples of culture challenge*
3. ***Communities characterized by a wide diversity of resources and multiple opportunities for members to influence community life are ideal contexts for persons to become resilient.***
 - *Contributing to the development of such contexts must be an explicit goal of social and community interventions to promote resilient functioning.*

	<p><i>Thank You</i></p>
	<p>■ <i>Mary Harvey</i> <u><i>Mary@violencetransformed.org</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <u><i>www.violencetransformed.org</i></u>➤ <u><i>www.tap.violencetransformed.org</i></u>➤ <i>tap@violencetransformed.org</i>