

Cultural acknowledgments

I thank Creator Spirit for allowing my feet to walk across the sacred country of the Traditional Owner peoples who are owned by this country here in this region of North Queensland.

I thank the Ancestors of my people, the traditional owner Ancestors of my sacred lands and Ancestors of other Sacred lands for allowing my voice to be heard across our Sacred Country, the land now called Australia.

I thank and I acknowledge Elders past and present, the descendants of peoples from other places who are with us today to do the business for which this gathering has been called. I hope and pray that Creator Spirit will bless you for coming and bless you as you return to your families and your places of work.

Opening Pandora's Box? The Cultural Nuances of Lateral Violence

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Theories of DV

- Exchange Theory
- Culture of Violence Theory
- Resource Theory
- Patriarchal Theory
- Ecological Theory
- Social Learning Theory
- Evolutionary Theory
- Sociobiological Theory
- Social Conflict Theory

General systems

Governmental Lateral Violence

- In 1937 it was stated at the Conference of Commonwealth and
- State Aboriginal Authorities:
- The policy of the Commonwealth is to do everything possible to convert the half caste into a white citizen. The question arises whether the same policy should not be adopted in regard to the aborigines ... My view is that unless the black population is speedily absorbed into the white, the process will soon be reversed, and in 50 years, or a little later, the white population of the Northern Territory will be absorbed into the black.
- In McGregor, 1997: 177 in Professor Earnst Hunter Keynote Lecture – IAP Conference. Presentation to the Third World Conference for the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies: March 2000), Cairns.

History and Background

Lateral Violence is the silent, hidden, historical and unconscious Violence that has been passed down in the oral histories of many of our people. It is no respecter of gender. In many instances it lies dormant in a person's psyche. Because of the colonial past, and how our ancestors were taught to survive the violent traumas of first contact, Violence in actions and words became so entrenched, that it went underground as it were. Lateral Violence evolved from the collective intergenerational traumatisation of a peoples, as colonisation progressed. Aboriginal people learned how to survive by being violent toward the violent acts perpetrated toward them, by the first boat people.

It underpins DV, and for years DV has been seen as the Core factor in need of addressing. However, Lateral Violence is the intergenerational element of DV that if not recognised or addressed, will continue to victimise Aboriginal women and children. (Yavu-Kama-Harathunian – 2012)

The core of Lateral Violence

“Lateral violence is the power and control used by a dominating authority and/or individuals, to disconnect and decimate a people’s or person’s nationhood birthrights, to their spiritual and cultural heritage, self and cultural identity and ‘sense of being’. This is done by means of colonisation processes that ‘normalise’ institutionalised systems of violent intimidation, manipulation and deception personally, legally, politically, environmentally, religiously, legitimately, governmentally and socially.”

- (Cheri Yavu-Kama-Harathunian 2010)

Triggers for male culturally nuanced Lateral Violence- Perpetrator's Say:

“We get lost in between child and man”

“Manhood making rites are becoming less respected. I don't know them because I was taken away when I was a young boy. It makes me feel real bad inside.”

“Manhood roles are not honoured. How can I respect my father who bashes my mother. I just want to kill him”

“Manhood functions in family and community become blurred through disconnection to a man's sense of 'Being' a man. We get separated from our Spiritual Connection to country. That's where we get our cultural identity from. ”

Triggers for culturally nuanced Lateral Violence

Power and control are the triggers for violence of the powerful Conqueror peoples with Anglo/Celtic origins.

Versus

For Aboriginal men, the first motivator for violence against their family members is a feeling of disconnection, **deep energies of powerlessness to change their reality. Instead they try** to fit their behaviours with their “fantasy reality” in which they see themselves as heroes

Traits of culturally nuanced Lateral Violence- **Entrapment**

Traits of a Cultural Nuance:

- Always subtle, often hidden and needs to be culturally interpreted
- Man gangs form - men who support the perpetrator, and whose purpose in support is to victimise the victims
- Specific to a cultural group – can be invisible to outsiders

Traits of Lateral Violence:

- Can be covert or overt
- Verbal or non-verbal
- Perpetrators are not to blame. Victims are to blame because they do not conform to the perpetrators expectations. “She didn’t do what I asked.”
- Draws off the subtle, often hidden, nuances of the cultural expectations of the perpetrator’s world view - if the victim does not conform to the ‘imagined ‘woman/family’ in their fantasy reality, violence is used to bring the woman/family into line.

Moving forward on Lateral Violence



Go into the wound and see Lateral Violence

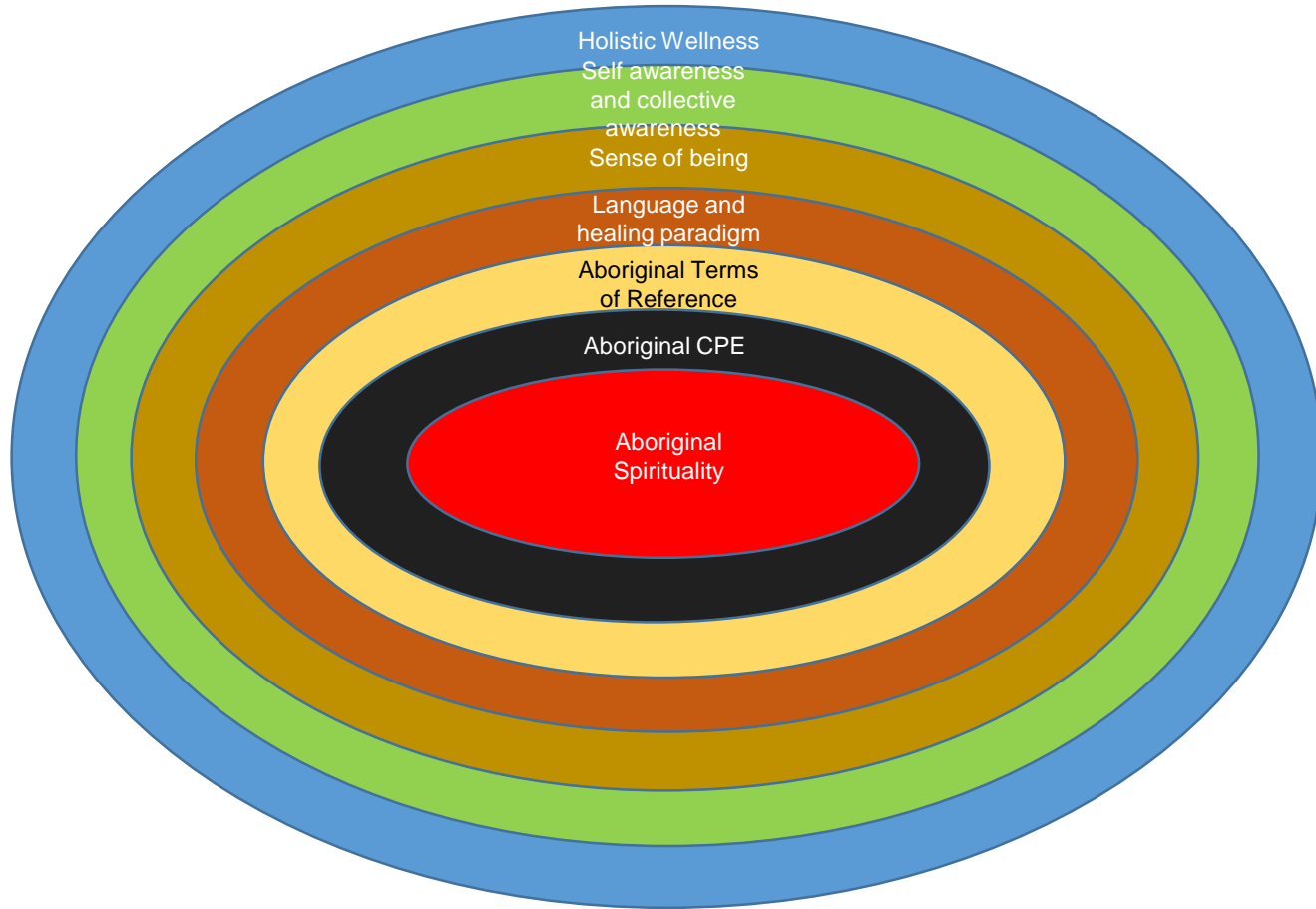
Disconnections bought about by Lateral Violence

- **Disconnections:**
- From Creator Spirit
- From Spirit
- from a person's sense of Self and 'Being'
- From culture
- From cultural identity
- From family
- From country

PLEASE HELP ME TO KNOW!

- “Who am I?”
- “Where do I come from?”
- “Where do I belong?”
- “What is my purpose?”
- “Why am I here?”
- “What is my life for?”

Moving forward on Lateral Violence



Cultural Philosophical Ethos Theory Yavu-Kama-Harathunian & Gibson K.: 2002

Moving forward on Lateral Violence

- Lateral Violence is a spiritual malaise expressed in violence
- It is an explosion of deep energies of powerlessness
- Solutions will sit within an Aboriginal Terms of Reference Framework
- Solutions need to include creating a point of entry into a different vocabulary that relates to Aboriginal cultural nuances, enabling families to culturally understand human reactions and interactions
- It must be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner, by services that respect and empower First Nation peoples and have trust within communities

Moving forward on Lateral Violence- 82 Year Old Elder.

“If we don’t respect a service, then we don’t respect the people they send us. Do they respect us? We play their game. We tell them **everything**, and they listen, listen, listen, and they think we telling them **something**, but we telling them **nothing** about our pain from violence. Why should we? You know, we just doing what they want us to do, and say what they want us to say. Bullshit stuff and they write it down. (*She laughs*). If you or one of our mob came, then that would be different. You would understand our bullshit and wait for the proper yarn about violence. Why we tell them our secrets. We not stupid. You know.”

Eidsvold/Gayndah - a Wakka Wakka Female Elder – May 2015