

Bringing forward families' skills, knowledge & ethics in the wake of gendered violence

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“The only thing we really own are our memories”



“How can we ensure that children are not vulnerable to an experience of re-traumatization in the context of speaking about what they have been through?” Michael White, 2005

Taking- it back- practices (Michael White)

Acknowledging you

There's a crack, a crack in everything...that's where the light gets in"
Leonard Cohen

Positioned as in need – rather than coming with knowledge

Shame job

So much more than anger being managed

Dignity for her son

An apprentice, an uncle, a footy coach, a mate.....a

Karna man

Injustice

Forced removal

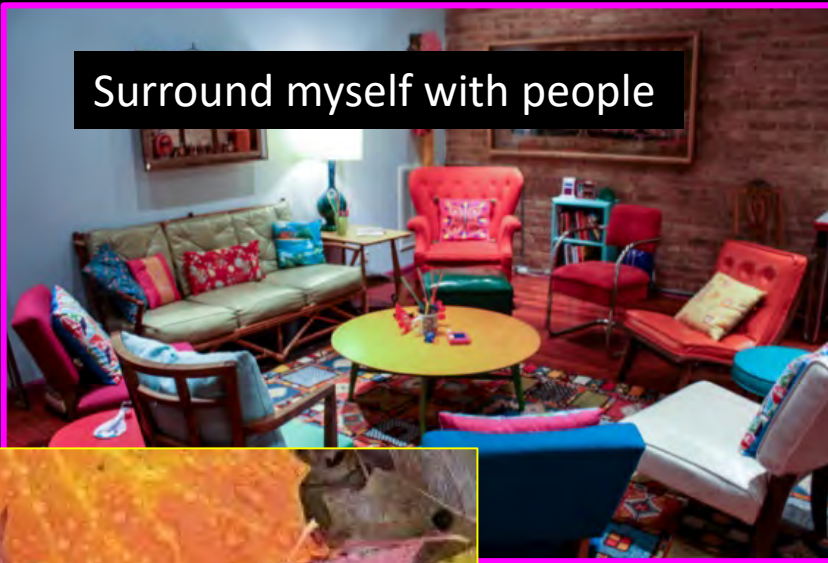
Helpful and unhelpful ways shame operates

Not see men just as violent

Narrative and Invitational principles



Surround myself with people



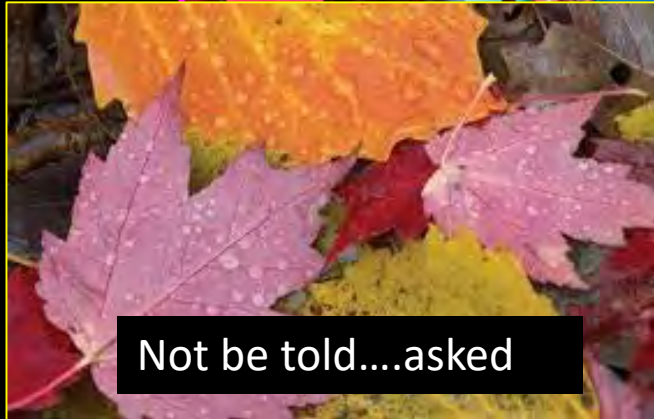
People know things
already ...



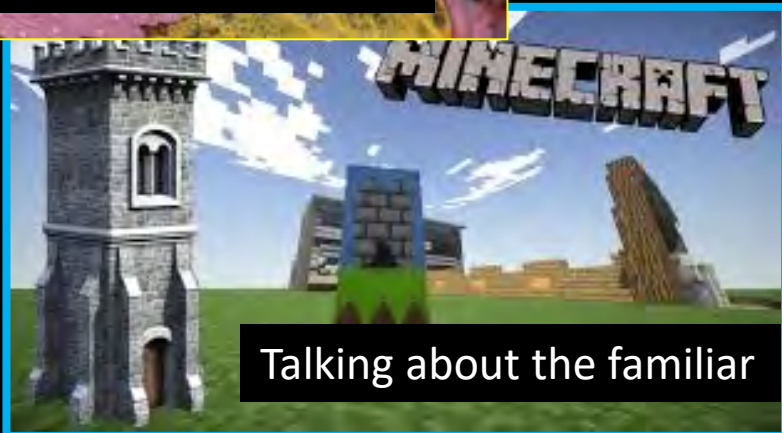
The meaning behind
Really hear them



Not be told....asked



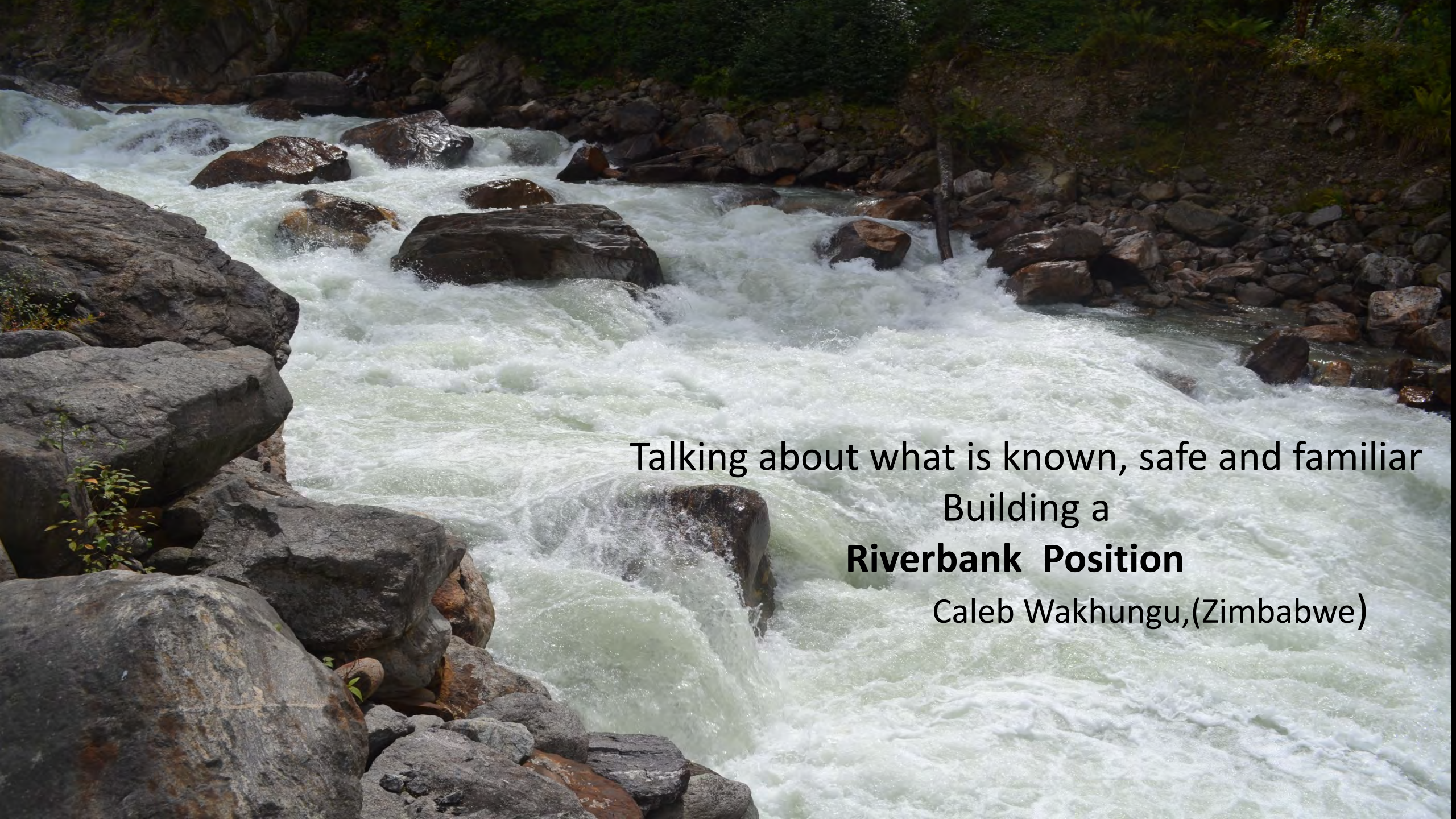
Talking about the familiar



options , time and choice



“ I’ve booked you extra time because the mum’s in a wheelchair, her husband broke her leg. She’s coming in with her daughters. ”

A photograph of a river with white water rapids. The water is turbulent and white with foam as it flows over dark, jagged rocks. The surrounding area is lush with green vegetation, including trees and bushes, visible in the background and along the banks. The overall scene is dynamic and natural.

Talking about what is known, safe and familiar
Building a
Riverbank Position
Caleb Wakhungu,(Zimbabwe)

I asked

“I know some hard things have happened that have got in the way of how you’d like life to be . We can talk about some of that. Today’s session is a chance also for you you to suss me out”



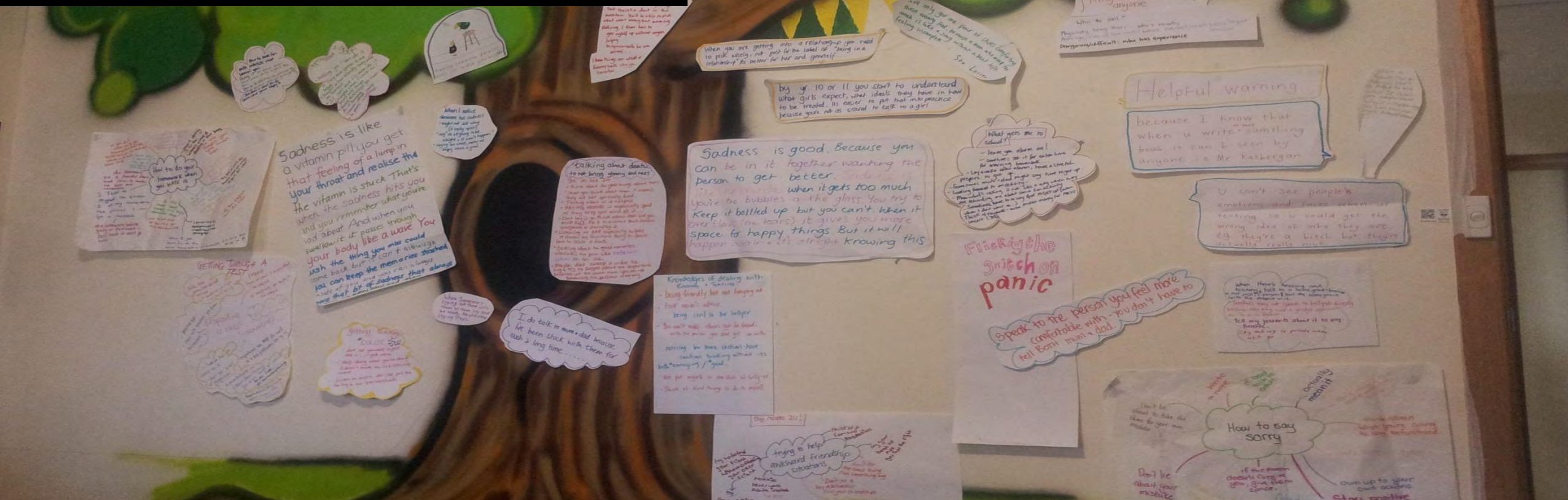
“It’s really quiet in here , this may seem like an odd question but could we play some of your favourite music ? What have you got on your playlist or Spotify?”

Being curious about everyday stories – Identity is always multi storied

I'm sure there's lots going on in your lives
What would you usually be doing on a
Wednesday ?

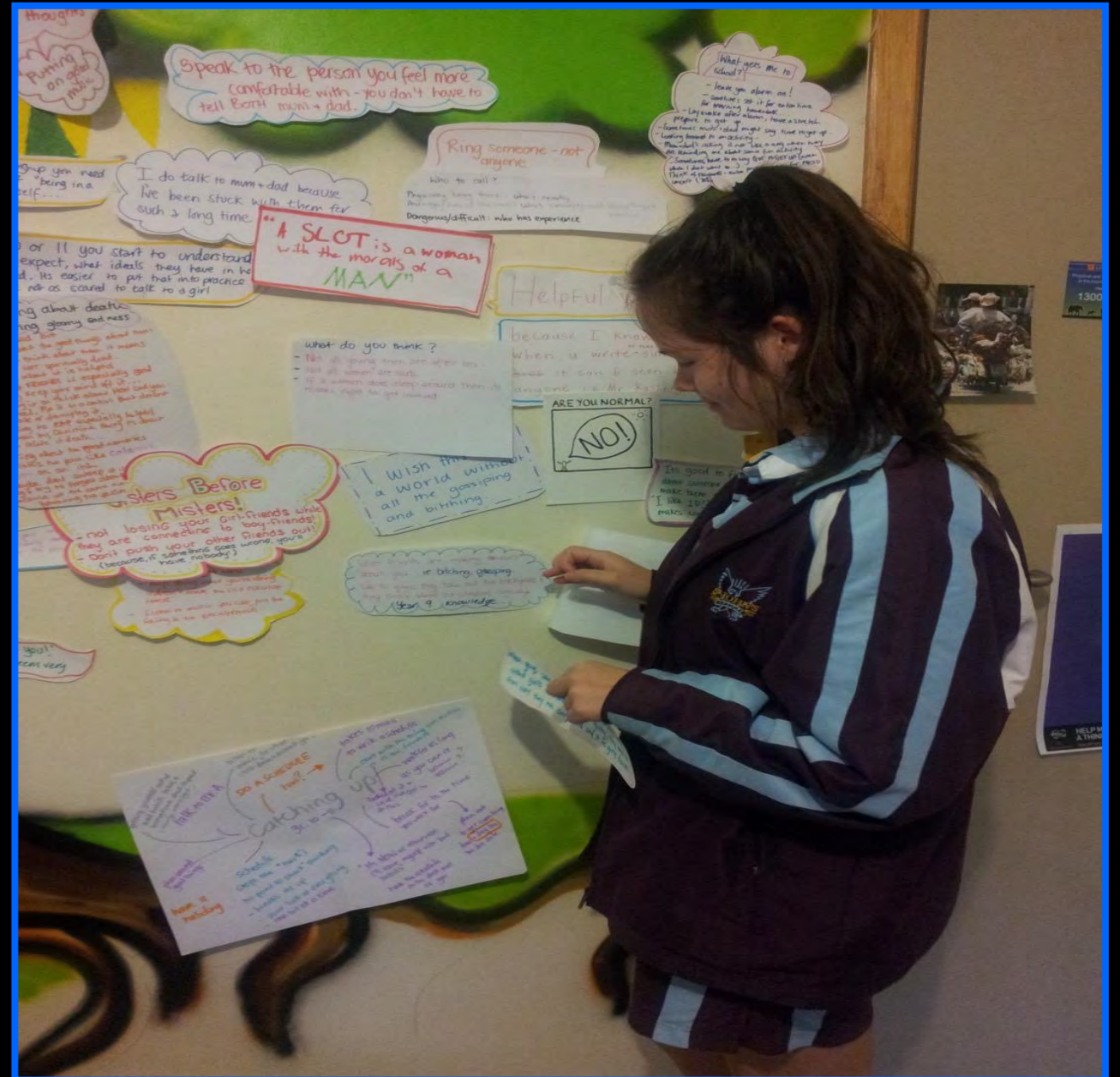


What's known and familiar
These writings reveal how other
students dealt with hard times.



The uncovering of subjugated knowledges
(ideas relating to Modern Power /Michel Foucault)
Local particular , domestic knowledge that has often been

“Chose a phrase or picture that stands out – it might just sound familiar, seem odd, or you just might like it...”



How did young people actually create these documents?

Listening for what young people KNOW



ADVICE FOR DIVORCED PARENTS

sometimes dad tries to make
mum look like a bad person...
but she's not.

Dads a good person too...
I shouldn't have to deal with
mum + dads bitchfighting...
its mainly dad. Mums happy
for dad.

He's never happy for mum...
It sucks to hear dad be so
rude to someone who's raising me
and doing a good job of it. He needs
to stop + get over it for a 50yr old
he's 3.

14yrs old...

How do you keep that in your head
that dad's a good person too when the
"bitchfighting's" going on?

What might knowing he's good too help with?

What do you think other separating parents
should know about?

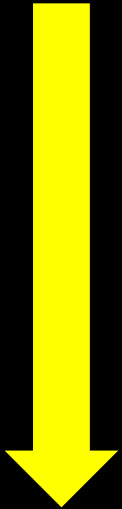
What would you hope adults divorcing would
learn if we wrote down your ideas?

How do you think it might help other kids to
know about this when their parents were
going through conflict?

Doubly listening

The Problem stories

What the trauma
did to me

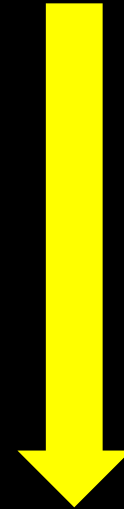


Positioned as victim



The subjugated
preferred stories

How they responded to the
trauma – the actions
thoughts , intentions



Positioned as agentive

Voice of Hannah (12 y.o.)

Mum and Dad were arguing...we then heard this thump. I got Amy and we ran down to see what had happened. Dad was kind of over mum and I jumped on top of him and started hitting him & told him, "STOP!"

Questions about intentions behind the action that Hannah took

Carolyn : What were you kind of supporting , by running down to Mum together?

Asking about intentional states

Carolyn: (to younger sister) What do you reckon was of upmost importance for Hannah....to be able to do these things to try to stop Dad, what might it have taken ?

Questions that bring forward agency

Carolyn : (to mother) What do you think it took for the girls to do these things ? I'm not suggesting trying to stop their dad was right or wrong , but I'm interested in what that tells you about what your daughters' value?

Mother: It's right and wrong but they were sticking up for me. What he did was not the best ...bad.

Carolyn: I know this is a particular time but are there other situations where they do this sticking up for others ...

(Locating a historical context ,creating a narrative, chain of association, so to establish it's not a one off or just linked to trauma)

Linking Values to Histories

Mother: Justice and fairness has always been important to Hannah
If she sees someone doing something wrong – she'll tell them. It can be embarrassing.

Carolyn: Could you tell me another story about something even funny or embarrassing Hannah did to stick up for fairness?

Building a story – linking preferred events that fit with the theme of fairness

Mother: Surethe one about the old man ...
I hear about another event of fairness

Asking about supportive audiences- the social and relational histories :

Carolyn : So where might Hannah have gained that ability from?

Both girls looking at their mother – “from mum”

Carolyn : Who else might know about this , that this value of sticking up for others is important to Hannah ?

Mother : Her Gran and Pop know.

(Reconnecting children with community origins and history of precious held beliefs rather than connecting them just to the trauma story)

Accountability practices

Men have told us about times when shame has had them telling their kids or family to be quiet about the violence.

What might that risk in terms of how you want them to know you as a dad ?

What might that be like for the kids?

Men are invited to contemplate how these silencing tactics or actions fit or usually transgress values that they hold for example about the kind of father they are striving to be or return to

Amy's (younger sister's actions)

Carolyn : So when you heard this thump

Amy, what did you do ?

Amy : "I did nothing , I hid behind the couch"

"People always respond to crises even when they are relatively powerless to escape the context"

Michael White, 2005

Carolyn :You hid, how did you think of that?

I dunno, I was scared.

Carolyn (to mum) : What are you guessing Amy was protecting by doing that?
(*re – membering skill :building a supportive audience*)

Mother : It's goodI'm pleased she did that. I would have!

Carolyn: What might have you been saying to yourself Amy when this was happening?(*asking about intentions*)

Amy: I had to go and see if mum was alright.

Carolyn: What was important to you at that time? (*asking about Intentions behind the action*)

mmm...I didn't want Hannah to go on her own.



Voice of Hannah (13)

“He’s a dad who’s not a dad.”

Carolyn: What do you mean... is that good or not so good or a bit of both ?
(staying curious, getting young people to evaluate meaning)

“It’s good, but I know dad now knows he’s done something wrong...”

Carolyn : How might you notice that ?

He’s not moping ...he actually told nan and Pop
The way he’s making it a better for mum makes him a dad... like
going for walks around the block when he’s getting mad ...not losing ithe
was horrible before it happened... he’s still both..... a dad & not a dad.

He's a bit of a dad but not a real dad....yet. Documenting action .

Asking about and listening for knowledge :

What makes it important to remember the OK stuff about dad ?

Where did you get the idea to only tell close friends?

Who else would think these ideas would be pretty good ?

Do you think if another person your age knew these things it might help?

Can we document this knowledge you have?

When dad's a
dad but not a
dad .

- when you're dad's been bad remember the OK stuff
- I remember he's a good coach
- he still tells dad jokes but he was shit to mum
- He felt bad .. thats good.
- Only tell some stuff to close friends .
- He's a bit of a dad but not a real dad yet.

Action outside of the counselling room

Contact made with school communities

Letters to staff instigating Social Justice programmes



Taking it back practices....

If you wish, write down something that you may have found useful that may contribute to your work , ideas , your intentions as a worker .

These will be taken back to the students and families that contributed to this piece



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