

Hope, Help, and Healing: Culturally Embedded Approaches to Prevention, Intervention and Postvention Services with Native Hawaiian Youth

Deborah Goebert, Dr.P.H.
Department of Psychiatry,
John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai‘i
goebertd@dop.hawaii.edu

E Hō Mai


- Composed by Kumu Hula and Hawaiian cultural and language expert, Edith K. Kanāka‘ole
- The chant was originally performed by students at the beginning of class to request knowledge and wisdom from the ancestral deities to accomplish the task at hand.
- Now it is often used at the start of an event or small gathering to focus a group’s energies and ultimately carry out the kuleana (responsibility).
- It is recommended that haumana (students) use this chant to help them seek knowledge and clear their minds of any negativity.



Out of Darkness Walk
September 2018

Acknowledgements

- This work was supported, in part, by the National Institutes of Health; the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and The Queen's Medical Center.
- I am grateful for my mentor, Dr. Naleen Andrade, for her ongoing support in project development and implementation as well interpretation and implication of findings.
- I would also like to express my appreciation to community partners in youth suicide prevention and mental health promotion and the Hawai'i's Caring Communities Initiative for Youth Suicide Prevention, Inspiring Hope through Sources of Strength Program and the National Center on Indigenous Hawaiian Behavioral Health from whom I have learned so much.
- Much of what is presented herein has been published in Goebert D, Alvarez A, Andrade NN, Balberde-Kamalii J, Carlton BS, Chock S, Chung-Do JJ, Eckert MD, Hooper K, Kaninau-Santos K, Kaulukukui G. Hope, help, and healing: Culturally embedded approaches to suicide prevention, intervention and postvention services with native Hawaiian youth. *Psychological services*. 2018 Aug;15(3):332.



Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe 2 health inequities in youth suicide
- Cite 3 key cultural values in suicide prevention
- Identify 2 promising cultural approaches to addressing suicide prevention.



I choose to live, not for the days that make me want to give up, but for the days I've yet to see. Every morning is a chance at a fresh start.

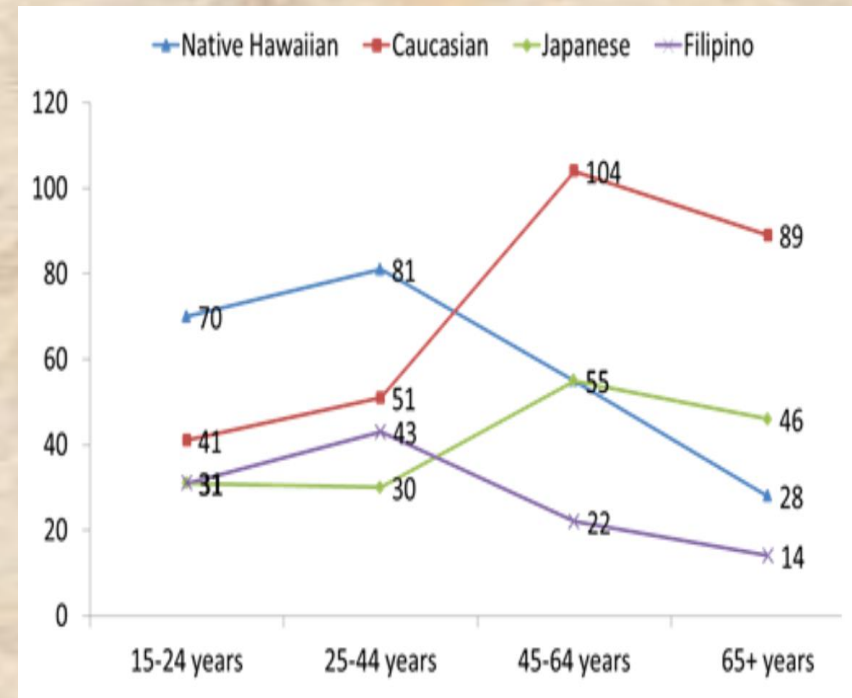


Introduction

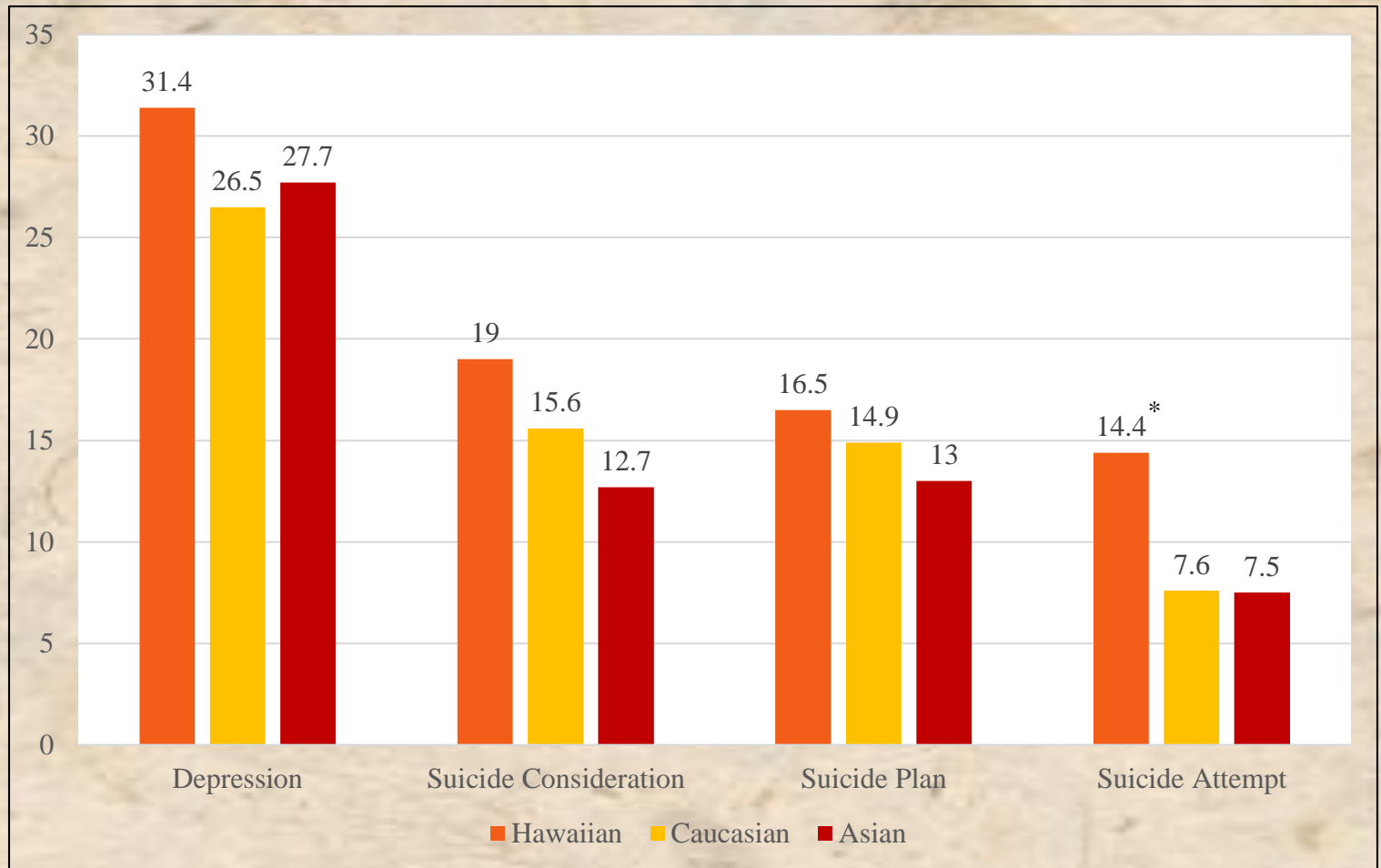
- Suicide is a serious, preventable public health problem that can have lasting harmful effects on individuals, families, and communities.
- Hopelessness is rising among youth.
- Hope is an important protective factor in emotional well-being, particularly among youth.
- Protective factors have a greater impact than risks.

Suicide Prevention is Important to Hawai'i Communities

- Suicide has lasting effects on individuals, families, and communities.
- Suicide death rates for Native Hawaiians are amongst the highest in the world for youth.
- Effective suicide prevention for rural and indigenous youth requires a broad-based community commitment and connection.
- Studies among indigenous youth show a relationship between lower suicide rates and community ties to traditional values.



Hawaii Youth Risk Behavior Survey



* p<0.05

Suicide Attempts Across Time

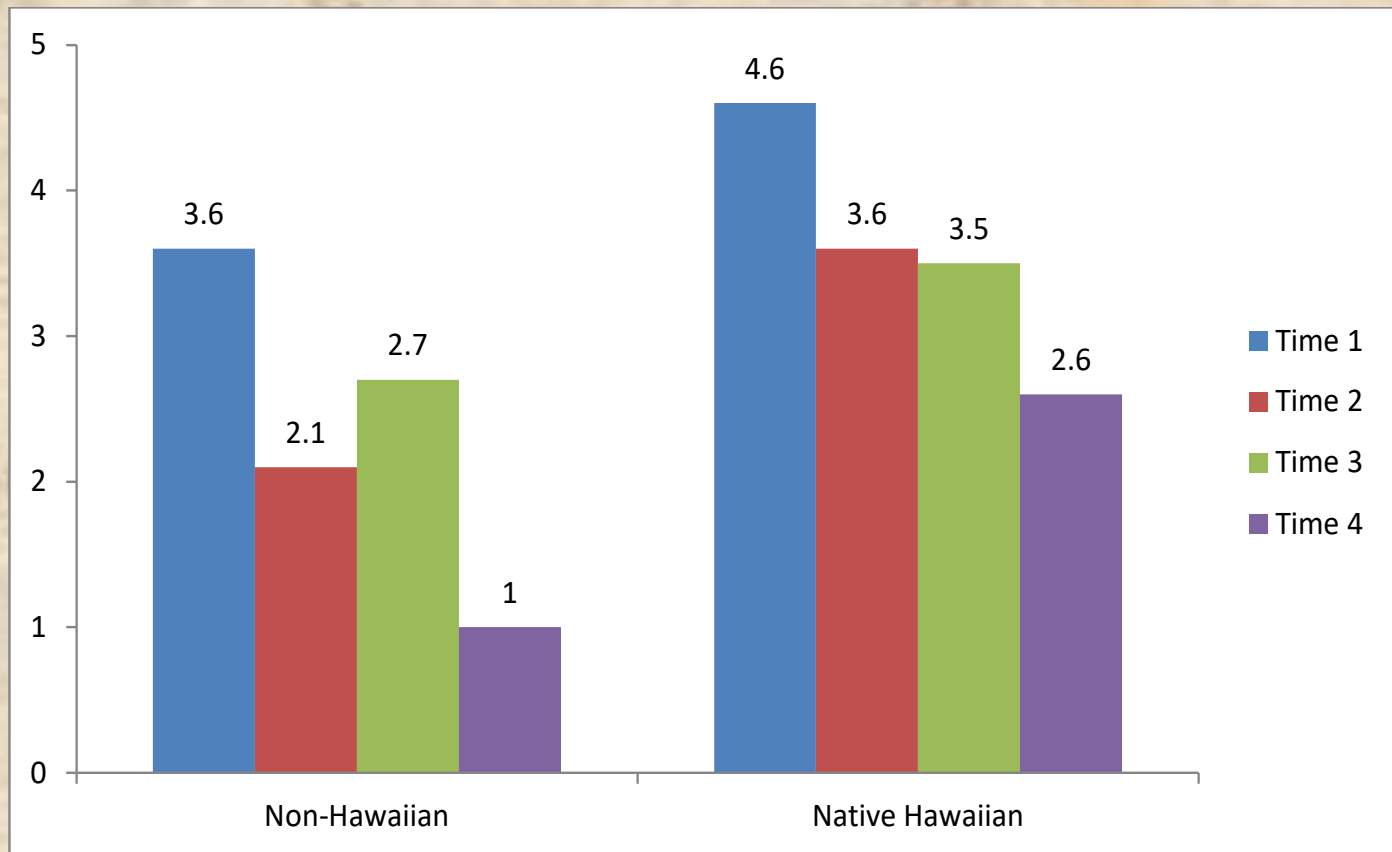
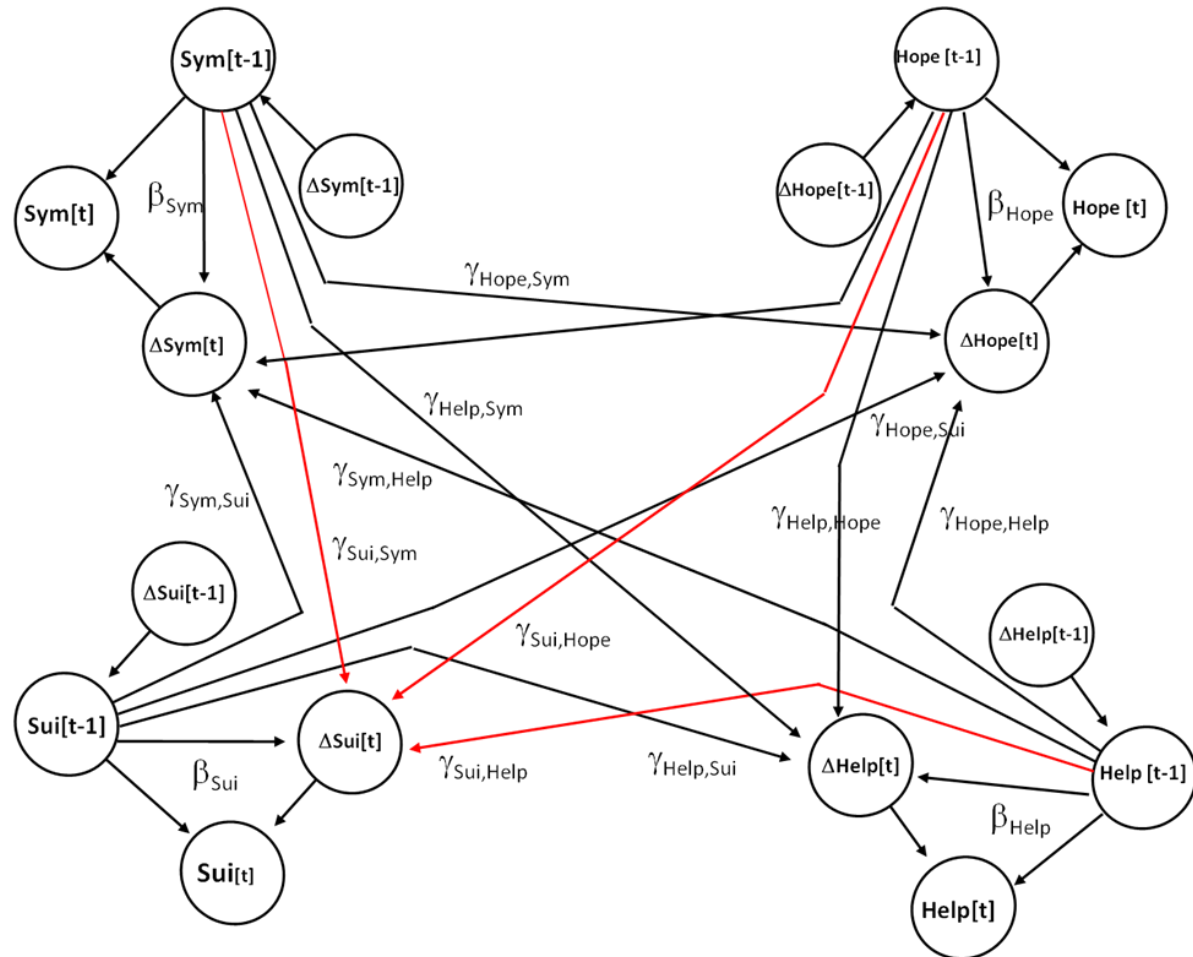


Figure 1. Repeated measures of suicide attempts by ethnicity

It's not this simple

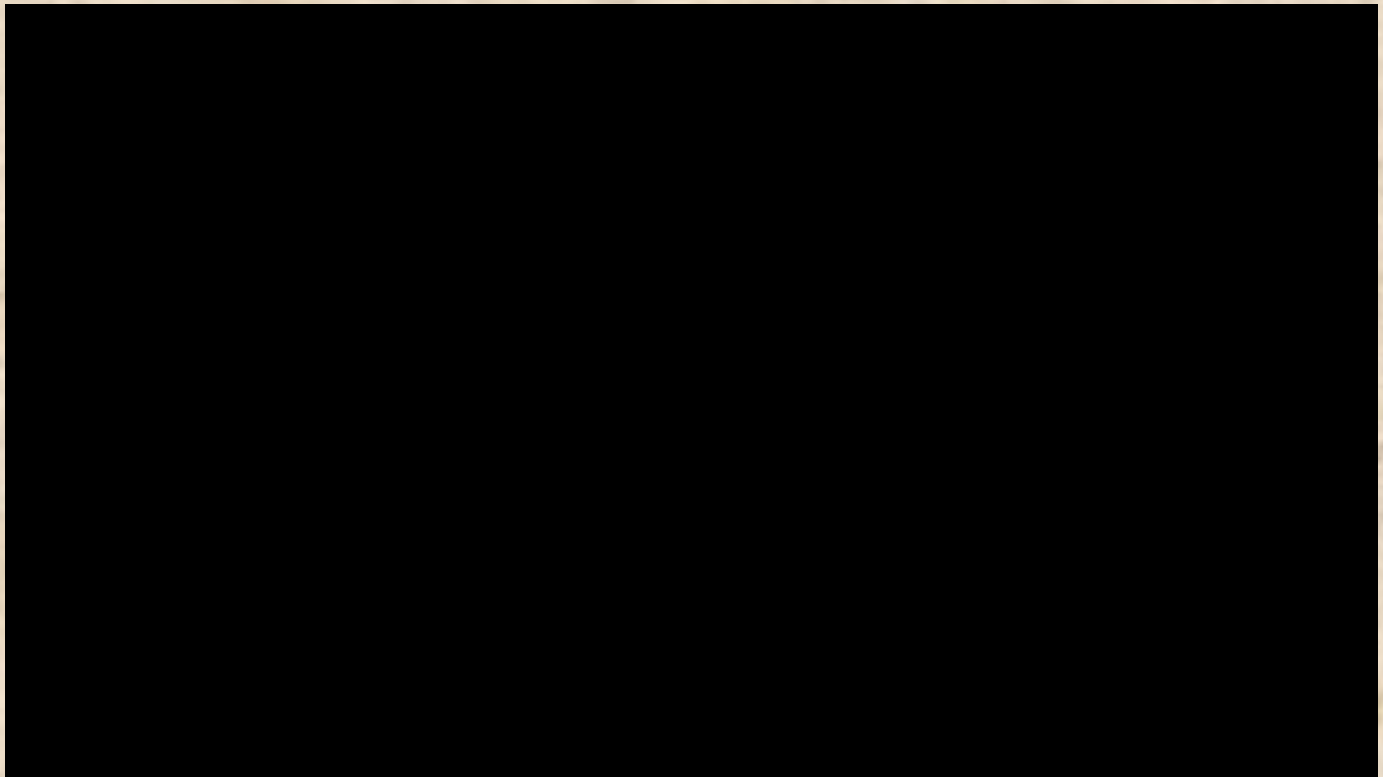




Small but important differences

- The vast majority of youth in our study did not report suicidality, even when they experienced symptoms of anxiety and/or depression.
- We found mainly similarities in dynamical systems between Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian youth regarding how change scores were influenced by the past behavioral patterns for the four domains.
- Yet Native Hawaiian youth remain at higher risk.
 - They seek help and restore hope less often.
 - Legacy-suicide considered an option.
 - Potential role of historical trauma.

William Giles & Tui Scanlan -
"Into The Dark"
(National Poetry Slam, 2014)





Health Inequities

- Poverty
- Rurality
- Exposure to violence and substance use
- Discrimination



Strengths

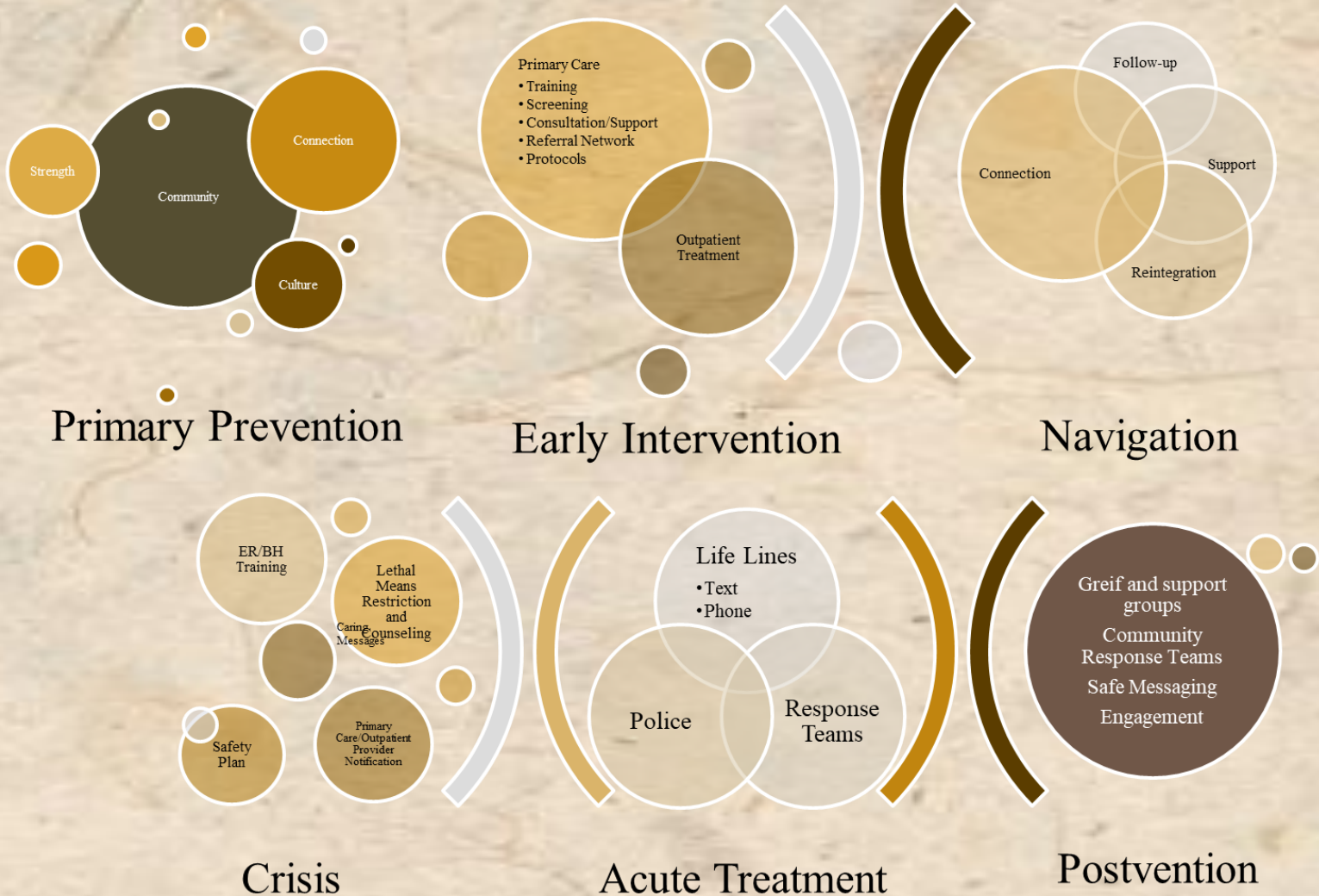
- Resilience
- Connections to People
 - Family Support
 - Community Support
- Connection to Place
- “Culture is our treatment.”



Cultural Approach

- There has been a strong calling for more culturally relevant tools and trainings related to youth suicide prevention and treatment.
 - Culture frames what *all* people bring to the setting including: help-seeking patterns, coping styles, support systems, role of stigma, and engagement in prevention treatment.
 - By building cultural strengths, such as kinship ties, community assets, spirituality, and creating positive meaning, we can prevent suicide among our youth.

A Community and Health Systems Approach




New Direction Based on Community Input



Guiding Values

- ***Aloha*** means to love, to give without the expectation of reciprocity, to be empathic and compassionate. It represents the unselfish kindly concern for the good of another without expecting anything in return from them. Hawaiian wisdom indicates “Ua ola loko i ke aloha,” meaning love is imperative to one’s mental and physical welfare.
- ***Mālama*** is commonly translated as to take care of, tend, attend, and care for. Mālama is used in many contexts relevant to suicide prevention. E mālama ola—care for life. E mālama kekahi i kekahi--care for each other. However the concept of mālama begins with each of us. In order to mālama life, mālama others, mālama our kuleana (responsibility), we must first mālama ourselves, take good care of ourselves. When we are pono, we can better care for others and take care of our many kuleana in life. When we are out of balance, lacking pono and spiritually and physically depleted it is difficult, if not impossible to mālama pono anything or anyone else.
- ***Hilina'i*** translates to believe as in hope or belief that things will get better. It also means to trust and lean on.



***'O ka hilina'i ka 'imi 'ana i kahi
pohihihi a ka puka aku 'ana me ka 'ike.***

To possess an undaunting hope: Believe that in the midst of confusion and bewilderment, one is capable of seeking and holding onto the way toward a future possessing insight and vision.



Youth Suicide Prevention

**‘Ike aku, ‘ike mai, kokua aku kokua
mai; pela iho la ka nohana ‘ohana**

*Recognize others (watch), be recognized
(observe), help others, be helped;
such is the family/community way.*

Hawai'i's Caring Communities Initiative for Youth Suicide Prevention

- Prevention and intervention efforts to impact at-risk communities and the statewide mental health infrastructure.
- Incorporated national evidence based suicide prevention training program while ensuring activities were community-led and culturally grounded.





Cultural Needs of Suicide Prevention and Postvention Evidence-Based Programs

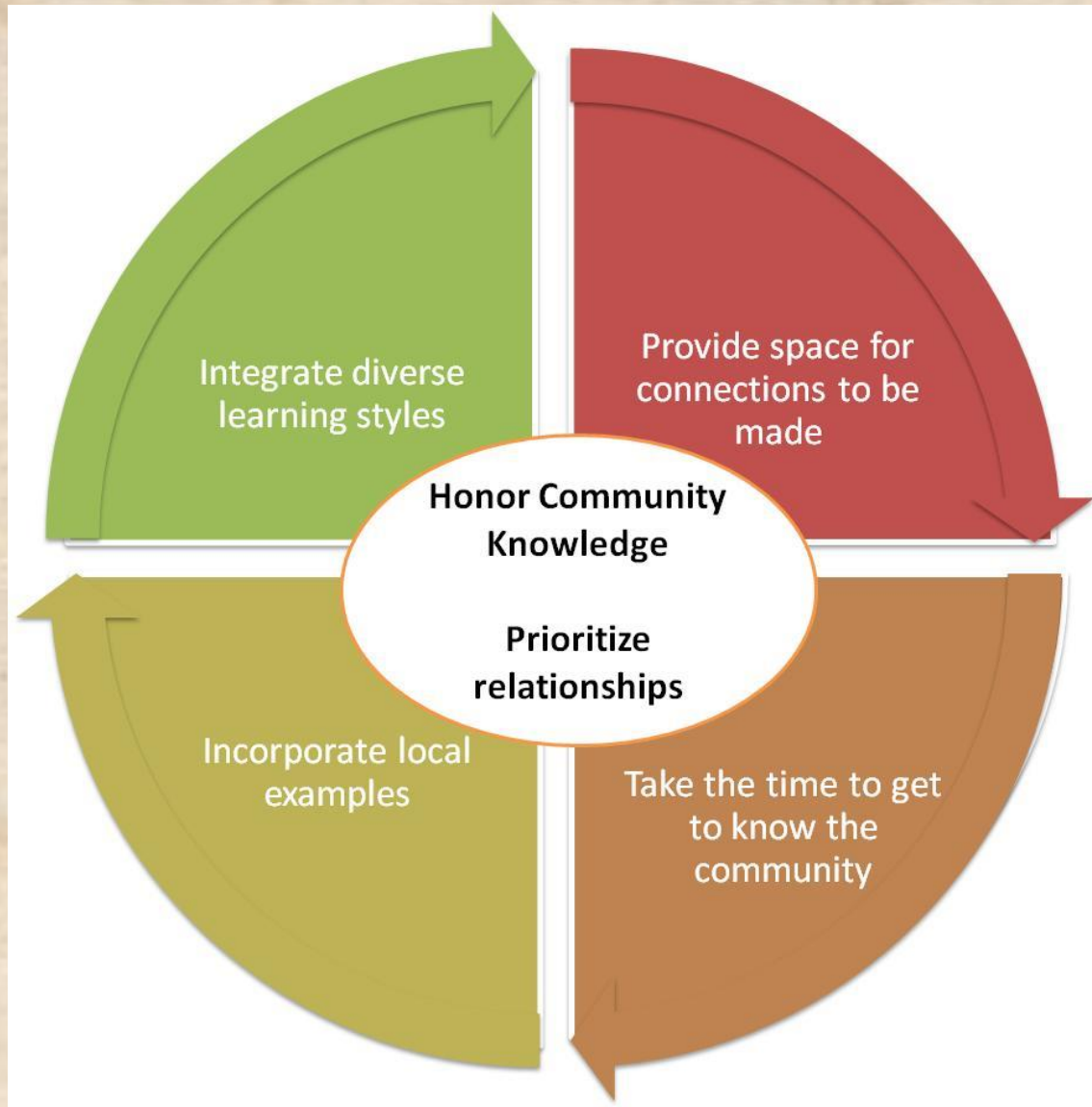
- Evidence-based programs (EBP) are increasingly receiving attention at the national level, especially among funders.
- EBP have not been intensively evaluated in minority communities.
- Cultural relevance has been identified as a gap by all states and tribes, including Hawai‘i.



Focus Group Questions

- *What are the cultural needs of Hawai‘i communities related to suicide prevention and postvention training programming.?*
- *How do the EBPs address these cultural needs? How can cultural relevance be enhanced?*

Framework for Cultural Relevance





Theme 1:

Trainings need to provide space for connections among the trainer and the participants.

*“The first couple of trainings we did, we really did go by the script. And there [was] no introductions and... [gasps and shaking heads among participants] ... talk story. And we did get a lot of feedback on that. **People in the community saying that’s not culturally right.** So that’s a tweak that we did to be more culturally appropriate. **We’ll introduce ourselves, even talk a little talk story in the beginning.** And that was something that, even if it’s small, I think that made it for people to connect with us a lot better.”*

*“So when we find ourselves in a certain cultural [group], **we as trainers, can salt, season, pepper the presentation for that cluster of folk. I think that is an asset.** ...because **we’re going to be able to individualize it,** and I think that’s very important. That is a real plus.”*



Suicide Prevention Trainings-
Connect Program, safe
messaging, etc.

Youth
empowerment

**YOUTH
LEADERS
in suicide
prevention**

Community
awareness event
development
and
implementation

Team-building

Youth Leadership Council for Suicide Prevention

- Youth voice to inform statewide suicide prevention work
- Leadership development and training for youth
- Civic engagement and community service opportunities for youth
- Trained adults to support youth in their local communities






Youth Developed Sense of Belonging and Increased Place Attachment

Just being able to do something that makes a difference. Makes you really feel like, being able to make a change.

To me, that's the biggest impact that we've made - that people know we're here and that we're willing to help and that we care. That's a big, I don't know-- I feel like that's one thing that could save a life, just knowing that people care.

I enjoyed helping the community and meeting new people and having to work with them.

When you want to do something with your life, you'll figure out that you want to do some-thing for your community, people in your community, outside, this and that. I realized that.



BUILDING STRENGTHS AND INSPIRING HOPE AMONG YOUTH AND THEIR COMMUNITIES: Efforts in Local Suicide Prevention

**‘Ike aku, ‘ike mai, kokua aku kokua mai; pela iho la ka nohana
‘ohana**

*Recognize others (watch), be recognized (observe), help others, be helped;
such is the family/community way.*

Deb Goebert

Project PI and Director for Hawaii's Caring Communities Initiative for Youth Suicide Prevention

JABSOM, University of Hawai‘i

Malia Agustin and Blane Garcia

Community Co-Directors and Health Educators

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

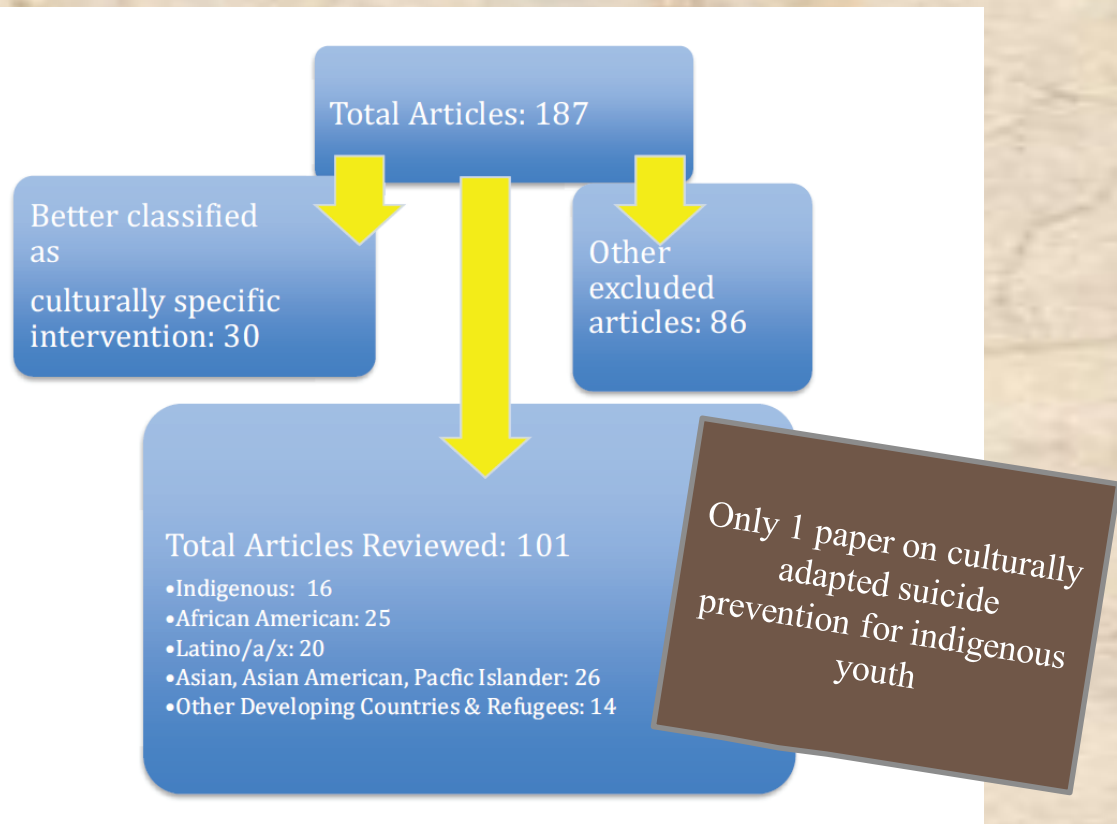
Cultural Adaptation

The systematic modification of an EBP or intervention protocol to consider language, culture, and context in such a way that it is compatible with the group's cultural patterns, meanings, and values.

(Bernal, Jiménez-Chafey, & Domenech Rodríguez, 2009)



Cultural Adaptation for Mental Health Interventions





Indigenous Cultural Adaptation for Mental Health Interventions

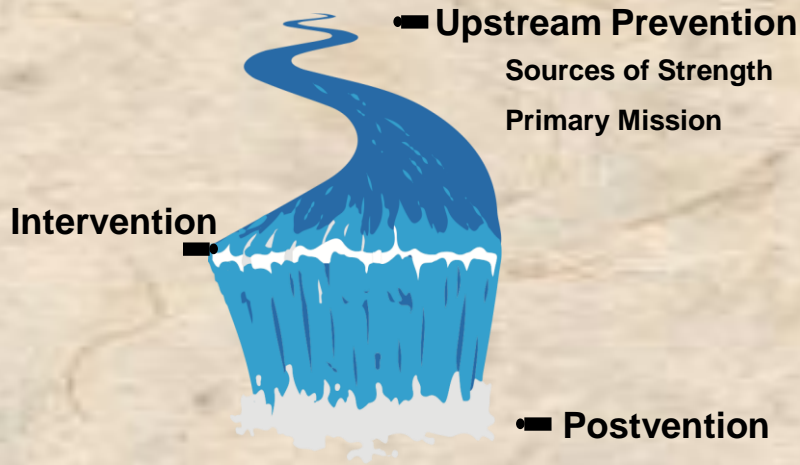
- Incorporate Values
 - Foster a positive indigenous identity (7 programs)
 - Multigenerational (3 programs)
 - Include traditional practices (2 programs)
- Metaphor and Stories (6 programs)
- Spiritual Beliefs (6 programs)
- Language (6 programs)
 - Simplifying jargon and using local terms
 - Local language for select elements (prayer)
- Visuals (4 programs)) for cultural congruence
- Removal of problematic western elements
- Tailoring for within group differences (diversity within indigenous)



Limits of Adaptations

- Balancing fidelity and fit:
 - Do adaptations change the theoretical propositional model or the implied theory of change?
 - Did the adaptation change the proposed core components and procedures to such an extent that what was adapted becomes a different treatment?
 - Is change still a function of the therapeutic techniques that respond to a particular theoretical model? Or are there other mediating factors that might be due to the adaptation?

Building Resilience



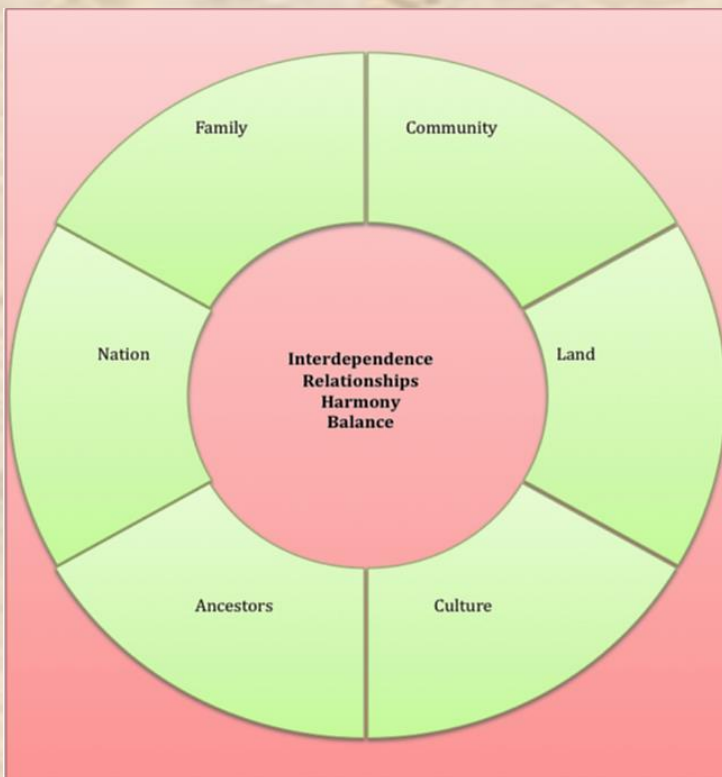
Suicide prevention efforts have largely focused on strategies to identify and get help for those with suicidal ideation. Upstream efforts focus on enhancing strengths.

Ola i ka wai: Water is life



Once when Kane and Kanaloa were journeying together Kanaloa complained of thirst. Kane thrust his staff into the pali near at hand, and out flowed a stream of pure water.

Relational Worldview of Native Hawaiian Well-Being



Theory:

- The relational worldview of the Native Hawaiian well-being is framed from an Indigenous perspective (McCubbin et al., 2010)
 - Interdependence, relationships, harmony, and balance at the center of the sphere
 - Encircled by ancestors, culture, land, family, community, and nation
- The core of this model is connectedness.

Relational Worldview of Native Hawaiian Well-Being

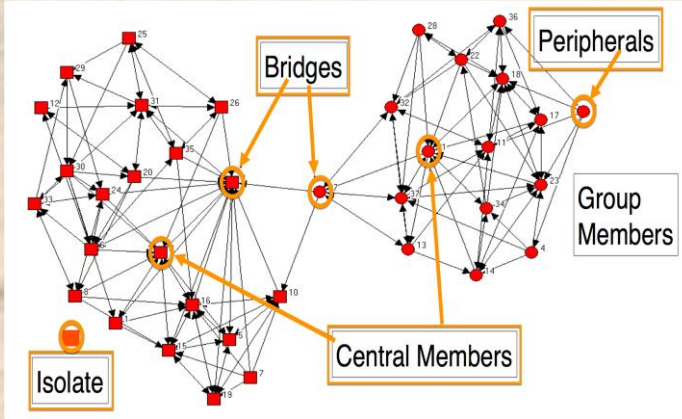
Identified Strengths:

- Connectedness with the 'āina and kai
 - Farming and farming education
 - Voyaging, surfing, lifeguarding
- Connectedness to family
 - Grandparents Aunty, Uncle involvement with youth
 - Serve as support, role models
- Connectedness with the community
 - Development of a call line in the 1970s (the first in the State), long before the crisis line was established
 - Passion to help





Social Network



Lāhui



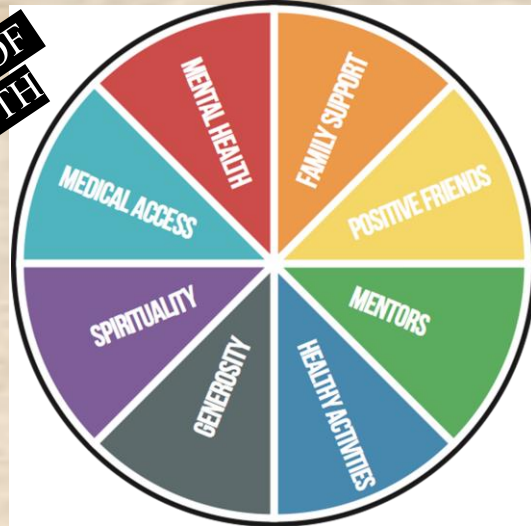
Connectedness



Inspiring Hope
through
Sources of Strength

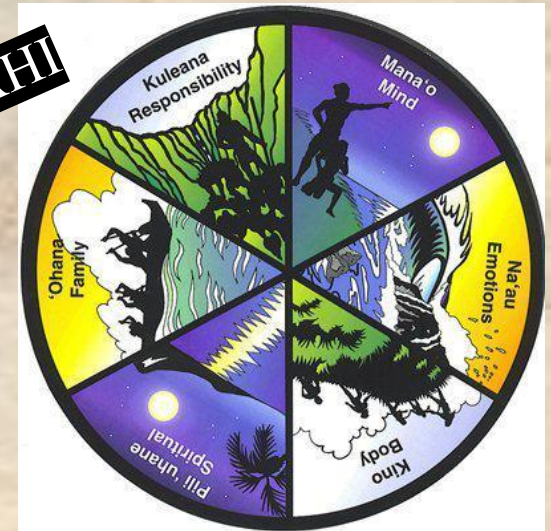


SOURCES OF STRENGTH



- Sources of Strength provides evidence-based prevention for suicide
 - Train, support, and empower both peer leaders and caring adults
 - In turn, they impact their community through the power of connection, hope, help and strength
- Many strengths are more powerful than one
- By enhancing these strengths positive change occurs at both the individual and community level

LŌKAHI



- Lōkahi refers to balance, harmony, and unity for the self, in relationship to the body, mind, and spirit.
- Respect sacredness of life
- We are never alone
 - Respect, protect, maintain connectedness with the 'āina (land) & kai (ocean)
 - Keep connected with one's ancestors
 - Be appreciative of life gifts from ke akua (The God), 'aumākua (ancestors)
 - Monitor for hō'ailona (signs) from ke akua & our 'aumākua
 - Keep connected with healthy 'ohana

Program

- Game
- Opening Protocol (oli, ground rules, today's purpose)
- Share
- Meaningful Play
- Create
- Plan
- Closing Protocol (pule, purpose)







Culturally Grounding Youth Suicide Prevention

- Ho`olohe pono—listen well—“be there” (active and attentive listening with all senses)
- Interaction with kupuna (elders), healthy families, mentors (supportive adults/role models)
- Find something you are good at and cultivate that skill (career studies one skill or special talent)
- Ma ka hana ka `iki (from doing one learns) and *hana lima* (“work with the hands” (Pukui & Elbert, 1986, p. 56). These approaches offer youth an experiential learning format that integrates their thoughts and feelings (Dupont, et al 2010).
- Mālama kekahi i kekahi - Take care of one another
- Lokahi—balance, harmony, and unity for the self in relation to the mind, body and spirit (self-care)

Treatment of Suicidal Youth

'Ie'ie and Koa

The 'ie'ie is a crawling vine that would cling to the koa tree. Let's consider the pilina or relationship between the koa and the 'ie'ie. The koa stands mighty and tall while the 'ie'ie is much more delicate and fragile, yet one compliments the other. So it is in our pilina with each other. Good relationships have this kind of balance. When one person is weak, the other is strong. When one needs protection, the other provides a safe place. When one person is growing and learning the other provides the stable foundation allowing the growth to take place. At times we may need to be the koa, strong, tall, steadfast and immovable. In our vulnerable times we may be like the 'ie'ie, creeping and crawling along clinging to those around us as we make our way. This is what makes pilina, relationships in our lives so important, so essential as we find our way through this journey called life.





Youth Perspective

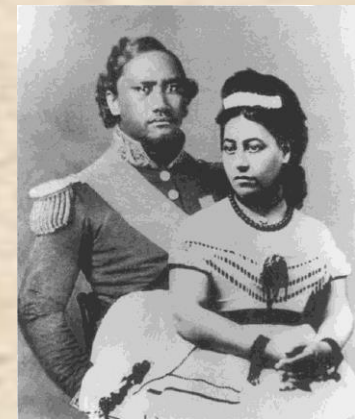
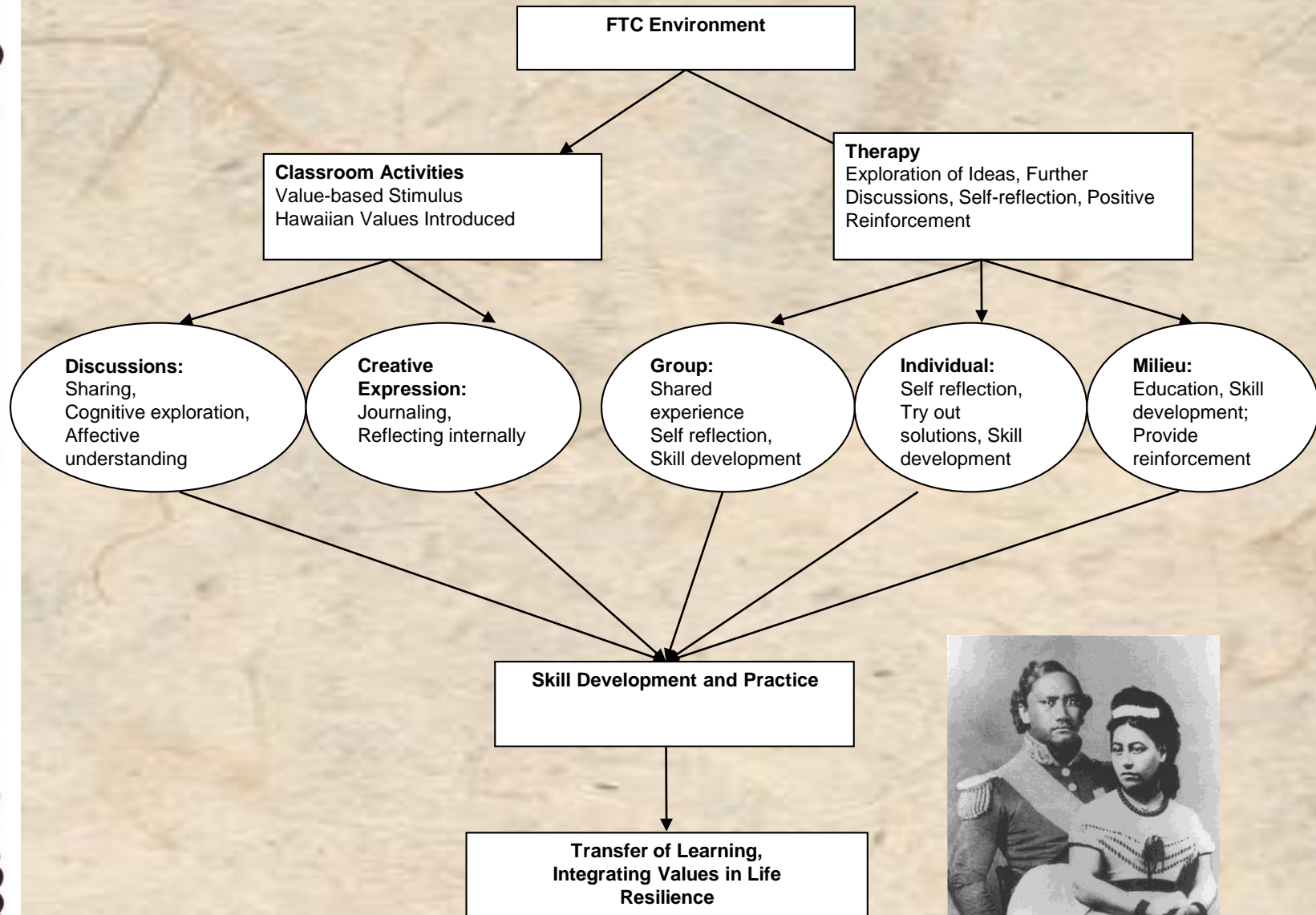
Loa 'a keolai Hālau-a-ola

Life is obtained in the House-of-life.

One is safe, well again. A play on *ola* (life, health, hope, healing, contentment, and peace after a struggle).

-'Olelo Noe'au , M.K. Pukui, No. 2017

Integration of Hawaiian Values



Carlton et al., 2011. Integrating Cultural Values into Mental Health Treatment

Hawaiian Cultural Values Program Family Treatment Center (FTC)

Hawaiian Value	Literal Translation	Applied Cultural Concept to thinking, decision-making, and/or conduct	Therapeutic Relevance
Huli Ho'ohuli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To turn, reverse, curl over like a breaking wave, change an opinion To look for, search, explore, investigate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To turn over or reverse your thinking; to physically and emotionally turn from or to something To search, explore, or investigate and leave no stone unturned (e.g., to seek the truth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reframe your perception or thinking about an event, as in CBT
Loli Ho'ololi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change To amend, alter, transform; to take a new form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To change or transform one's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolving a conflict Restoring a developmental deficit




Postvention—After a Suicide Death

Malama ola no na lei

A rainbow is waiting.


“In moments when darkness is all around and it’s hard to see beyond it, a rainbow or preserver of life for youth is waiting. There are moments in life filled with darkness, confusion, doubt and uncertainty; especially after a significant loss or a shattered dream. Youth and their families may struggle and can get caught up in anger, depression, and negative behaviors. Such ongoing suffering contributes to feelings of hopelessness. Colored with love, understanding, and cultural pride; our Hawaiian children and families lift themselves out ...[and] come to know and build on their innate strengths through learning about our ancestral leaders, their values and practices that continue today.”

- Uncle Val Kepilino and Aunty Malia Craver



Culturally Grounding in Suicide Postvention

- Coming together as a community to grieve and heal, need for family/extended family grief groups.
- AFSP Hawaii Child and Teen Suicide Bereavement Support Group Facilitator Training included space for a connecting welcome, cultural protocol and aloha leadership training in their workshop
- Ho‘okala--The act of releasing or forgiving. Used as a stage as part of the ho‘oponopono, conflict resolution that forgives and releases one from the negative energy that perpetuates the trauma or wrong that was done by you or to you by someone else.
- Passing life forward--Need for early involvement in primary prevention (contagion levels high in communities) to create change.



Culturally Grounding in Suicide Postvention

- Manawa--The proper or right time or opportunity for a change. Readiness depends on community—for some immediate needs (1-2 weeks while other need longer period of adjustment up to 2 years)
- Partnering with those who have shown care and continuity in the community. Emphasizes the importance of relationship building, connectivity, and hō‘ihi--treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Community Postvention work needs to use small community meetings, prevention training with emphasis on process, be led by locals, and have local community members serve as resource person to greatest degree possible.

Future Directions

More collaborative, youth-centered, and community-based approaches to suicide prevention and intervention provided with a cultural context are essential in enhancing well-being in indigenous communities.



Youth Leadership Council



Other Local Efforts



- **Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Taskforce**
 - Trainings – Basics, safeTALK, ASIST, Connect, Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - Activities in your community
 - Policy
- **Hawai'i Chapter of American Foundation for Suicide Prevention**
 - Focus on supporting loss survivors/postvention
- **Hawai'i Chapter of Mental Health America of Hawai'i**
 - Trainings – Youth Suicide and Bullying Prevention, Grow a Rainbow
 - Comprehensive social services directory





1-800-753-6879

**HAWAI'I
CARES**

In addition to *continuing to serve as Hawaii's 24/7 Crisis Hotline*, CARES is now the entry-point and coordinating center for all behavioral health services (substance use, mental health, and crisis intervention).

LOCAL RESOURCES for SUICIDE PREVENTION

We got you. Text ALOHA to 741741.

crisistextline.org

Free, 24/7, confidential crisis support by text

NATIONAL
SUICIDE
 PREVENTION
LIFELINE
 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

GET HELP 24/7:



TrevorText

Text START to 678678



TrevorChat

TrevorChat.org



TrevorLifeline

866.488.7386

THE TREVOR PROJECT
Saving Young LGBTQ Lives

Mahalo

