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**A PROGRAM FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN:
IMPACT OF THE JAIL MILIEU**

BY

CAROLE P.M. HAYES

**A Practicum Report
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

**Faculty of Social Work
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

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**A Program for Incarcerated Women:
Impact of the Jail Milieu**

BY

Carole P. M. Hayes

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
Master of Social Work**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.0 Aboriginal people and the Canadian justice system	
2.0.0 Over-representation	
2.0.1 Types of offences	
2.0.2 Aboriginal women	
2.0.3 Aboriginal programming	
2.1 Social work programs for women in correctional institutions	
2.2 Collectivity	
2.3 Aboriginal intervention strategies	
2.4 Violence against women	
2.5 Involuntary clients	
2.6 Social work theory - strength perspective	
3. METHODOLOGY	28
3.0 The Kenora District Jail	
3.0.0 Functions	
3.0.1 Internal facility and initial implementation of the Walking A New Path program	

3.1 Sessional content

3.1.0 Walking A New Path program design

3.1.1 Sessions

3.2 Practise theory

3.2.0 Methods from the Margins - Kirby and McKeena

3.2.1 Traditional Native intervention theory

4. THEME ANALYSIS

71

4.0 Movement and Time

4.1 Interruptions

4.1.0 Spacial concerns

4.1.1 Facilitation of other programs and service providers

4.1.2 Institutional Activities

4.1.3 Resource Provision

4.1.4 Communication Dynamics

4.2 Privacy and emotional expression

4.2.0 Anger

4.2.1 Crying

4.2.2 Humour

4.3 Participant dynamics

4.3.0 Violence

4.3.1 Alcohol

4.3.2 Cultural considerations

4.3.3 Concepts of violence and abuse

4.4 Facilitator issues

4.4.0 Institution rules

4.4.1 Perspectives

4.4.2 Participant-observer role

4.4.3 Participant support

4.4.4 Spontaneity and flexibility

4.4.5 Session attendance

V CONCLUSION

ABSTRACT

This practicum studied the effect of the totality of the milieu of the Kenora District Jail on the content and implementation of a social work program, entitled Walking A New Path, which addressed issues of violence and assault against women. There were a total of sixteen sessions which female inmates attended on a voluntary basis. It was ascertained that lack of privacy and the atmosphere of the jail setting impinged on the opportunity and ability of the participants to express emotions, particularly anger. Time and spacial issues also proved to be a primary concern.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to begin this practicum report by acknowledging all those people who assisted me in this endeavour. Without their guidance, assistance and support it would never have been completed.

First of all, I would like to thank the personnel of the Kenora Jail for their assistance and for allowing me to undertake this project, especially Gisele Spryzak who had the confidence in my abilities, engaged my participation in the Walking A New Path program, and became part of my Master's committee.

I would like to acknowledge, Shirley Grosser, my first faculty advisor, who assisted me in negotiating my initial experiences at the University. Ms. Grosser took a sabbatical, and was unable to see the completion of this project.

I am eternally grateful to Laura Taylor, who entered in the middle as a faculty advisor, and assisted in revitalizing this project when I was ready to throw in the towel. Also to Don Lugtig, who was a continual source of information and inspiration.

Deana Halonen was instrumental in the completion of this report, providing support and resources. Mary Alice Smith gave hours of time editing.

Then there are the friends on the home front who were a source of ideas, support and encouragement.

Mildred Snow

Donna Belisle

MaryAnn Osinski

Cathy Lindsay

Ida-Kim Bedford

Virginia Naumann

The Board and Staff of Kenora Anishinaabe-Kweg Aboriginal Women's Organization provided me with support , encouragement and resources to write this practicum report.

Meegwetch

The Elder, Colleen Sandy, who began the Walking a New Path program with me was a consistent source of guidance and helped me find a sense of humour when things were dark and heavy.

I would honour the Lodge Keeper and the Grandmothers in my favourite Sweatlodge. I took my struggles with this practicum experience to them on many occasions and always found the vision and strength to carry on.

I say Meegwetch to Creator for it all.

INTRODUCTION

This practicum project grew out of the implementation of a program entitled **Walking a New Path**. The Ontario Women's Directorate provided funds for the development and delivery of a program to women incarcerated in the Kenora Jail which would address abuse and violence in their lives. In response to a request from the Coordinator of Services at the Kenora Jail, the writer, in concert with an Anishinaabe Elder, designed a program that would focus on some aspects of those concerns. This accounts for the use of the plural pronoun 'we' used in some instances within this practicum report. The Elder found the confinement and negativity of the jail environment difficult. She was unable to fulfil her commitment, and was intermittently involved in the implementation and facilitation of the **Walking a New Path** project. She was not involved in the development and/or facilitation of the practicum project.

It is important to note that during the past two years this project had been primarily dormant as the individuals who contracted to design and facilitate the program failed to fulfill their commitment.

The **Walking A New Path** project was designed to increase the participants awareness of the impact of abusive relationships, both as children and adults, on their ability to function within society. This was to be accomplished through the provision of information regarding definitions and dynamics of abuse; societal and cultural contexts and aspects of abuse; elements of abusive relationships. Holistic healing concepts were introduced. The program is described in detail in the methodology section.

It became immediately apparent in the first sessions of the **Walking a New Path** program that the effect of the environment of the institution would necessitate an alteration in program design, delivery and expectations. The effect of the institutional environment on the **Walking a New Path** program is the subject of this practicum project. This practicum studies the impact of a provincial jail environment on the implementation

of a social work intervention addressing domestic/spousal abuse, family violence and sexual assault with incarcerated women.

In order to explore this project further it is necessary to explain the Walking a New Path project. The focus of the practicum is not to analyse the Walking A New Path program but rather to examine the impact of the environment on programming.

The goal of this practicum experience has been to catalogue, categorize and delineate the felt and observed circumstances encountered within implementing the Walking A New Path project in the jail on clients and on the program facilitator; and to commit that information to a body of written work. This provides an opportunity for an in-depth examination and understanding of the experience. It also provides an opportunity to share this knowledge with other practitioners who may wish to implement programs within a penal institution. The institutional environment impacts on, and to some degree dictates, every step that is taken, every move that is made within its walls. Understanding this impact is essential to efficient program development and implementation and to the well-being of all persons concerned: the inmates, the institutional personnel and the program facilitator(s).

There is little information written specific to women in the prison system. This is generally attributed the fact that they represent only a small percentage of the total inmate population. (Stephen et al,1999, Faith, 1995) In 1993-94 they comprised only 9% of all provincial institutions in Canada. (CCJS, 1994 in La Prairie, 1996) Information that exists predominately refers to incarcerated women as a whole and seldom discusses provincial penal institutions such as the Kenora jail which is a smaller, multi-faceted facility. This practicum generates a body of information directly responsive to the situation of women in such a facility providing guidelines specific to correctional institutions and for the development of social work programming within penal institutions. This project also demonstrates to personnel within the institution the impact of the institution on the social work process. Finally, suggestions are made for altering the environment and mitigating its effects so that the experience has optimal value for all parties.

Before addressing the main body of this paper, it might be helpful to describe the

perspective that I, as the writer, bring to this work. My journey through life has led me to a personal understanding of violence and abuse both as a child and as an adult. I have walked my own path of healing for the last twenty years which has included participation in sexual assault counselling, recovery from alcohol use, and participation in Traditional Native healing activities. I also have professional experience as a child welfare worker in the field of abuse intervention. I began as a front line community worker (First Nations and urban), developed and implemented an addictions program, was responsible for intake and abuse investigations and finally, functioned in a supervisory capacity. It would be impossible for me to cite the numerous sources of information I have been exposed to during this period. Not only was I required to ingest written theory and information, I gained experience in the recognition and assessment of abusive situations. I also observed first hand the dynamics of family violence and abuse and became cognizant of generational abuse and of the legacy of the residential school system.

My current employment with Kenora Anishinaabe-Kweg Aboriginal Women's Organization entails the facilitation of traditional Aboriginal healing methods primarily for Aboriginal women in Kenora and the surrounding First Nation communities. In that capacity I have been in communication with many members of the Aboriginal community, male and female, who have experienced and witnessed the degradation of abuse and violence in their homes and communities. Most had been through the residential school system. I have been privileged to listen as they shared their experiences of the healing of their spirit, mind and body. I have also been allowed to participate in healing traditions such as the sweat lodge and circles. The teachings of some of the medicines have been shared with me and I have come to know their healing properties on a personal basis. Therefore, I bring to this practicum experience a strong belief in and respect for the ethics, values and principles that underscore traditional Native ways.

This practicum report has been an exercise in duality. I live and work in a world which primarily focusses on experiential learning and discussion. At the same time completing studies at the Masters level requires that I speak in academic terms, using appropriate terminology, and theoretical frameworks. Recording this material has felt

conceptually and linguistically awkward at times, as I try to reflect both of these worlds accurately and credibly.

I ask the Creator for guidance in my thoughts and in choosing my words, that this endeavour may speak the truth, and that what is recorded in these pages respects the dignity of all those who participated.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aboriginal People and the Canadian Justice System

Overrepresentation

The Aboriginal people of Canada are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. As a culture or race, on a per capita basis, they are more involved in almost all facets of that system than any other grouping of peoples. While people of Aboriginal origin represented only 3.7% of the population of Canada in the 1991 census, they constituted 17% of incarcerated persons and 12 % of persons on probation on a national scale. Furthermore, Aboriginal persons are not granted parole, probation and/or community supervision as often as non-Aboriginal persons. The disparity of involvement appears to have a cultural bias as opposed to a gender bias as overrepresentation is as applicable to Aboriginal women as it is to Aboriginal men. (LaPrairie, 1996; McCaskill, 1985; Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994; Yolk, 1989)

There is evidence of overrepresentation of minority groups in penal institutions on a global basis. LaPrairie (1996) cites studies which demonstrate the overrepresentation of Black Americans, Aboriginal populations, and minorities in the justices systems of the United States, Canada, Australia, and England. Many nations, including Canada, the United States, Australia, and the members of the Council of Europe excepting Austria and Italy have reported an increase in female offenses. A similarity does exist in charges laid against women across the above stated nations in that women were most often incarcerated for economic crimes and drug/alcohol related offenses. (LaPrairie, 1996)

The overrepresentation of Aboriginals in the justice system does not occur equally across Canada. The percentage of incarcerated Aboriginal persons is significantly higher in the Prairie provinces than in any other part of Canada (York, 1995 in LaPrairie). Data from Statistics Canada, 1995, showed that the percentage of Aboriginal offenders in the Prairie region was 35.4%, as compared to 14.2 % in the Pacific region, 3.7% in Ontario

region, 3.6 % in the Atlantic region and 1.5 % in the Quebec region. A demonstration of those dynamics exists in the city of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan where three penal institutions are located: a federal penitentiary, a provincial correctional centre and a women's jail. Within these three facilities the Native population accounts for an extraordinary percentage of the total inmate count: 50%, 75 %, and 85% respectively while, only 10% of the provincial population is Aboriginal (York, 1990). In Manitoba the Native population is over- represented at all levels of incarceration. A study of the Winnipeg Remand Centre in 1995 revealed that 63% of the female offenders were Aboriginal.(Stephen et al, 1999). Aboriginals in Ontario constitute 3.7% of the population in the penal system. (La Prairie, 1996) This figure is not indicative of North Western Ontario, specifically the experience of the Kenora District Jail. Personnel of the Kenora District Jail and other professionals involved with that facility verify a predominate Native population, similar to the ratios in the Western Provinces. (KDJ 1,2,&3, 1998/99) This was the experience of the Walking a New Path program as well. Aboriginal women made up 80% to 100 % of the group attendance on week to week basis.. (LaPrairie, 1996, York, 1990, Interviews: DKJ1, May 1998; DKJ2, 1998; DKJ3, March 1999; PSP1, Oct, 1996; PSP2, Oct, 1997; PSP2, Oct, 1997)

Discussion as to the conditions that precipitate the overrepresentation of Aboriginal persons is somewhat varied. LaPrairie suggested that the marginalization of Aboriginal peoples is a primary factor. The majority of Aboriginal peoples incarcerated originate from isolated communities where they develop few skills that prepare them for interaction in mainstream society (La Prairie, 1996). This accounts for the higher rates of Aboriginal incarceration in the Prairie regions as this geographic area would incorporate more First Nation communities which are isolated from mainstream society. The First Nations communities of the Atlantic region, Pacific region and what was historically known as Upper and Lower Canada have interacted with Euro-Canadian people over a much longer time frame. LaPrairie (1996) notes that the lack of the ability of isolated communities to teach the skills required to successfully function in the mainstream culture frequently results in poverty due to unemployment or work which pays marginal wages.

Illegal professions such as prostitution, drug trafficking, professional boosting, and bootlegging become a means of survival as do theft and fraud. Breaking and entering is one of the most prevalent charges levelled against Aboriginal people at a provincial level. These conditions account for their high involvement with the legal system. (LaPrairie, 1996)

The geographic location and circumstances of the First Nation communities surrounding Kenora are more appropriately described by the conditions of the Prairie regions rather than Southern Ontario. Indeed, Shkilnk, in A Poison Stronger Than Love, a sociological discussion of the effect of the intervention of European society on the Grassy Narrows First Nation and Wabaseemoong, two First Nation communities (within a two hour driving time from Kenora), demonstrate those precise demographics. The destruction of the traditional cultural ways was mitigated by two basic factors: the influx of persons from mainstream Canadian society and the lack of consultation regarding the alteration and relocation of their villages. These dynamics resulted in a loss of identity, extremely high rates of unemployment, spiralling alcoholism, suicide and violent behaviours (Shkilnyk, 1985).

York (1992), McCaskill (1985) and Ross (1996) refer to the power and control issues imbedded in colonialization and the resultant destruction of the culture. McCaskill (1985) and York (1992) draw attention to the fact that truly isolated communities in the far North have little crime. They advocate that the penal system has replaced the residential schools as a method of assimilation. York (1992) states that in 1976, in the province of Saskatchewan there was a 70% chance that an Indian male would be incarcerated before his twenty-fifth birthday, that the percentage of Native people in the correctional system continued to be on the rise, and further, that in the near future, Aboriginal people will comprise 80% of the prison population. The marginalization of Aboriginal people by the rest of Canadian society could suggest that many people consider the Native population responsible for these conditions and further, that the solution lies in the development of social skills belonging to the mainstream society. McCaskill, Ross and York would term this the final assimilation. (McCaskill, 1985; Ross, 1996; York, 1990)

Ross (1996) describes how the traditional Aboriginal cultural norms significantly impact on the interrelationship of Anishinaabe people with the Canadian justice system. After spending three years seconded to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, it was his assessment that a return to Aboriginal cultural values was a primary solution to the 'Indian problem'. He cited Aboriginal belief systems, foreign to the European adversarial model, that guide Aboriginal approaches to justice. Ross notes that prior to colonization by White society there were no jails in Aboriginal lands, because a well developed and efficient 'justice system' appropriate to their culture existed. They dealt with inappropriate behaviors in a completely different manner. Aboriginal cultures have a holistic perspective in that they do not see misbehavior as an isolated individualistic act. The involvement of all persons is taken into account. They also identify inappropriate or harmful actions as representative of disharmony, and focus investigation and intervention on the underlying issues as opposed to the act itself. Solutions are found in healing the discord as opposed to enforcing deterrents. The antagonism of the European adversarial system is seen as problematic and inflammatory. The Aboriginal focus is to return to harmony as opposed to promoting disharmony. Native traditional methods attempt to help the offender realize that he/she is more than his/her act(s), while the current judicial system labels and stigmatizes those who come before it. Aboriginal approaches incorporate dynamics that encourage the offender to meaningfully acknowledge the totality of the suffering of all persons affected by his/her actions. Traditional laws also assume that the responsibility and the ability to heal are within the individual presenting the problem. Professionals are involved to guide processes, providing the wisdom of their experiences by teaching values and role modelling. Ross (1996) acquired an understanding of these concepts through communications with numerous Elders and committed them to written form. These views are his interpretation of the teachings shared with him by Aboriginal persons as he toured First Nation communities across Canada. His writings reflect the same thought forms and beliefs that have been represented by Elders at the Elders' Gatherings and during conversations with the writer. They are also reflected by many other Aboriginal writers. It is not surprising, from such a different perspective that Aboriginal people raised within

their culture, do not understand the concepts of the Canadian justice system (McCaskill, 1985; Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994; Ross, 1996; Solomon, 1990; Wagamese, 1996).

Some of the literature attributes the disparity of Aboriginal persons being incarcerated to racial prejudice throughout the justice system. The murder of Betty Osborne in 1971 in the Pas, Manitoba, and the murder trial of Donald Marshall in Nova Scotia in 1971 are discussed and contrasted in detail by York (1992) as evidence of prejudice. In both cases negative prejudicial attitudes towards Aboriginal people are cited with regard to the investigating officers, lawyers and the court itself. In one instance, the result was the conviction of an innocent man. In the other, the investigation to find the persons responsible for the murder of Betty Osborne was incredibly lax. The Betty Osborne murder trial and the incarceration of an innocent man, Donald Marshall, demonstrate the inequalities in the judicial system. These two incidents have been used by York (1990) and this writer to demonstrate bias as they are well documented occurrences and have received attention from the press.

There is also evidence that Aboriginal persons are incarcerated more frequently because they are stopped and questioned more often. It is reported that Aboriginal persons are questioned by police if they are in possession of items or property that would indicate a substantial purchase, such as a new bicycle or car. There appears to be a belief that Aboriginal persons are not likely to be in legitimate ownership of such items. In addition to the overt practices of the justice system, LaPrairie cites that research into the dynamics of overrepresentation shows that the system is moving towards "subtle, systemic and institutional practices that seem neutral but in fact differentially affect certain minority populations" (LaPrairie, 1996, 27) A statement from the Law Reform Commission of Canada (1991) is indicative of the attitude regarding Aboriginal people. They stated that "their (Aboriginal peoples) sense of injustice is bottomless...If the truth be told, most have given up on the criminal justice system." (Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994, 3)(LaPrairie, 1996; McCaskill, 1985; Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994; Ross, 1996; York, 1990)

There has been some attempt to classify the type of Aboriginal persons who are involved in the criminal justice system according to their cultural belief systems and cultural involvement. Waldram, in a project in 1992, delineated three specific groups as 'traditional, bicultural, and assimilated'. Group one, Traditionalists represented persons who had command of their Aboriginal language and had predominantly resided in Aboriginal communities. Biculturalists, group two, were those, as the name would suggest, that had good knowledge of mainstream Canadian society while at the same time practising their own cultural beliefs. Group three, the assimilated category, had no knowledge of Aboriginal culture and/or language. It was found that groups two and three experienced more racism and prejudice than group one. Those in groups one and two were exposed to more violence and abuse. Almost three-quarters of the researched group were comprised of persons from groups one and two (LaPrairie, 1996).

Types of Offences

Statistics demonstrate that Aboriginal people primarily commit two types of offences: theft and assaults (La Prairie, 1996, Shaw and Dupois, 1995; Stephen et al, 1999). It is stated that a predominance of criminal activity is resultant of poverty and economic factors. Smaller crimes such as petty theft result more often in incarceration for Aboriginal people because of their inability to pay fines. This is also applicable with regard to the inability to post bail and incarceration for failure to appear in court. The predominance of these charges is reflected in provincial data as the penalty for such offences would most often result in incarceration periods of two years less a day. Aboriginal persons are also more likely to plead guilty to offences than to go to trial. This is attributed to the lack of expert legal representation because of monetary issues and to the fact that, often, Aboriginal people do not understand the legal process. It is documented that they plead guilty with the intent of terminating the process, that 'it will be over' (Faith, 1995; La Prairie, 1993; LaPrairie, 1996; McCaskill, 1985).

Federal statistics of types of offences show that Aboriginal persons are more likely to be incarcerated for manslaughter, than for first or second degree murder (LaPrairie,

1996). They are also over represented in charges of assault causing bodily harm (LaPrairie, 1996, Stephen et al, 1999). Non-Aboriginal persons are more likely to commit crimes which involve drug trafficking and firearms offences, while Aboriginal offenders are more often incarcerated for property crimes (LaPrairie, 1996).

Aboriginal Women

Aboriginal women in Federal institutions are more likely to be incarcerated for violent offences than non-Aboriginal women (York, in LaPrairie, 1996; Shaw and Dupois, 1995). Moreover, 77% of Aboriginal women, as opposed to 41.2 % of non-Aboriginal women were incarcerated for schedule one offences.¹ Aboriginal women are also more likely to have had previous convictions. While drug-related offences and property crimes are the most prevalent crimes for both groups on a provincial basis, Aboriginal women are more likely to commit property crimes (Faith, 1995; LaPrairie, 1996; Shaw and Dupois, 1995).

There is conflicting data regarding the proportion of women who have been involved in abusive relationships. While LaPrairie (1996) states that the statistics regarding sexual abuse show that there is no reported difference between Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal women, others disagree. Faith (1995) and McIvor (1993) suggest that Aboriginal women are more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have been the victims of both physical and sexual abuse. Sexual abuse has been identified as a

¹The following is a list of criminal offenses by category:

Murder	Schedule I	Schedule II
1 st Degree Murder	Manslaughter	Trafficking
2 nd Degree Murder	Attempted Murder	Import/Export
	Sex Assault	Cultivate
	Sex Involving a Child	Property
	Robbery	
	Arson	
	Kidnapping	
	Firearm	
	Injure	
	Prison Breach	

prevalent theme by Elders during Gatherings. Valdie Seymour (1996) of the Hollow Water First Nation reported his finding that approximately 93% of that community had been sexually abused and that 86% had perpetrated sexual assault at some level. McIvor (1993) notes that Aboriginal women have most often endured prolonged and systematic violence in their homes and communities. (Elder's Gatherings, 1997, 1998, 1999; Faith, 1995; La Prairie, 1996; McIvor, 1993; Valdie Seymour, 1996.)

Aboriginal Programming

The sparse information that is available on the subject is taken from inmate and prison personnel studies regarding programming for Aboriginal inmates. On some levels this information appears to be contradictory. While some research suggests that cultural activities and content are a primary issue, (Faith, 1995, Neechi Institute, 1995), other information suggests that it is not (LaPrairie, 1996). During interviews Aboriginal inmates and penal institution personnel focussed primarily on the 'how' of program delivery more than the 'what' of the subject matter. It was important, in their view, to deliver programs respectful of and inclusive of Aboriginal culture (LaPrairie, 1996). Therefore, the involvement of Elders is one of the priorities. Other data states that Aboriginal inmates are as inclined to attend programs led by non-Aboriginals as by Aboriginals (LaPrairie, 1996). A concern expressed by provincial Aboriginal inmates targeted the lack of programming as opposed to cultural content. There is evidence that the focus of most programming for Aboriginal persons is inclusive of cultural dynamics. A Federal penal institution in Saskatchewan for Aboriginal women, referred to as a 'healing lodge', incorporating traditional Aboriginal spiritual practices such as healing circles, the Sweatlodge and the Shaking Tent is an example of cultural interventions (Faith, 1995; LaPrairie, 1996; Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994, Interviews).

A document entitled Healing, Spirit and Recovery reports on a study of twenty Aboriginal persons who made dramatic changes in their lives. They identified the

following elements as instrumental in assisting them:

1. Quitting drinking/drugs,
2. Elders,
3. Spirituality and Culture,
4. Sick and tired,
5. A desire for a better life,
6. Native Brotherhood,
7. Correctional services staff, and
8. Other persons.

An area which is particularly pertinent to the issues addressed in this paper are the comments made respective of correction staff. An attitude of respect towards the inmates was of primary importance.. Focussing on the inmates' potential, and identifying positive attributes coupled with supportive and encouraging communication were also identified as instrumental to effecting change (Nechi Institute & KAS Corp. Ltd., 1994).

Social Work Programs For Women Within Correctional Institutions

Canadian literature regarding women inmates in correctional facilities has generally been based on a federal penitentiary, the Prison For Women located in Kingston, Ontario. Often, institutions do not recognize that women's needs are different than mens. The literature that does exist identifies that women's issues include contact with children, assertiveness and vocational training and more opportunity for the inmates to have input into program design and activities (Kendall, 1994; LaPrairie, 1996).

With reference to programming specific both to women and the issue of violence, the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional services convened a workshop (1998) involving service facilitators in provincial correctional facilities. They, in part, identified the main principles essential to effective programming as a holistic approach, acknowledging the unique needs of women and their life experience with abuse and violence, issues involved with victims as perpetrators, and the need for linkages with outside resource agencies. Kendall (1994) in her report about therapeutic programs in the

P4W (Prison For Women) in Kingston identified similar dynamics, categorizing them as feminist perspectives. She reported that the commitment of the therapists to the inmates coupled with the recognition of the impact of societal influences on the behaviors was instrumental in therapy having a positive influence for the women in the P4W in Kingston. Service providers involved with the Ministry workshop cited at the beginning of this paragraph identified the following principles as applicable in dealing with incarcerated women: "empowerment, meaningful and responsible choices about their lives, respect and dignity, supportive environment, and shared responsibility" (Minutes, 2). Incarcerated women represented in the video Twice Condemned (1994) (1994) exemplified these issues when they identified abuse issues as a primary reason contributing to their incarceration (Kendall, 1994; Ministry Workshop, 1999).

A theme of the literature concerns the belief that penal institutions emulate the power and control dynamics of abuse relationships. The institution has control over every aspect of life. The totality of the environment of the institution replicates the elements of abuse and is particularly damaging for women. Attempting to effect change and heal in such an environment is at best contradictory. The institution demonstrates an attitude that the inmates must not only take the responsibility to make changes in their lives but initiate those changes. Kendall terms this as "crazy making" (Kendall, 1994, 13) given the inmates lack of opportunity to identify and coordinate with resources. The expectations appear to be that those without skills are required to demonstrate skills in order to acquire skills (Kendall, 1994, LaPrairie, 1996; McIvor, 1994; Ministry Workshop, 1999).

A holistic approach to treatment is identified as one of the most significant elements of program content and design. This is consistent in addressing the dynamics identified as contributing to Aboriginal women being incarcerated. A holistic view is consistent with Aboriginal belief systems. It is difficult to isolate abuse and violence as a topic without considering its contexts and the range of factors. Alcoholism, unemployment and poverty are the primary issues identified by service providers and inmates related to violence and abuse. Other factors to consider are behaviors learned through family interaction methods, generational abuse and community standards and

expectations. Also, of serious significance is the dynamic of the victim as a perpetrator, along with recognizing the dangers of repressed anger. In addition, legitimizing women's issues and empowering women through raising self-esteem is seen as essential to rehabilitation. Support services need to encompass a wide range of topics, and a variety of activities including alternatives to talking and writing such as; music, art physical movement, sewing projects, and other forms of creative expression (Kendall, 1994; Ministry Workshop, 1999; Interviews KDJ1, 1998; PSP4, 1998; PSP5, 1999).

Collectivity

Lang (1986) and Young (1987) have attempted to differentiate between congregations and/or configurations of small gatherings of persons for social work purposes citing that the term 'group' was being used in a generic manner which lacked precise definition. The definition of 'group' and variations of 'groups' became central to their discussions. Attributes of a group were listed as (a) unity, (b) common goals, (c) shared norms, (d) communication, (e) interaction based on roles, (f) a sense of identity and (g) social structure. (Theodorson & Theodorson, 1969, in Lang, 1987) A primary group was depicted as having more intimacy, permanence and cohesion, functioning as a fundamental socialization and personality development agent. (Theodorson & Theodorson, 1969, in Lang, 1987)

Conversely, a collective does not embody the above stated dynamics. Lang identifies four types of collectivities: limited social form, intended social form, ongoing supportive context and small groups transformed into large collectives. Both Young and Lang categorize temporal, contextual, individual, professional and entiative variables as a means of assessing a collective. Temporal refers to time issues which may preclude the formation of a group. The participants may meet for too brief a time, or at too distant intervals. A gathering may remain a collective as opposed to forming a group because the meeting place may not facilitate the need appropriately. Individuality pertains to the attributes brought to the experience, whether enough competence and skill in relationship-

building exists to move beyond a collectivity to a group. Entitative variables refer to the ability to identify commonalities, shared values and norms as well as to perform processing and problem solving tasks. Without these skills a group will not form. Finally, professional involvement through control of content and/or process influences what form the gathering will take. Lang (1987) identifies a final category represented by the interaction of some or all of the above stated variables.

The social work significance of this material is to assist practitioners to assess 'group' functioning identifying elements that are required to help a group form, and/or adjust material and expectations appropriately to the formation that the gathering takes. In the instance that variables exist that preclude the formation of a group, the definitions lend understanding to functioning.

Aboriginal Intervention Strategies

The title used here is a misnomer in that traditional Aboriginal 'programming' would seldom incorporate this type of terminology. Their beliefs and values would use phraseology that involved terms such as 'healing', 'harmony', and 'teachings. However, given the purpose of this paper and with reference to the content of this section, 'intervention strategies' is an appropriate academic term.

Aboriginal healing methods incorporate a holistic view, based on an understanding that it is not possible to see the individual in isolation from the physical, spiritual, mental, and/or emotional environment.(Equay-Wuk, 1996; Hollowwater Conference, 1997; Ross, 1996; Sacred Tree, 1994; Solomon, 1992; Interviews E1, 1997-99; E2, 1997-99; PSP4, 1998) Therefore, recognizing the interrelationship of all contributing factors, human as well as environmental, is essential to program development and design. Personal responsibility is not discounted, but rather emphasized (Anishinabe Ikwe, Geraldton, no date; Equay-Wuk, 1996, Four Worlds International Institute, 1984; Four Worlds International Institute, 1988; New Directions In Health, 1992; Interviews: E1, 1987-1999; E2, 1996-99; Elder's Gatherings, 1997, 98, 99; Hollow Water Conference, 1997).

The role of the professional in traditional Native healing has a different perspective. The mainstream societal philosophy of a professional is virtually non-existent. Although the 'profession' may facilitate the program, resource and advocate on behalf of the participants and provide expert information there is purposeful absence of a hierarchical attitude or stance. Hart (1995) defines this as a mutual teacher and learner role. There is an assumption of mutuality, that the helper and the helped share the experience (Hampton et al, 1995 in Hart). Hart states the following attributes as central to being an Aboriginal Healer: "expunging the expert role, maintaining humility, demonstrating centeredness, acknowledging the spiritual, listening, being patient, using silence and speaking from the heart" (Hart, 1995, 69). Seldom can program personnel be identified from participants by dress code (Hollowwater Conference, Oct 97; Elders Gatherings, 1996-99). While on occasion presenters stand to be heard or to be more visible, a circle remains the most common form of presentation. This physical constellation does not recognize one person as a lead contributor and facilitates the inclusion of each person on a level of equality. It is recognized that all persons have special skills and abilities, therefore the professional is not viewed as better than, nor more important than other participants (Elder's Gatherings, 1996, '97, '98; Four Worlds International Institute, 1988; Hollow Water Conference, 1997; Interviews: E1, 1987-1999; E2, 1996-99; New Directions In Health, 1992).

Aboriginal healing and teachings are often presented in story form. Migisi Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre (Interview PSP6, 1997) incorporates the use of a story board in their programming. This activity facilitates several elements of traditional Aboriginal program design. Participants are requested to identify the important events in their lives and to explain the impact of those events. They create the story of their lives. This can be done through a variety of methods. Collages, drawings, writing are encouraged as well as any other form that the participant can devise. Creativity is encouraged as long as the presentation style is comfortable. The story board is presented to peers and appropriate staff. As opposed to other treatment modalities, the client identifies and interprets significant events and their consequential impact on life behaviors. Identifying and listing

incidents through labelling techniques is not an element of this activity; the participant tells his/her story devoid of professional interpretation. This facilitates a holistic accounting of life events, and allows the participants to express themselves through the medium in which they are most comfortable. Participants are made aware that a condition of employment as a counsellor at Migisi is the completion of the program as a client. Counsellors involved with a participant can interact on a personal basis and there is an absence of hierarchical positioning or posturing. This approach is indicative of traditional Aboriginal healing methodologies (Interview, PSP 6, 1997, Hart, 1995).

Aboriginal programs often emphasize positive activities as opposed to concentrating on negative behaviors. The Hollow Water program designed to address sexual abuse and family violence is termed Community Holistic Circle Healing (Hollow Water Conference, 1997). Equay-Wuk's programming, designed to address family violence and abuse, focusses on appropriate behavior and effective communication rather than on identifying the elements of abusive relationships directly. This is also demonstrated in an undated publication by the Anishinabe Ikwe (Aboriginal women) of Geraldton, Ontario. These are three examples of this prevalent and common approach. Members of the Elders' Advisory Committee of the Aboriginal Healing & Wellness Strategy project at Kenora Anishinaabe-Kweg Aboriginal Women's Organization advocated these program development dynamics consistently throughout that project (Advisory Committee Meetings, 1996-99; Equay-Wuk, 1996; Interviews: PSP4, Spring, 1997)

The Circle is an extremely important concept in Aboriginal Healing. Antoine & Hill (1990) in their article "Guidelines for Talking Circles" state that the purpose of circles is to create a safe environment for people to share. The Anishinabe Ikweg (Aboriginal women) of Geraldton, Ontario, in their booklet designed to assist Aboriginal women to heal violence and abuse through traditional Aboriginal methods stated that the goal of the Circle is to "heal the inner self"(no date, P6).

As a physical organization, the circle creates an atmosphere of equality. There is no position within the circle that is physically more important; there is no concept of a

beginning and end as represented by a line between two points in linear thinking, nor is there past or future, only present. All directions are visible; there is nothing behind, nor is there anything ahead that is unseen or hidden from view. (Four Worlds International Institute, 1988; E1, 1987-1999; E2, 1996-1999; E3, 1998; Hart, 1995)

Concepts regarding the circle vary (Hart, 1995). Some sources differentiate between types of circles while others do not (Hart, 1995 Interviews, E1, 1987-1999; E2, 1996-1999; E4, 1998-1999). The dynamics of the circle are described as a place to learn, listen, share, teach, touch and heal (Anishinabe Ikweg). The ethics of non-interference and respect are practised in the circle. Each person has the opportunity to speak without interruption, the giving of advice, or pressure to share should they wish to remain silent divulging only information they wish to discuss. Participants are asked, in some instances, to listen intently to the words of other participants. In other instances, participants may be urged to speak with Creator. In all cases a sense of shared emotions and feelings exists. Circles can be opened by holding hands while (a) praying, (b) with sacred bundles, (c) with herbal medicines, (d) with song(s), and (e) with Elder's presents. The Anishinaabe Ikwe of Geraldton identified the following beliefs which form the manner in which the circle is conducted: (a) the Circle belongs to all participants and is to be respected and honoured; (b) each person shares in turn whatever they choose to speak of and (c) only if they wish to share; no one interrupts; (d) confidentiality is a must.

Antoine & Hill (1990 in Hart, 1995) have identified four levels of circles. Level one is a talking circle in which the participants become aware of original hurts; level two incorporates a high degree of trust facilitating the expression of painful emotions; level three represents working through painful experiences in an atmosphere of trust in receiving spiritual and/or intuitive messages; and level four circles exist at a level in which spiritual gifts are reclaimed intuitively through cultural teachings and practices. Other sources (Interviews, E1, 1987 - 1999; E2, 1996 - 1999; E5 1997 - 1998) have suggested three types of circles; talking, sharing and Sacred. A talking circle would parallel the type one circle; a sharing circle would parallel level two dynamics. The Sacred Circle could include any of the circles described by Antoine & Hill (1990). A Sacred Circle requires

the presence of an Elder and of ceremony. The attendance of the Elder implies that their special gifts, strengths and knowledge will be shared with the group. All circles share the belief that Spirit (Creator, God) is present and hears the issues being presented. Emotion may be expressed through screaming, crying, yelling or the making of sounds appropriate to the emotions expressed. Hand drums, rattles and singing are often used within a circle. Information shared does not necessarily address negative emotional feelings. Gratitude is consistently expressed (Antoine & Hill, 1990; Clarkson, Hart, 1995; Interviews: E1, 1987-1999; E2, 1996-99; E4, 1997; E5, 1997; Morrisette, Regallet, 1992).

Hart (1995) quotes that dignity, unity, acceptance, respect and harmony are characteristics of the circle. Regnier (1994 in Hart) states that the circle allows participants to overcome isolation, exclusion, alienation, and a loss of identity.

Violence Against Women

A Statistics Canada study (November 1993) assessed the occurrence of violence against women. The following are dynamics from that report. One-half of Canadian woman have experienced at least one act of violence after they turned sixteen; one-quarter of the occurrences were committed by current or past partners; one-half of women in terminated marriages reported incidents of violence by previous partners while one sixth reported violence in current marriages. One in ten incidents of reported violence included fear of being killed. Violence by the male's father resulted in a three times greater risk of violence to their partners. Finally six out of ten Canadian woman are afraid of walking alone after dark (Anderson, 1998).

Defining violence is a complex task. Funk and Wagnall's Standard College Dictionary states violence to be, in part, "1. the quality or state of being violent; intensity; fury; 2. an instance of violent action, treatment, etc; 3. Violent or abusive exercise of power; injury, outrage; 4. *Law* Physical force unlawfully exercised; an act tending to intimidate or overawe by causing apprehension of bodily injury." (Funk & Wagnall, 1982, p 1496). In an attempt to define the concept of violence Suma Chitnis describes the

"essence of violence - a feeling of violation, of the transgression of what is considered to be human" (Chitnis, 1998, p 15). The term, in and of itself, implies a victim, and a victimizer, also known as a perpetrator, or abuser; force, and an action resulting in some form of unnatural pain. It is noted that violence has a cultural interpretation. Activities accepted as cultural norms in one nation are interpreted as atrocities in another (Chitnis, 1998; Funk & Wagnall, 1982).

Changing cultural norms is discussed with regard to the historic rise of the recognition of violence against women as an inappropriate act. The rule of thumb in England which allowed men to beat their wives with a rod no thicker than their thumb clearly endorsed physical punishment of wives. The concept that men should have dominance over their wives, and use physical force if necessary to bring her into line, remains a current phenomenon. For some, it continues to define a man. This attitude is so prevalent that members of the judiciary have been chastised in recent years for commentary within the court room alluding to the acceptance of men exerting physical authority over women (Brown, Bicknell-Danaher, & Nelson- Fitzpatrick, 1991; Pressman, 1989; NiCarthy, Merriam, Coffman, 1984).

Central to abuse is an element of secrecy. Children are told not to tell as are wives. Shame and guilt are an ever present dynamic used to enforce the secret. Another damning element of abuse is the blaming of women and/or children for their ill treatment. Abusers contend that the victim's behavior forced them to take abusive actions. While this sounds absurd on the surface, counsellors ask women what they did to cause their partners to become so angry or violent. The question asked of abused women as to why they stayed is indicative of that attitude. The question should be, why has society allowed the man to stay (Cadieux, 1994; Loxley Hall, 1994; Ghaswala, 1998, Jones, 1980; Morag, 1994; McGrae Vander Voet, 1998).

A blunting of emotion and loss of self-esteem often occurs as the result of being abused. Women become despondent and depressed. Counsellors and therapists have termed this as learned helplessness; despair that nothing can change or help the situation. Woman become depressed, apathetic, and despondent (Anderson, 1998; Nicarthy,

Merriam & Coffman, 1984; Pressman, 1989). Their helplessness may be more accurate than most of society would want to know. The advent of shelters for woman has assisted many women to leave. However, it is well documented that the most dangerous stage of abusive relationships is after the woman has left (Jones, 1980, Hoff, 1990). As is expertly explained in the videos When Woman Kill and Hostages At Home (1994) (1994) the batterer's sense of self-worth is deeply invested in the control of the spouse. Losing her represents losing the meaning in life and is simply not acceptable. Woman who leave are often stalked by their previous partners and under constant threat. Too often, they are maimed and/or killed. Although society in general appears to believe that women could leave the situation if they really wanted to, the reality for many women is that, in fact, they cannot (Cadieux, 1994; Loxley Hall, 1994; Jones, 1980; Morag, 1994; McGrae Vander Voet, 1998).

The introduction of feminist theory changed the interpretation of family violence. Whereas women were seen as sick or pathologized by both medicine and psychiatry, feminist theory introduced data legitimizing women's response to the impact of abuse on the women. (Pressman, 1989) Feminist theorists emphasized the power dynamics of abuse: the loss of identity and self esteem, the lack of resources at their disposal and the inability to access resource due to financial and physical restraints imposed by the abuse. Abuse began to be interpreted in economic and societal terms. Some theorists began to identify societal power and control dynamics as the roots of abuse, that domestic violence is societal violence acted out in the home (Anderson, 1998; Jones, 1980; McGrae Vander Voet, 1989; Pressman, 1989). The legal system, media, education institutions, and religious doctrines were cited as sources of institutional power which perpetuate violence against women. The cutbacks to services for women and children by the Harris government have been cited as indicators of institutional violence (Hoff, 1990; McGrae Vander Voet, 1998; Pressman, 1989).

Institutional violence is evidenced in the legal system in numerous ways. Even in the light of zero tolerance legislation little attention is given to women's reports of spousal violence. Minimum sentences which represent no more than a 'slap on the wrist' are given

in many cases of spousal abuse; fines are levied by judges which punish the family equally or more than the abuser; offenders are released on restraining orders which fail to provide any protection for their victims (Brown et al, 1991; Jones, 1980 McGrae Vander Voet, 1998). Many women prefer to remain silent rather than to endure the process involved in laying charges and testifying in court. The adversarial system and rules of evidence provide more protection to the perpetrator and appear to be 'stacked against' victims, particularly in the case of sexual abuse. This is crucially applicable to cases involving abuse to a child. The dynamics of child sexual abuse dictate that the abuse occurs in isolation. It is the child's word against the adults. Without corroborating evidence, usually medical, there is little chance that charges will be laid and that the case will even come to court. Perhaps the most glaring instance of abuse by the legal community is the failure of the legal system to recognize the right of women to defend themselves against sexual and physical assault. Counter-charges of manslaughter and murder are often laid in cases where women killed their attackers. Violence by women is so unacceptable in the court system that self-defense has been pathologized as "the Battered Women's Syndrome." It is simply inconceivable that a woman could kill a man in self-defence and be rational (Jones, 1980; McGrae Vander Voet, 1998; Pressman, 1989).

Current issues in counselling or treatment regarding abusive relationships have primarily centered on a recognition of power and control dynamics in a cycle of violence. Relationships go through a period of good times, followed by the building of tension, culminating in acts of abuse. Guilt and remorse are expressed, the relationship enters a honeymoon phase of good times to be followed with the building of tension and another act of violence. This cycle is usually repeated many times in abusive relationships unless there is some form of intervention. (Jones, 1980; Loxley Hall, 1994; NiCarthy, Merriam & Coffman, 1984; Pressman, 1989).

Aspects of the literature focussing on recovery and healing stress that in order to address the horrors of abuse, women need to be in a place of safety and to recognize that they are not the cause of their own abuse. Ending the secrecy of abuse is vital. Denial and minimizing the severity of the abuse is common and victims often need support to confront

the reality in which they have existed. Self esteem must be built or restored. This can occur through helping the person to recognize that they are not alone; identifying and enhancing strengths, skills, and a sense of competence; assisting in developing an understanding of societal pressures and conditions; and creating an awareness of the origins of demeaning attitudes, values and belief systems towards the self. Women also need ways to grieve the loss of the trust and respect in the relationship, and to express repressed rage, anger and hurt without creating feelings of being unloyal and unfeminine (Bass & Davis, 1998; Jones, 1980; Loxley Hall, 1994; NiCarthy, Merriam & Coffman, 1984; Martens, 1988; Native Counselling Services of Alberta, no date; Pressman, 1989).

Involuntary Clients

Ivanoff, Blythe & Tripodi (1994) identify two basic categories of involuntary clients: mandated groups and nonvoluntary groups. Mandated groups are court ordered, whereas nonvoluntary groups involve an element of coercion by family, friends, employers, and social service agencies. Participants of nonvoluntary groups can, in a manner, be classified as participating on a voluntary basis, however most often participants avoid jail sentences or some negative consequences by attending such groups.

It is noted that both classifications of involuntary groups represent social control groups (Garvin in Ivanoff et al, 1994). Behroozi (1992) notes that involuntary participation violates social work ethics in that self-determination and respect for the worth and growth of the persons is not respected. The dynamics of working within these groups had little differentiation.

The literature predominantly focuses on overcoming client resistance and motivating clients to reinterpret their behavior in a different, and more socially acceptable perspective (Ivanoff et al, 1994; Behroozi, 1992). Power and control issues are recognized as occurring frequently between the participant(s) and the group leaders. Mangrum (1976) and Ivanoff et al, (1994), in discussing social work with participants involved in the criminal justice systems, stated that it was unreasonable to expect

voluntary participation on the part of mandated prisoners and parolees.

In the working relationship, emphasis is concentrated on assisting the participant to recognize their power and responsibility in making choices (Behroozi, 1992; Berliner, in Ivanoff et al, 1994). Clearly, defining boundaries, roles and rules was considered essential to achieving a working relationship with participants (Ivanoff et al, 1994; Mangrum, 1976 in Ivanoff et al, 1994). Acknowledging the resistance and lack of desire to be part of the group was also considered to be vital (Ivanoff et al, 1994; Behroozi, 1992). Behroozi (1992) found that identifying the source of reluctance to be involved was central to effective practice.

Social Work Theory - Strength Perspective

The Strength Perspective, as indicated by the title, focusses on the strengths that clients or participants possess as opposed to concentrating on their deficits. A basic component of this perspective is the belief that social work is designed to assist people in relating to and communicating with society, promoting social and economic justice. (Cowger, 1994) Cowger (1994) and Holmes (1997) discuss that all social work involves political action; further, they propose that the Strength Perspective is a form of empowering clientele within the social structure. Holmes (1997) proposes that the older model of social work, termed the "deficit/pathology model" because it focuses on problems and weaknesses, maintains the societal status quo.(Holmes, 1997, 152) Cowger suggests that social work based on assessment of client deficits negates the role of society and social structures with relation to the problems presented.

A major component of the Strength Perspective is assessment. Cowger (1994) refers to two themes in assessment: personal empowerment and social empowerment. He notes that these two elements are interrelated, that personal empowerment is interdependent on the ability to access resources. Social empowerment increases opportunities to share in resources.

The attitude of the social worker in assessment is key. Holmes (1997) discusses

this element in terms of allowing the client to tell his/her story and honouring the interpretations and meanings attributed to the interactions, without alteration. The worker does not look for hidden meanings and reinterpret the meanings consistent with a particular societal context or concept. Cowger (1994) lists the following attributes of assessment: "(1) give preeminence to the client's understanding of the facts, ...(2) believe the client,... (3) discover what the client wants, ...(4) move the assessment toward personal and environmental strengths, ...(5) make assessments of strengths multidimensional, ...(6) use the assessment to discover uniqueness,... (7) use language the client can understand,... (8) make assessment a joint activity between worker and client,... (9) reach a mutual agreement on the assessment, ...(10) avoid blame and blaming, ...(11) avoid cause-and-effect thinking, ... and (12) assess, do not diagnose". Kishardt echoes these strategies advocating a holistic approach to assessment of client strengths: an attitude of mutuality and partnership between the "consumer and case manager" (Kishardt, 1997, 98) with the consumer directing the process; the belief that all persons have the capacity for change; and that the helping process occurs in the community, as opposed to a building, utilizing all the available resources.

Cowger (1994) refers to the state of "clienthood" perpetuated by the deficit/pathology model as having a connotation of the client being weak and/or deviant, assigning them a devalued and marginalized status in society. He visualizes the Strength Perspective as unseating the power of the social worker by negating the status of clienthood and therefore the power of the social worker. The person seeking services is accorded equal status; their interpretation of events is given credence; and their positive attributes are identified and accentuated. The client's account of their experience must not be detached from environmental and sociological contexts. If the professional is listening to detect pathology then the client's story is not truly heard nor assessed as they related it.

Finally Homes (1997) identifies that the Strength Perspective embodies a formidable task for social workers attempting to embrace it. He suggests the Strength Perspective primarily as a new vision and attitude that the worker carries into the totality of their work environment.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this practicum is to answer the question: "How does the milieu of the Kenora District Jail affect the implementation of the Walking a New Path program: a program to provide incarcerated women with information about violence and abuse?"

Answering this question requires the exploration of the following:

1. The concept of the milieu of the Kenora District jail for the purposes of this practicum;
2. The regulations, activities and procedures are involved in the implementation of the Walking a New Path program;
3. The target population, program content, and intervention strategy of the Walking a New Path program.

Milieu is defined in the Concise Oxford dictionary as "environment, state of life, social surroundings. " It is the appropriate term for the purposes of this practicum as this concept encompasses the Kenora District Jail in it's entirety: the physical facility, the personnel, and the perceived 'emotional atmosphere', as well as the functions of the facility. "State of life" is appropriate terminology as it implies emotional atmosphere and well being.

The following segments address in detail the above stated subjects.

The Kenora District Jail

Exterior Physical Facility

The Kenora District Jail is located on the eastern outskirts, but within the limits of the town of Kenora. It is a partially a two-storey orange brick building. More modern building materials, concrete blocks painted shades of brown, were added to the original structure demonstrating that the facility has been renovated at some time in the past. The facility itself is immediately surrounded with well kept lawns including large trees and shrubs, parking facilities and some smaller buildings. The institution is further bordered by a small area of unkept grass and bushes leading to the highway, a lake, and a semi-

business and residential area which includes a motel. There is no fencing around the facility itself. The two outside areas that facilitate movement of inmates, the exercise yard and the entry / departure doors, are surrounded by chain-linked fence topped with barbed wire.

Function

The Kenora District Jail is a provincial penal institution serving many functions. It is 'home' to both men and women being incarcerated for numerous reasons. One of the functions of the Kenora Jail is to act as a holding facility for persons who have criminal proceedings pending. Inmates housed there may be awaiting bail hearings and/or have been denied bail; they may be awaiting pretrial, the actual trial and/or all of the previously listed circumstances. The charges that they are held for can range from first degree murder to minor offences. This institution also houses persons sentenced for minimal charges and those who serve their time on weekends. Many of the inmates incarcerated in this institution are sentenced for a period of incarceration of two years less a day. However, this is not necessarily an accurate description for two reasons. Prisoners can be detained in the Kenora District Jail while waiting for transfer to Federal facilities. Women inmates sentenced to terms of imprisonment longer than six months are often transferred to other facilities which offer more programs. The institution also has a section which houses young offenders. They are held entirely separate from the adult inmates and occupy the newer, renovated section of the jail.

All these conditions result in an extremely diversified and highly transitory population. The type of criminal offence for which a woman may be incarcerated here is as widely varied as the criminal code permits.

Internal Facility and Initial Implementation of the Walking A New Path Program

To briefly return to the context of this material, this practicum grew out of an existing project, the Walking A New Path program. A large body of knowledge and experience regarding the impact of the jail setting on program delivery was accumulated previous to the implementation of the actual practicum. Because much of the information forms the building blocks and cornerstones for program development, content, and delivery, the following outline describes those early experiences to set the stage for the practicum. Before going into a detailed description of the areas of the Kenora District Jail that we accessed, it is appropriate to discuss a general overview of the internal facility.

The institution was built to hold approximately ninety persons. On occasions this institution has housed fewer than forty and as many as one hundred and thirty inmates. The Kenora District Jail is a provincial maximum security facility. In part, this means that the inmates are afforded the least amount of privacy experienced within penal institutions. The "doors" are bars. There is virtually no privacy. The Kenora District Jail facility offers minimal programming or recreation. The facilities that are available, a gym and weight room, are currently not accessed by the adult inmates due to a lack of personnel. This has been attributed to budget cutbacks as there are not enough personnel to escort and supervise the inmates in these areas while maintaining essential services. As a result the majority of inmates sentenced to terms of more than six months are transferred to other facilities.

An examination of the internal physical facility and access to it is instrumental to understanding the impact of the Kenora District Jail on delivery of the Walking A New Path program. The jail has several components including the following: administrative offices, a young offenders area, a section which houses male inmates, a section for the female inmates, a laundry area, a kitchen area, and the reception area.

The following information is presented in a conversational format to assist the reader to 'experience' the jail setting and, therefore have a deeper appreciation of the data regarding the impact of the setting.

The first step involved in gaining access to the Kenora District Jail is to sign in at the module immediately inside the front doors. A sign-in sheet on a clipboard is passed through a 'stainless steel box' with a sliding top. We (the Elder and facilitator) sign in giving our names, printed and signature, purpose, and the time of our entry into the facility. We are advised that the guard on duty in the module will record the time that we leave.

As an observer, it becomes apparent that it is from this module that jail personnel control entry into the womb of the facility. Approximately the bottom one-third of the wall of the module is consists of painted cement blocks. The top two-thirds is bullet-proof glass. There is a metal ledge where the glass and cement meet, approximately twenty inches wide and three feet long, for people to write on, etc. On the external wall of the module on each side of the ledge are curious looking objects. We are informed that the round barrel-like item on the left is used by police officers to discharge their weapons. The small lock boxes on the right are specifically for police officers to store their weaponry - guns, bullets, night stick, etc. I am allowed to store my keys in one.

One guard commands this post which appears to be the hub of the institution. (Over time, one of the truly bright spots of delivering the program is the cheerful disposition of the guard who most often is assigned to this duty.) No one, including the guards, move past this position without his knowledge and approval as he commands the controls to the electronically controlled doors. The module contains a battery of monitors which show sections of the jail, cupboards of keys, and telephones which are constantly ringing. We are instructed by this guard to sit on the bench and to wait. It is apparent that although we have signed a contract with the institution and have developed a time schedule in consultation with the program coordinator and Acting Superintendent, we will not be adhering to the agreed schedule. We are informed that as soon as the guards are available to escort us to the activity dorm we will be allowed to enter. I begin to wonder what will happen to the program agenda. How will we introduce the information that was scheduled for today? It is obvious that program content will need to be flexible.

We are informed that they are now ready for us to enter and we are escorted

through the many doors and up the stairs to the activities room. Let me take you on that journey.

There are three electronically controlled doors that are monitored by the personnel in the module. A 'buzzing sound' indicates that the buttons have been pressed which allow the door(s) to open. They are heavy steel doors and require quite an effort to move. Proceeding through the first door allows entry into a small control corridor about ten feet long with another heavy steel door immediately ahead. This is a 'holding area'. Without exception, the second door will not be opened until the first door is closed. To proceed beyond the second door you must be accompanied by a guard or other jail personnel. Turning left allows access to the program coordinator's office and the area where young offenders are housed. To proceed to the area which holds the women inmates one turns right and faces the third electronically controlled door. Again, you can not move through it without the personnel in the module allowing access. After passing through that door you are in another wider corridor which holds the 'I.C.'s (officer in charge) desk. Within this corridor there is also a doorway for inmates to access their side of the visitors area and doorways to offices. Giselle Spryzak, program coordinator for the jail and our immediate contact, is waiting for us in this area. A guard with a radio device informs guards at post five that we are on our way and we move to the end of that corridor, turn right and enter another much wider corridor which contains three stairways: two going up in opposing directions and one going down. We are escorted up the set of stairs directly in front of us. Another guard station, post five, which consists of a small table with a chair is to the left of the top of the stairs. This is the guard whose duty it is to "watch over us". We are briefly introduced and are now escorted by Giselle Spryzak, the original officer that left the I.C. area with us, and the second guard that we have just met. We take a few steps forward through a previously locked door of iron bars, immediately turn right, and take about five or six more steps. The women's dormitory is immediately in front of us. We turn left and enter the activities dorm, again through a door of 'bars'.

The program dorm contains six stools which are permanently fixed to the floor, in front of two counter tops that are fixed to the wall. A television is bolted to a shelf on the

wall above one of the counter sections at a height of approximately six and one-half feet. There is no permanent fixture to hold the VCR. Because it is portable, and not permanently affixed, it must be returned and removed from the room for each session. The location of the T.V. requires that the viewer sit with their neck and shoulders in an uncomfortable backward tilt. The sound is also muffled and hard to understand, presumably because of the location. The room has two outside windows made from approximately four inch squares of heavy glass which cannot be seen through. Both of these windows are heavily barred and contain a smaller window of approximately one square foot. The smaller windows can be seen through and open for air exchange. One looks out over the exercise yard which is surrounded by a chain link fence topped with barbed wire; also in view are a parking lot, other small buildings and a lake which is adjacent to the building. The other window overlooks adjacent lawn, shrubbery, the highway and a small section of bush. There is a partition, approximately four and one-half feet high and eight feet long on one side of the activities dorm which protects a bathtub, sink, and toilet from view. Program participants often use this while group is underway. The floor is made of cold four inch squares of brown tile. Chairs are sometimes brought into the room for the group. The audio of the television in the women's dorm can be easily heard in this room.

This 'trip' is not a surprise to me as I have accessed the activities area previously to attend a program which occurs in the evening. However, the atmosphere 'feels' more rigid, more restricted. As I experienced the jail throughout the implementation of the practicum, it became obvious that the day time schedule proves more challenging for all concerned. This is due to the increase of duties and activities required of the personnel to facilitate visitor and inmate movement. This is my first cue that we may constitute a 'problem' for the guards as the program creates extra work. It is probable that the jail personnel will have limited time to facilitate our movement and needs because of other duties and tasks. This will result in time constraints and periods of waiting for resources and movement.

The equipment that we requested, a VCR and a flipchart, is being set up as we

enter. One of the guards speaks to the women in the dorm as to whether they would like to attend our program, describing it from his understanding. It is immediately apparent that there is little to no control over how the program or we as facilitators will be introduced to potential participants. We are totally at the mercy of the interpretations of the guard. I begin to move towards the women's dorm but am restricted from doing so. The guard's tone of voice in advising me that I cannot move to that location is extremely authoritative, and I freeze in my place. (This is described, not to fault the guard, for he was acting appropriately. It is included to give definition to the lack of mobility and the necessity for planning each and every move in detail prior to making it). If I wish to address the women as to what the program is, I will have to request that I be allowed to move the eight or ten feet from the activities room to the front of the women's dorm and that request may or may not be granted at the discretion of the guard. We are fortunate that Giselle Spryzak, the institution program coordinator, is there to correctly interpret the program to the prospective participants. It feels strange not to be accorded credibility. It is apparent that as program facilitators we are guests in the facility and have no authority over movement, and/or activities.

The next step of the journey highlights again to the ability to function effectively in the jail setting. Everything will require permission. The women have entered the room. The door has been locked. We wish to smudge - a sacred traditional Native practice of burning a small amount of sacred plants, purifying the body, mind and spirit by 'bathing' in the 'smoke'. We have been told that smudging is allowed, however, we are not prepared for the procedure which is entailed. We must request that the guard turn the fan on, and later, request that it be turned off. However, the guard is not there. He has other duties to attend to and does not remain stationary at the post. We are advised by the participants that if one wishes to speak to a guard it is necessary to yell. Therefore, we yell for the guard and wait. Once the fan is turned on we find that it is extraordinarily loud and intrusive. It is almost impossible to hear. Oddly enough, this seems to be of some comfort to the women, a possible source of privacy. The loudness of the noise of the fan is the only buffer from the voices carrying into the women's dorm and to the guards. How

can there be any discussion of anything which is sensitive or private in this atmosphere? There is a feeling of being on display. The expectations of the depth of sharing that might occur are already modified. Not only will we be working with women who are not inclined to trust anyone, we will be working in an atmosphere that is completely designed to be visually and verbally inspected at all times.

I will later be advised that all provincial institutions in Ontario are maximum security institutions. There will be no discussions behind closed doors. There will not be even an illusion of privacy. We will constantly be open to the surveillance of the guards.

The learning from this experience and the effect on the program development and implementation will be discussed in further detail in the chapter entitled Theme Analysis. I will end this segment by stating that it is impossible to describe the impact of losing ones ability to move from one area to another without constant supervision and permission. This was perhaps the first and foremost impact of the institutional milieu.

Sessional Content

Previous to detailing each of the sessions, it is expedient to discuss the overall design of the Walking A New Path program outlined as follows:

The Walking A New Path Program Design

The Walking A New Path program occurred on Thursdays beginning in the fall of 1998. The program is continuing at this time. The actual dates that the practicum occurred will not be reported here to preserve the confidentiality of the participants as well as that of the Kenora District Jail personnel. The sessions have been numbered for identification purposes.

Each session followed the same basic program agenda with the following scheduled activities:

Morning session from 9:30 am to 11:30 pm.

1. Introduction of program content and program facilitator(s).
2. Opening with smudging in a Sharing Circle.²
3. Heart Cards: Participants were encouraged to draw from a choice of positive message cards and read the message if they wished to. If they chose to they could remark on the contents of the card and/or how they were feeling. This occurred while still in a circle grouping.
4. Video: (when equipment was available) The participants only choice of material was that which was presented by the facilitator. On some occasions there were several to choose from, on other occasions only one video was available. Participants were invited by the facilitator to request any videos which they would like to see, but no material was identified. In the instance that a video was not possible due to the lack of a VCR, alternatives were presented. Participants were asked if they had a subject that they would like to discuss. Written material also was kept available to aid in discussions or to provide topics.
5. Discussion of the video contents: This again occurred in the Sharing Circle format. Participants were asked to share/discuss regarding the contents of the video.
6. Inspirational handouts were made available.

Afternoon Session from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

1. Initially the afternoons consisted of group discussion and/or one-on-one sessions. Later, the program content was altered in consultation with the personnel of the Kenora District Jail at our request. This was done to meet

² Concern was expressed as to whether the program represented a circle or a collective. After consideration, it was thought that neither of these terms was entirely appropriate; that the term "circle" in the context of traditional Aboriginal healing more appropriately describe the function.

needs that were already identified as a result of the impact of the jail on program content. This information will be reported in the Theme Analysis chapter.

2. After program changes the participants were provided a choice of the following:
 - 2.1 One-on-one and/or group discussions. When two facilitators were present, it was possible to provide both a group experience or a one-on-one (provided that interview rooms were available). When only one facilitator was present, the time period was expanded and one-on-one discussions were facilitated after the group experience, again under the provision that interview rooms were available.
 - 2.2. Music
 - 2.3 Working with clay
 - 2.4. The Wave: moving meditation activity in the gymnasium

At the beginning of each session, during the introduction, the participants were informed of the practicum project. It was explained that no information had been provided to the facilitators regarding the women. This included their names, the reason for incarceration, length of sentence, and/or any concerns that may be held by the personnel of the institution. It was further articulated that although notes would be made regarding each session, and that material from the session would be referenced in the practicum report, their names would not and could not be included. Participants were also advised that the facilitator(s) were required to adhere to the rules of the institution; that the rules would not be broken as this would jeopardize the existence of the program. Confidentiality was explained. It was requested that information shared during the sessions would remain private. However, they were informed that as facilitators we were not exempt from testifying. It was also stated that we had an ethical obligation to report information concerning criminal activities and that as such, it would be unwise and inappropriate to discuss criminal activities.

Participation in the program was voluntary.³ In consultation with the program coordinator of the jail it was decided that the facilitator of the Walking A New Path program would not be provided information regarding potential participants.

At this point it is useful to define the terminology which will be used during this discussion. When the program originated there were two facilitators, however, the Aboriginal Elder was unable to keep her commitment to the project on a consistent basis. This accounts for the variance of terminology referring to both 'we' and 'I' when describing the practicum experience. When referring to the writer within the institutional setting this paper uses the terms 'program facilitator' and 'counsellor'. 'Jail', 'institution', 'facility', 'penal institution' will be used to refer to the Kenora jail. 'Personnel' refers to the guards as well as all other employees within the jail itself. On occasion the 'program coordinator' from the Kenora District Jail will be referred to by that title. The word 'group', will be used to describe the gathering of women inmates. There will be discussion as to the accuracy of the term 'group' as it is used specific to social work dynamics. However, as it is the predominant word used to describe a gathering of persons, it will be used in the general sense of the word throughout this discussion of methodology.

³ There was discussion that although participants attended the Walking A New Path program on a voluntary basis the dynamics of involuntary clients was applicable. While it is true that incarcerated women are not present in the jail of their own volition, this is beyond the intended dynamics of involuntary clients. Court ordered programs occur outside of penal institutions as well as within them. The pertinent variable is not residence within the penal institution, but an order by the court to attend. No participants were ordered to attend this program. Neither is coercion applicable as the Walking a New Path program did not report attendance of participants.

Sessionals

Session One

Participation

Attendance:	1			
No. of women in the jail this day:	11			
No. of repeat participants:	1			
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	1	Non-Aboriginal	0

Materials

VCR:	No
Flipchart:	Yes

Program content and goals

Morning:

There was only one participant. The client led the discussion regarding her experiences and needs. As we were aware that she would be discharged soon we emphasised safety plans to prepare her for outside.

Afternoon:

No afternoon session.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. It is easy and potentially problematic to be led off topic into areas which our program is not designed to address; ie current needs within the correctional facility (These needs can be addressed by workers from NeChee Friendship Centre including also discharge plans. The discussion of safety issues is on target while addressing abuse issues, however care must be taken not to become involved in instrumental issues. Identification of appropriate

community resources is both advisable and feasible.

Participant:

1. Our program had boundaries which we would/could not cross; a duplication of services only serves to confuse helping agencies and to use up valuable time.

Solutions

- 1) Be more conscious of participant's discussion topic(s) and the boundaries of the program discussion arena. Reinforce this during introduction each day by discussing what issues the project addresses.

Session Two

Participation

Attendance:	4			
No. of women in the jail this day:	12			
No. of repeat participants:	4			
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal	0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	Yes

Program content and goals

Morning:

The video Twice Condemned (1994) was shown. The main purpose was to assist the participants in identifying anger as it might arise within a correctional institution; and to make connections between the power and

control issues within the institution and the similarities of power and control issues in abusive behaviours in childhood and spousal interactions. The second goal was to connect the anger, depression, helplessness, hopelessness felt in behaviours which lead to incarceration.

Afternoon:

Introduction of The Wave, (1993) a moving meditation for stress and tension relief.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. The attendance and dynamics of the participant's interactions are significantly affected by the dynamics within the women's dorm. As a facilitator I will have no prior knowledge of those interactions. In some respects these incarcerated women represent family dynamics; further the guards and jail personnel are also a part of that "social family". Although they are a diverse group with a wide variety of experiences and geographical roots, they share the commonality of the same space on a daily basis. Laundry duty is a way to escape the pressures/noise of the dorm.
2. Discussion regarding anger reinforced the belief that it is essential to implement emotional release mechanisms into the program.
3. I am concerned about the impact of the video. Participants were very sombre after viewing it.
4. Showing the video of the moving meditation interested the participants. However, despite the words in the video, they express concerns that they won't do well. Possibly, I should have omitted the video and only played the audio in the gymnasium.

Participant:

1. One of the stated learnings from one participant was that they would never

allow themselves to "get that bad" with reference to the women in the video (Twice Condemned (1994)).

2. Participants identified with the anger in the institution and the lack of ability to express it. It was expected that in a long period of incarceration they would do time in segregation because of outbursts of anger. Some identified that a period of segregation was a relief from the constant interaction in the dorm. It was also stated that on occasion inmates requested to be placed in segregation.

Solutions:

1. Be more cognizant of the dynamics between the participants. Attempt to identify more stress relief activities.
2. Introduce the audio of the moving meditation in the gym without showing the video.

Session Three

Participation

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day:	11		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	Yes

Program content and goals

Morning:

Show the video entitled The Homecoming (1985). This video is primarily

designed to discuss alcohol use. The intent in showing it is to assist in making connections between the use of alcohol and the incidence of violence as shown. The filming location is an extremely isolated fly-in community, a setting familiar to many participants. As always, participants guided discussion after the video.

Afternoon:

The Wave, (1993) a moving meditation, again to assist in stress relief and creation of a more relaxed body posture.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. I felt the impact of losing participants, when I learned that one woman who had been very active in the program had left the facility. She had engaged in discussions quite easily and others had been encouraged by her sharing. I felt we had lost a valuable asset.
2. I also learned first hand the difficulty of expressing immediate emotions in the correctional setting. I had no opportunity to digest or to discern my own feelings. There was absolutely no place of privacy for me to regroup. The rapport of developed communication was lost. There had been no opportunity to disengage, to come to closure for either of us. My mind was flooded with the things that I had hoped to work through with her. It was obvious that here, in this environment, you need to make the most of every available moment not knowing there will be the luxury of ongoing relationships. As these thoughts and feelings flooded through me, it became absolutely necessary to put them aside, and to attend to the needs of the women in front of me. Spontaneity is essential in working within the jail environment.
3. I had designed the program content for this session to focus on video information appropriate for people who had attended previously. There

were two new participants, however, as I had no other materials, we went ahead with the video as planned.

4. Discussions were more concerned with alcohol use and problems associated with that than violence or abuse, although that was mentioned as well.
5. In the afternoon session I learned of the depth of the participants's anxiety and discomfort at being observed by the guards. Some of their comments implied they might be teased. It was not stated if this was in cruelty or in a manner that indicated that the guards being friendly.

Participant:

1. Video, The Homecoming, (1985) generated participant directed discussion. All participants shared and identified how alcohol use had led to incarceration. Discussion identified the depth of the problem and previous incarcerations associated with alcohol use.
2. Also identified was that in sober periods emotions and reality of life is too much.
3. There was recognition that inability to deal with 'reality' and sobriety is problematic.
4. Some identified that alcohol use often results in violence and that violence is 'easier to take' when drinking than when sober.

Solutions

1. Be prepared with alternative video material at all times; or have other material that is appropriate for new participants.
2. Be prepared to spontaneously respond to activities and changes that may occur; monitor my own assumptions.
3. Use the gymnasium space creatively; the corners cannot be observed.

Session Four

Participation

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day:	6		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Not available in AM
FlipChart:	Not available

Program content and goals

Morning:

The initial goal was to show video Honouring Our Voices (1995) and to discuss types of abuse, associated behaviours and healing methods. The second goal, identified by the participants was to recognize feelings, actions, and behaviours that constitute anger; to identify the many forms and expressions of anger..

Afternoon:

Moving meditation in the gym for stress and tension relief

Learnings:

Facilitator

1. It can be difficult to create discussion without the video as an aid to introduce and explore a subject.
2. Creating a cohesive group atmosphere is hindered by the number of times that the guards are required to interrupt the group in order to facilitate other activities. Lawyers, yard, laundry appear to have priority over group attendance.
3. Tone of voice and general attitude displayed by the jail personnel impacts on the self-esteem of the participants.

4. **Power and control issues associated in the literature with the milieu of an institution are evident. The first priority of the institution is to meet its own primary goals not necessarily those of a social work program such as this project.**
5. **Maintain a positive attitude when dealing with all personnel.**

Participant:

1. **They can and/or will be called from group in order to deal with other issues and concerns.**
2. **Anger has many forms other than physical expression.**
3. **Angry thoughts are recognized.**
4. **Patterns of isolation, depression, self-blaming as methods of dealing with/or hiding anger are identified.**

Solutions

1. **Become 'thicker skinned' and flexible regarding interruptions; acknowledge and continue as best as possible. The participants have other issues to be dealt with and other service providers are: (a) possibly unaware of program times and (b) cannot arrange their schedules according to the Walking A New Path program.**
2. **Talk again with the program supervisor to ascertain if there is any way that I can coordinate better with other service providers.**
3. **Decisions are made at differing levels within the institution; learn the level that differing issues are decided at, and who should be involved.**

Session Five

Participation

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day:	10		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	Yes

Program content and goals

Morning:

The video shown was Honouring Our Voices (1995). Discussion addressed types of abuse, associated behaviours and healing methods.

Discussion also included how the methods of healing identified in the video can be applied in the institution.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. Positive interaction with personnel contributes to a better group atmosphere and interaction
2. The Wave (1993) meditation is a particularly good vehicle for expression of anger for this group resulting in some demonstrated relaxation by the participants.
3. The atmosphere in the gymnasium is conducive to communication and discussion. Immediately upon the guard's entry to return participants to the dormitory, more tense, rigid body language is noticeable.

Participant:

1. Physical meditation activity can release tension.
2. There is a possibility of "healing" within the institution, that attitude toward our own ability to heal is important.
3. Participants acknowledged experience with all forms of abuse/violence.
There was some discussion as to why psychological abuse and verbal abuse are different categories, that all abuse is psychological.

Solutions

No specific issues

Session Six**Participation**

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day	6		
No. of repeat participants:	2 in A.M./ 4 in P.M.		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	No
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals**Morning:**

Clients determined the discussion talking about dynamics of sharing information in the institution setting. Sacred items - sage, cedar, sweetgrass - had been returned to the participants.

Afternoon:

Relaxation and expression through variations of working with clay.

Learnings**Facilitator:**

1. **Women want changes in their lives.**
2. **Attendance and participation in the group is dependant upon several dynamics:**
 - 2.1 **the number of persons**
 - 2.2 **the topic**
 - 2.3 **the level of comfort amongst the person(s) present**
 - 2.4 **activities and interrelationships in the dorm**
 - 2.5 **the manner in which the jail personnel introduce activities**
3. **Storage issues arose in that women are not allowed to keep clay in their personal property. There is not enough room and the nature of the clay is not suited to the available storage space.**
4. **Time is very short for working on clay project.**
5. **Returning to the afternoon session, and working with the clay, it is important to respect the participant's privacy. Some of the participants were hunched over their 'work' not wanting anyone to see it; others allowed their work to be open to view. Again, in an atmosphere that affords privacy only in the shower, it is essential to respect the unspoken body language and not pry in any manner into what they have chosen to create.**
6. **Important to 'count' the wooden sticks that are used in shaping the clay before taking them into the institution, and before leaving in the presence of the participants. It is necessary to account for all items taken into and out of the facility. This is also true of pens.**
7. **To properly prepare clay for moulding, and to make the differing smaller**

pieces meld together into one piece, it is necessary to throw the clay against a hard stable surface. The first activity that the women were asked to do was to throw the clay. It was encouraged that they could redesign whatever they were working on at any time. They would only need to reshape the clay by again throwing it. It was stated that it was acceptable if they chose to spend the time throwing the clay. Although no participant chose only to throw the clay, participants did appear to take pleasure in this action and did so quite often. They would get a grin on their face and I would smile back, encouraging them to put lots of effort into the activity. There was lots of laughter.

8. Listening to music also helps to create a more relaxed atmosphere. Aboriginal music was played (with the participants' permission) throughout the afternoon activity.

Participants:

1. Clay can be creative and fun.
2. The reality of having very little power to make choices in the jail is reinforced when they are told they cannot keep the clay objects that they created.

Solutions

1. Find time for more one-on-one sessions to provide an opportunity for discussion of issues and the expression of feelings.
2. Discuss at the beginning of the clay session that articles can not be retained.

Session Seven

Participation

Attendance:	3		
No. of women in the jail this day	4		
No. of repeat participants:	3		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	3	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning:

Showed the video Twice Condemned (1994). The main themes in the video are: (a) childhood abuse dynamics are replicated in the institutional setting; (b) anger is a major concern in penal institutions; (c) how childhood abuse issues affect developmental patterns leading to incarceration. The goal is to stimulate discussion on the above stated issues.

Afternoon:

Participants had a choice of clay activities facilitating stress relief, humour, and safe emotional expression.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. Inmates leaving impact on those who remain. There is evidence of confused feelings: happiness regarding inmates release, but a reminder of the time left to serve for those still in jail. This is more difficult for those who remain engaged in the court system with their fate unknown pending

bail hearings and trial. The stress and tension of living with such uncertainty is magnified. This is especially true when the person leaving has developed some degree of friendship with the participant(s) remaining. During this session these dynamics were particularly evident. Do suicide issues exist?

2. Choosing program materials is an ongoing difficulty. One participant has now attended several sessions, while others are new. Is repetitious material problematic?
3. Keeping open lines of communication is essential to effective functioning. It may be necessary to state and restate concerns at differing levels of the institution in some instances. Also, it is important to consider the time that the jail personnel require to deliberate issues and concerns, and formulate appropriate policy.
4. It was a very sombre group today. Is the video content too graphic, too depressing and too 'close to home' for the participants?
5. Use of materials (paper, pens, pencil crayons, crayons) during the video to assist in expressing thoughts, feelings, and/or emotions appeared to be successful. The participants actively engaged in writing and drawing. Materials that were shown to me were appropriate to the video information.
6. The video may act as a deterrent to committing serious crimes. From participants written commentary it was obvious that images of Kingston Penitentiary affected some of participants.

Participant:

1. Some were questioning the advisability of developing friendship relationships while in the institution setting.
2. Actual demonstration to and for the participants that calm, rational, and patient discussion can achieve positive results; that their Aboriginal cultural

needs can and will be honoured within the institutional environment.

Solutions

1. Will not show Twice Condemned (1994) again as it appears to have had a negative impact on the participants.

Session Eight

Participation

Attendance:	3		
No. of women in the jail this day:	6		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	3	Non-Aboriginal 1

Materials

VCR:	No
FlipChart:	Yes

Program content and goals

Morning:

Discussion of pamphlet, "Wife Assault, Dispelling the Myths" regarding the myths of wife assault.

Afternoon:

Moving meditation in gymnasium for stress and tension relief, to promote relaxation.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. The mixture of culture in the group alters dynamics:
 - 1.1 The non-aboriginal woman spoke from an intellectual aspect

disseminating information to/for the group. She also spoke on behalf of other persons and Aboriginal people in general. This has never occurred before. The previous participants have always spoken from their own experience and knowledge. It is immediately obvious that 'rules' are needed to define appropriate sharing.

- 1.2 The Non-Aboriginal woman also spoke words that indicated knowledge of and previous participation in smudging, however, she showed disrespect in some of her actions. I need to be more 'protective' regarding the Sacred items. During previous groups there has been lots of silence. There is now a competition for speaking time. I need to act as a referee, attempting to implement equal time and respect for all speakers.
- 1.3 Repressed anger takes on a new dimension in these schematics. This is the first time that I have experienced any concern that I might not possess the ability and skills to handle any situation(s) with the participants. One of the participants is more interested in high kicking a punching bag in the gym than in the moving mediation. She is highly agitated. I am exceptionally happy that I have a 'key' that will allow me immediate contact with the guard in the module. I do not panic nor do I express any preference that she should cease her activity. Perhaps the opportunity to display her aggressive feelings will circumvent aggression in the dormitory at a later time. The activity is meeting the designated goal.
2. Discussion regarding the pamphlet digressed from assault on women to assault by women. Again the theme of female violence is raised. There appeared to be a dynamic of bragging. A lively discussion was generated. Conflict within the group can instigate avid discussion. Also words can be threatening. It is feasible that one participant, in bragging of her past

violent behaviours, was attempting to intimidate another of the participants.

Participant:

1. **Aboriginal teachings, ceremonies and Sacred items will be respected as well as all other belief forms.**
2. **Individual persons will be respected and treated equally, regardless of race or philosophical beliefs.**
3. **Issues of violence and poverty are not racially exclusive.**
4. **Although the group is participant directed, the facilitator would interject in order to ensure all individuals are treated with respect, dignity and given equal opportunity to speak.**
5. **That the facilitator was not easily intimidated and did not demonstrate fight (verbally) or flight dynamics or responses.**

Solutions

1. **Consult with participants and develop 'rules' of sharing for the group sessions. Remind participants of these at the beginning of sessions.**
2. **Define and insist on appropriate behaviours regarding culture and sacred items. This should take place prior to the Sacred items being opened.**
3. **Continue to discuss the optional use of smudging and to be inclusive of other types of openings if requested.**

Session Nine

Participation

Attendance:	5		
No. of women in the jail this day:	8		
No. of repeat participants:	3		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	5	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning:

Showed the video “You're Hurting Me Too” (1997). Assist the participants in recognizing the effects of observed domestic abuse/violence as children in their current lives. Also help them to understand the dynamics and impact of observed abuse and violence on their own children.

Afternoon:

Moving meditation in the gym - Stress release and relaxation.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. The participants informed me that an inmate (the non-aboriginal woman referred to previously) “requested” segregation. This confirms that the observations regarding tension were accurate. I am surprised at a request for segregation but not surprised at the need for separation.
2. From a discussion regarding laundry duty with two of the participants I learned that laundry duty is viewed as a good way to get out of the dorm, and also to get away from the other women for a while. It can be a source

of positive feedback from the personnel. The guard was stating that two of the participants are the “best workers” in the jail.

3. Interruptions by staff have a variety of causes.

Participant:

1. Violence is identified as a normal part of life by some participants. One comment was: “It’s just the way it is.”
2. Some participants are unbelieving of the statistics that were presented regarding the impact of violence on children. This information reflects statistics from Seattle, Washington. They may not be as bad in Canada.
3. In discussion of the residential schools it was emphasized that violence wasn't in the home before the imposition of the school system.

Solutions

1. Continue to liaison with program coordinator and personnel to negotiate assurances that choosing to attend the group will not result in the loss of other activities.

Session Ten

Participation

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day :	9		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 0

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning: Video: Singing Our Voices (1998). The video contains some historical discussion of the drum and recording of Native singers. It is exclusively Aboriginal women singing and contains a strong message of cultural healing and wellness. The intent was to give the participants a respite from information directly addressing violence and abuse and bring in a relaxing message of healing through music.

Afternoon: Working with clay - relaxation and emotional release.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. Personnel accessing the women's dorm is a distraction for the participants. The staff's discussion appears to concern some type of alterations to the building; another person, identified as a plumber, while I was waiting to enter the facility is now present. The participants are not privy to that information. I am uncertain as to whether I can inform them, therefore I do not. Another insight into the dimensions of confinement. You only have access to information that is made available to you by others to interpret your circumstances and surroundings. This again is indicative of abusive relationships in that often the abuser controls information available to the abused.
2. The degree of distraction regarding personnel entering the dorm may be due to the possibility of a search for contraband materials, however there does not appear to be any repercussions from their visit.
3. The video appears to be too long. Also the participants say that some of the content is not appropriate. They did not object to the singing and information from most other Aboriginal cultures but specifically did not enjoy a segment regarding one particular tribes.

4. The importance of the opportunity to smudge is reinforced. A participant, new to the program, has tears as the Sacred Herbs are prepared and passed amongst the women. Although she makes no verbal comments, she is visibly emotionally moved by the presence of sacred items.
5. Again, there is a concern about the destruction of images made with the clay. On this instance, however, I was able to warn the participant that this would be necessary. Also, the clay was chosen by the participants for the afternoon session.

Participant:

1. Group members affirm that Aboriginal women used to have a strong voice in their communities.
2. Participants express appreciation for hearing PowWow music, and the drum.

Solutions

1. Inquire of the staff as to what information I am allowed to share with the participants.
2. If the music video is presented again, it would be simple to omit the section that they did not like.
3. Having to destroy the clay images may be more disturbing to me than to the participants. Continue to offer the experience always emphasizing early on that whatever is made cannot be kept.

Session Eleven

This session was cancelled by the jail personnel. It was explained that there had been an incident on the men's side, that personnel were involved with other duties arising from that concern and that there was not enough personnel available to facilitate the program.

I was concerned that during a crisis occasion, when the inmates are likely in more need of support and resources, that those resources cannot be provided.

Session Twelve

This session was cancelled by the Walking A New Path program personnel due to other unavoidable commitments.

Session Thirteen

Participation

Attendance:	2		
No. of women in the jail this day:	4		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	1	Non-Aboriginal 1

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	No

Program Contents and Goals

Morning:

Video: Hostages At Home (1994) This video will facilitate discussion of

the indicators of emotional and physical abuse in the home, and the pattern of intensified stalking when women attempt to leave. The video is shown to help women relate to elements of abuse. Also, because the video is predominately about non-Aboriginal and partially upper-middle class persons, it demonstrates that violence and abuse is neither economically nor racially exclusive.

Afternoon:

No program this afternoon, as both participants requested one-on-one sessions.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. As previously identified there is more conversation with fewer participants.
2. As this video is more graphic than most, we were not surprised at the request for one-on-ones sessions.
3. The dynamics between women in the dormitory appear to be affecting attendance in the program.

Participant:

1. Both participants relate to many factors in the video, particularly the danger in leaving, "better to know where they are".
2. One participant identified that extreme abuse in childhood has made her terrified of any type of close relationships; " She always finds the losers".
3. Participants expressed surprise at the degree of violence in non-Aboriginal, middle-class homes.

Solutions

1. The facilitator will discuss with program coordinator the feasibility of implementing some reconciliation work within the woman's dormitory.

Session Fourteen

Participation

Attendance:	5		
No. of women in the jail this day	7		
No. of repeat participants:	2		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	4	Non-Aboriginal 1

Materials

VCR:	Yes
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning:

Video: Honouring Our Voices (1995). Identification and introduction of material that helps to define types of abuse and what actions/behaviours constitute abuse; also includes Elder information on methods to heal. Participants were questioned as to their interest in a Christmas party.

Afternoon:

Moving meditation in the gym - Stress release and relaxation.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. Physical movement does not appeal to all of the participants, but appears to be very effective for those who do choose to participate. The lack of involvement may be due to shyness and fear of being observed by fellow inmates and guards.
2. The Women *are excited, almost childlike, about the concept that I would attempt anything special regarding Christmas. Activities the requested included music, Christmas foods (oranges, candy canes as well as pop, chips, cake), and especially a tree. I stressed that I was asking if they would*

like me attempt this; that I was totally uncertain about the ability to provide anything special. I had already consulted the program coordinator and had been advised that there was a possibility, but I would have to articulate what the women would want. I was concerned about raising the women's hopes, yet it is essential to have both their permission and their input. It appears that there is always a risk of setting the participants up for disappointment.

Participant:

1. Economic abuse was a new concept to some of the participants.
2. There was happiness at the fact that there is information created by Aboriginal people discussing Aboriginal healing ways.
3. Programming does not always have to be serious work. We can play too.

Solutions

1. Consult with the program coordinator regarding the Christmas party, what is feasible, what is not.

Session Fifteen

Participation

Attendance:	4		
No. of women in the jail this day:	8		
No. of repeat participants:	4		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	3	Non-Aboriginal 1

Materials

VCR:	No
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning:

The goal was revised due time shortage: to give the participants an opportunity to smudge and have some discussion on a topic of their choice - possibly a subject arising out of discussion of the heart cards as well as a discussion of Christmas party.

Afternoon:

Moving meditation in the gym - Stress release and relaxation.

Learnings

Facilitator:

1. Time issues made this session difficult. Because we were not allowed in to see the women until 10:30am, there was only one hour for activities. We were not escorted from the activities room until approximately 11:55 am; twenty-five minutes after the session would normally end. We had automatically brought the session to closure at the normal time of 11:30 am and it was very difficult to fill those extra twenty-five minutes. Returning to program discussion was not feasible as the guards could come at any time; chitchat very difficult as many subjects are very delicate. Conversation becomes stilted and uncomfortable. This occurrence accentuated how few subjects there are that the participants can casually discuss with us. This is marked by knowing that the guard may arrive at any time and end any discussion which begins. This occurrence is exceptional considering the emphasis by jail personnel of the necessity of stopping at 11:30 am. This is the first time that the group has gone past the morning deadline. The participants appear to be concerned as to why this would occur. As the time period became more prolonged discussion became more difficult.

Participant:

1. Group members became aware of the lack of control that we as facilitators have within the jail.
2. They acknowledged that we as facilitators care about them, that this program is not "just a job".
3. The Christmas party plans are a reality; they will be allowed special foods and music, an appropriate tree and trimmings.

Solutions

1. Develop a repertoire of jokes and fun material(s) or stories for such occasions.
2. Business plans for the lunch break contributed to the tenseness for the facilitators. Although the plans were tentative, it is obvious that it is unwise to make time commitments on the days that we are in the jail setting.

Session Sixteen**Participation**

Attendance:	8		
No. of women in the jail this day:	10		
No. of repeat participants:	5		
Cultural identity:	Aboriginal	7	Non-Aboriginal 1

Materials

VCR:	No
FlipChart:	No

Program content and goals

Morning Program only:

Christmas Party so that the women will have some experience of the Christmas season, and also to bring closure to the practicum. The Walking A New Path program also was terminated until January.

Learnings

Facilitator:

- 1. Every activity appears to have a positive and negative side. Although it had been queried if the participants would be searched if additional items were brought in to the jail and it was stated that this would not occur in the program coordinator's opinion, the woman were searched before being returned to their dormitory. At this time it was not procedure.**
- 2. It is essential to double check authorization. A misunderstanding led to tobacco which was presented as a gift being taken from the participants.**
- 3. Never assume anything. A Christmas tree was provided for the occasion and the participants decorated it. As they had left the activities dorm previous to me on all other occasions, I assumed that this would be repeated. I was asked to leave first, and the tree had to be undecorated (necessary to return it to the box it was brought in) in their presence. They actually did the task. The joy that they displayed in decorating the tree was lost.**

Participant:

- 1. They expressed great delight in decorating the tree and in having a little bit of Christmas brought into the jail.**
- 2. Christmas was not always a time of joy for the participants. Participants expressed times when Christmas had been marked by extreme drunkenness and violence.**
- 3. Christmas in Kenora District Jail also meant missing children and**

grandchildren.

Solutions

1. When planning activities for include special events, meet with the superintendent if at all possible.
2. Begin planning at least 6 weeks in advance, so that all the proper authorities can be consulted.
3. Consult with the participants and discuss the possibilities. Allow them to make an informed choice about special activities.

Practise Theory

As with the rest of this paper it is necessary to emphasize the focus of this paper. It is all too easy to slip from the topic of the practicum into examining the Walking A New Path program itself. While it is necessary to discuss the practice theory of the Walking A New Path program, it is essential to maintain the focus on the practicum theme of examining the effect of the milieu of the Kenora District Jail on implementing the Walking A New Path program. Therefore, there are two basic components of this discussion; the practise theory of the practicum and, also of the Walking A New Path program.

Methods From the Margins - Kirby and McKeena

It is acknowledged that this practicum project is not a research project, and as such did not include a research dynamic. However, it was necessary to collect data regarding this experience in order to have reference for and to examine the themes and issues that arose. The framework for the documentation of the information was taken from Kirby and McKenna (1989). This publication is the culmination of their discontent with contemporary research practise and design and their effort to create a discourse delineating a different thought process and methodology. They advocate concepts which respond to the needs and circumstances of disadvantaged persons, and as such, the

perspective that they advocate is both relevant and appropriate to the subject of this practicum.

The title of this publication proposes the concept of margins. Margins is defined in part as " the context in which those who suffer injustice, inequality and exploitation live their lives" (McKenna & Kirby, 1989, p 33). LaPrairie in her discussion of the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in correctional institutions refers to the term "marginalization" and presents graphical data to demonstrate that the highest percentage of Aboriginal inmates come from geographical areas which, as described by LaPrairie, foster the conditions that contribute to marginalization. Adopting a research methodology that is specifically designed to speak to and for these persons is fundamental to this practicum. (La Prairie, 1996; Kirby and McKenna, 1989)

One of the major principles that Kirby and McKenna (1989) postulate addresses the use of the researcher in research practise, and second whether researchers are capable of total objectivity. They believe that the inclusion of the knowledge and experience of the researcher is essential and further, that the researcher is "an ingredient of" the research project (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, forward). They further state that it is an impossibility for the researcher to be totally objective, that individual attitudes and beliefs affect the perception of information in both formulating and observing research projects. The methodology advocated by Kirby and McKenna (1989) asks the researcher to record "thoughts and ideas about the research question at the beginning and throughout the research process" (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, 32). They identify these preconceived notions "conceptual baggage." and advance the belief that when the researcher continues to record their own interconnection and interaction with the project, that the researcher then becomes a part of that process, and, in doing so, is a participant. The hierarchical power differential between observer and observed is nullified (Kirby and McKenna, 1989 32).

Kirby and McKenna state their belief that research has often been used by a dominant few to maintain inequitable power dynamics and can be a "tool of domination" (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, 17). A corresponding premise of Methods

From the Margins is that research should be done "*by, for and with*" participants as opposed to "*on*" them (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, 28) (Emphasis from the quotation). This further defines the role of the researcher. The attitude and methodology espoused in Kirby and McKenna complemented the manner in which the facilitator of the Walking A New Path program interacted with the participants and is therefore, appropriate for this practicum.

Another concept of Methods From the Margins is termed "being honourable" (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, 33) and refers to speaking the truth of our experiences, acknowledging "our experience of marginalization and using it as our touchstone" (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, 33). They discuss that actualizing this concept can result in discussing the uncomfortable contradictions and questions that arise.

Finally, Kirby and McKenna (1989) facilitate research as a participant/observer. This is again, complimentary to the Walking A New Path program. The researcher must decide, according to the program design, the extent of these roles. It is necessary to make copious notes as this information is the research "data" from which information will be drawn. It is qualitative research and does not espouse to have reliability and validity as proposed in quantitative research design. As previously stated, this practicum is not a research project; however, the elements and practise theory proposed by Kirby and McKenna constitute the practise theory used during this practicum.

Traditional Native intervention theory

This program grew out of a request from the Kenora Jail and was designed in consultation with the Elder who at that time was initially involved with the project. In preliminary discussions with the program coordinator of the Kenora District Jail it was stressed that while the program needed to address women of all cultures, the predominate number of women incarcerated within the Kenora District Jail would be of Aboriginal origin. This information, coupled with our own practise belief ethics, resulted in a program design which employed and followed many of the traditional

Anishinaabe beliefs and values. The next segment of this paper will attempt to describe how those beliefs and values affected program design and practice theory.

My involvement with the Anishinaabe tradition has fostered a confidence in the "methodologies" that they employ in healing. Discussions of traditional Aboriginal programming primarily focus on the values, principles, and belief systems that define and guide how and what services are provided. These principles are often referred to in literature as cultural elements. They are the basic belief systems that inform Aboriginal people of appropriate thoughts and attitudes, and, therefore suggest appropriate actions. This is applicable to the manner in which they would address dealing with abuse and violence. These are the attitudes that were used in the development of the intervention strategies for the Walking A New Path program.

Central to this discussion is fact that the Walking A New Path program is not a therapeutic program in the strictest sense of that word, and that a therapeutic model, as such, was not applied. The purpose of the Walking A New Path program is to provide an opportunity for information about the subject of violence and abuse to be presented to the participants and further, to give them an opportunity to discuss that information. That process has been described in detail, previously in this methodology section. A Sharing Circle format provided an opportunity for the participants to relate to that information, sharing their experience if they choose to on a group basis. One-on-One sessions allowed for sharing as individuals.

THEME ANALYSIS

This section of the practicum report discusses the themes that arose out of the practicum. These have already been identified in the learning and solution segments of the sessional comments section of the report. The purpose of this dialogue is to gather that data into focussed areas of concern and further elaborate on them.

Movement and Time Issues

Some general observations and comments are pertinent before exploring concerns specific to the Walking A New Path program. As would be expected, movement in the institution is totally restricted for all persons entering the facility to interact with inmates. All the areas in which professionals are allowed to speak with their clientele are located beyond the entrance module and therefore guards must escort these persons regardless of the purpose of their visit from the front module to their destination. If personnel are otherwise occupied, it is impossible to proceed further or to move within the facility. When friends and/or family visit inmates, the inmates are escorted to the visiting room located immediately adjacent to the front module. These visitors do not enter the restricted area of the facility.

Movement of inmates affects the movement of non-inmates within the facility. Inmates cannot occupy the same space as a non-inmate while either is in transit. therefore, it will be necessary for one of the groups, either the inmates or the non-inmate to wait for the transfer of the other. Jail personnel must always provide an escort, therefore movement within the institution always affects time available for other duties and concerns. Time and movement issues are interactive and interchangeable.

Due to the diversity of functions that the institution meets the Kenora District Jail has difficult dynamics concerning the need for inmate movement. The Jail is required to facilitate the attendance of inmates at court hearings. Prisoners must be

moved to and from the court house located downtown, a few kilometres away. A rigid time schedule for the days activities cannot be adhered to because of the unpredictability of the number of persons required to attend court and spent time away from the institution. It is simply not possible for any of the personnel to know when they will be required to attend to those duties. For example, one particular morning the guard manning the front module explained that an unprecedented number of persons, thirty, had to be taken to court the previous day. Court had not adjourned until approximately 5:30 that evening. They had been shuffling inmates back and forth all day. Had my program occurred that day, it would have been extremely difficult for the personnel to accommodate the movement required. There would have been serious consideration of program cancellation.

This also accounts for the difference between day time and evening scheduling. Professional visits of all forms need to be facilitated on behalf of the inmates. These occur within two sets of dynamics during the day time hours. Inmates are taken out of the facility to access stationary resources such as the court, hospital, dentist, etc. Other professionals such as lawyers, probation officers, as well as all forms of counselling and support services come into the facility. The evening schedule is more reliable, as less movement of persons is involved during that time period. Volunteer programming such as church organizations and twelve step programs (AA/ NA) usually occur at these times.

Because the jail has limited personnel, the unavailability of guards to perform escort duties and other tasks may result in delays. This can occur at any juncture during a person's time in the institution. The following are ways in which the implementation of the Walking A New Path program was affected:

1. The opening portion of the program was "smudging". This activity required that an excessively noisy fan, controlled from outside the meeting room, be turned on and off by jail personnel. Often considerable lengths of time were lost waiting for both of those activities.

2. As it was frequently not possible to enter the jail at the scheduled time, the program content had to be adjusted to the altered time frame. On occasion during the morning session the selection of video material had to be changed due to time constraints. Often the discussion period was shorter than had been projected or desired. During the afternoon session the dynamics were similar. On some occasions, although not all, a Native Elder brought in a program immediately following mine. The activities room where the Walking A New Path program occurs is the only room that is available for such purposes. The gymnasium can be made available upon special request, but requires more elaborate movement for the inmates. I attempted to be considerate of this time frame, however, the guards were not always prepared to escort me out of the building. It is obvious that the lunch time schedule affected when we were required to terminate the morning program. (Meal times are the only schedule that appears to be strictly adhered to.)
3. The morning session was scheduled to terminate at 11:30. In some instances, the guard announced that the program would have to wind up earlier, requiring us to end the session abruptly without any opportunity for planned closure. On one occasion, the reverse occurred. Bringing sessions to a close appropriately can be challenging in such an atmosphere of unpredictability.
4. All materials required for the session must be brought at the time of entry into the jail or not at all. This was equally true of leaving, especially during the lunch break. There is no opportunity to return to retrieve forgotten materials from either the inside or the outside. (On one occasion I forgot the key to the locker where my purse and car keys were stored in my briefcase in the activities dorm. It was a ten minute procedure to have a guard retrieve it on my behalf). The guards frequently provided assistance in carrying materials brought

into the facility, however, it is expedient to limit the required resources. Everything that is required must be taken in one journey. This sometimes contradicts attempts to “be prepared” for any and all eventualities. Each time that the facility was accessed a large ghetto blaster (they deserved the best), a briefcase crammed full with video materials, heart cards, paper, pens, pencil crayons, kleenex, handouts, a variety of written materials; and sacred items were transported to the sessions. On some occasions when clay was used in the afternoon, an approximately twenty-five pound box of clay and appropriate tools were also taken into the facility.

Interruptions To Programming

Spacial concerns

1. The location of the activities room where the Walking A New Path program takes place is within approximately eight steps from the front of the women's dorm. The activities dorm and women's dorm therefore share a common hallway. In order to access the women's dorm, it is necessary to pass immediately in front of the activities dorm. Activities occurring in the corridor concerning either dorm can be both seen and heard while in the group. The loudness of discussions of personnel and the other inmates can interfere with programming. If several members of the institution personnel congregate in this area it appears to be disconcerting for the participants. They expressed concern as to what was happening and why the personnel are gathered there. Negative connotations were associated with the personnel's activities as the participants always showed serious concern as opposed to smiles and/or laughter.
2. The same spacial concerns are equally true of the television set in the women's dorm. It is easily heard in the activities dorm. There were

occasions it sounded like the women's dorm and the activities dorm had duelling television sets .

Programming and service providers

Participant meetings with doctors, lawyers, probation and other service providers interrupted sessions. Again this was related to the limited times available to see clients.

Institutional activities

1. "Yard" is the term for an institutional activity in which the inmates have an opportunity to go outside. It had been previously discussed with the jail personnel that "yard" would not be offered during the program time as it would present participants with a difficult choice; either ending their participation in the program at that time, or losing the precious opportunity to be outside. On occasion, "yard" took place during program time despite the negotiations. Scheduling difficulties were cited as the reason.
2. The nurse choose scheduled program time to administer medications. As with "yard" it had been negotiated that institution activities would conflict with program time at a minimum. Interruption could have been related to the time issue or communication break down.
- 3 The option of doing laundry was more of an alternative to the program than an interruption. As was previously discussed there were positive benefits to doing the laundry not the least of which was positive feedback from the institution personnel. I watched women go to the laundry when I truly believe that they would have attended the group if they felt they had a free choice, for example, if they were confident that attending the group instead of doing laundry duty would not displease the guard resulting in a lose of positive attention.

4. Personnel are required to monitor the activities inside the activities dorm. This occurred on an irregular basis. These checks are done to ensure the safety of all persons and to monitor that the activity in the room is appropriate. Although this was done on most occasions with sensitivity there were times when it was disruptive.
5. The demeanour of the guard, including the tone and loudness of voice, and the brusqueness of non-verbal presentation influence the impact of the interruption on the group dynamics. Demanding, loud and harsh tones interrupted the process far more than requests stated with normal voice volume. It would appear highly reasonable that while discussing elements of violence and abuse the participants would be sensitive to harsh and demanding tones of voice.

Provision of resources

A lack of promised resources proved disruptive at times. This element could belong in several of the themes. It appears most appropriate to refer to it in this section, as the lack of resources interrupted program implementation. On occasion the VCR was not present; on other occasions it was not working. The flip chart was not available on several occasions. These circumstances were met with a variety of responses by the personnel. Some times the equipment was fixed, or found and delivered. Other times there was little attempt to provide the item. In fairness, it must be stated that other duties, unknown to the facilitator, may have been required of the personnel at that specific time. When the missing resources were located, personnel entered the activities dorm to place them appropriately. In the instance of the flip chart the interruption was minimal; however, installing the VCR required personnel to stand on the counter and to converse with other personnel in the hallway regarding threading the plug in to an electrical outlet outside of the activities dorm. Waiting for the resources to be provided before beginning the program

in order to avoid interruptions later resulted in the loss of precious time. Therefore, most often, the program was went ahead without the equipment. This was always a trade-off of negative circumstances, a lose-lose situation. Lack of equipment meant no video material to provide information to the participants and a focus for discussion. Although it affected the flow of group discussion, interruption while the VCR was installed appeared to be the best of choices.

Communication dynamics

Some interruptions were due to misunderstanding and a lack of information flow between the personnel and the Walking A New Path program. In dealing with personnel in the jail, it was productive, prior to any activity, to clarify an understanding of procedures and requirements on the many levels of authority that existed avoiding complications and misunderstandings. The Acting Superintendent who authorized the program was replaced during the period in which the practicum was implemented. This may have been the source of some of the confusion as to expectations and procedures regarding the Walking A New Path program. (Although it is not within the scope of the practicum experience, program implementation dynamics have increasingly improved).

Privacy and Emotional Expression

Much of the information learned in implementing this practicum sounds very simple and logical. It is the depth and degree of the conditions experienced that is relevant. This applies most emphatically to this segment. The lack of privacy can be expressed in two small words, no privacy. The discussion of the impact can be stated very simply. There is no place for the women to exist on any level, with the exception of

personal hygiene, without being observed and/or heard by their peers and the institution personnel.

The Walking A New Path program presents information that may affect the participants emotionally. The total lack of physical privacy from both institution personnel and from other inmates results in a there being absolutely no safe place for the women to express emotions. The following points highlight concerns about the expression of emotion:

Anger

1. Anger was a predominate emotion identified by most of the women during many of the sessions. Participants especially related to the information in the video Twice Condemned (1994) concerning the pent-up anger carried by incarcerated women, and on many other levels. None felt that they could express anger with impunity inside the Kenora District Jail.
2. The consequences of displaying anger in the institution are punitive. One woman being held awaiting bail hearings and trial stated that she was afraid to speak of or demonstrate anger in any manner lest she be put on report and have a negative citation from the institution. She further expressed that she thought of engaging in activities that would result in being put in segregation to get away from her sister inmates, but again did not want such behaviours on her record. She further felt hurt and anger at watching other inmates being released while she remained. She had been imprisoned for more than three months when I interacted with her. Her expectations were that she should not allow herself to demonstrate anger at any time.
3. Other women spoke of repressing their anger while being incarcerated as there was absolutely no place that such emotions could be expressed without negative consequences.
4. There was concern about showing and/or discussing material and

information which might elicit emotions of anger without providing an opportunity to express it. Physical movement and working with clay were introduced to afford the participants an opportunity to express this emotion.

Crying

1. Crying appeared to be somewhat acceptable amongst the program participants. These tears, however, were silent tears sliding down the participants face, head bowed so as not to be seen. There were never sobs or screams befitting the abuse that was been spoken of, neither was there any place within the institution that this could occur. Hurt, shame and guilt were voiced by a few of the participants, however, these feelings could not be adequately expressed. The feasibility of committing these feelings to paper through journalling is considered totally unwise as there is no way to protect it from being read by others.
2. Crying also occurred in the expression of happiness and gratitude. This was observed frequently in conjunction with the use of sacred items and traditional music. Again, even the happy tears were hidden.
3. Teasing or belittling words regarding the shedding of tears did not occur while any of the participants were engaged in the program. No participant ever stated that women in the dorm made remarks of this nature. They did, however, refer to power and control dynamics within the women's dorm. This was usually spoken in generalities. However, on one occasion while a particular woman was placed in segregation, others shared they had not attended group because of her presence.
4. Participant withholding of tear could be reinterpreted as a cultural norm as opposed to a factor of the jail environment. Occasionally, apologies were expressed for the shedding tears.

Humour

1. Laughter and humour are the tools that are used most by the participants. They openly discussed that they laughed and made jokes at themselves and others to avoid crying and erupting in anger.
2. It was also identified by some of the participants that while humour was a positive tool and coping mechanism, it was used to the exclusion of all other emotions and it had negative overtones.

Participant Dynamics

Violent actions by the participants

1. Some of the participants, in response to statements introducing the program and to the program material itself, questioned their eligibility and right to participate in the program. They felt that they did not belong as they themselves had been violent and/or were incarcerated for violent offenses. The commission of violent acts became a frequent focus for exploring sources of anger and frustration. Identifying a pattern of criminal activity as a result of violence experienced either as a child or an adult is a main objective of the project.
2. Participants, in discussing their own violence, were most comfortable talking about violence towards male partners. It was a source of jokes and humour on many occasions. Discussion of violence and abuse to other women occurred but was strained. I cannot recall any woman admitting that she had been physically abusive to her child(ren), however verbal and emotional abuse were acknowledged. Acknowledging and legitimizing repressed anger from abusive and/or violent relationship was central to the purpose of the program. At the same time it was important not to legitimize violent behaviour.

3. The issue of “fighting back” and of “hitting them before they could hit me” proved to be emotionally charged and sensitive in discussions. The right to defend oneself was articulated on occasion raising issues regarding the battered wife syndrome, and the possibility of charges of manslaughter or murder when self defense may have been more applicable to the circumstances.

Alcohol

The use of alcohol was identified by the participants as a factor in violent and abusive situations. This was applicable to childhood experiences as well as in situations in adulthood. Concerns regarding alcohol consumption did not necessarily refer to the abuser. Alcohol was identified as a coping mechanism by participants who had been abused and as a factor in their own violent behavior. While this would most likely be an identified issue in any group concerning abuse and violence, the stated extent of the use of alcohol would be more prevalent within the institution setting. Stories concerning intoxication was often a source of humour and laughter.

Relationship dynamics

Unknown interactions and relationship dynamics between the participants, occurring outside the program context, impacted on group behavior and attendance. Women participated or declined participation according to who was in attendance. On occasion, obvious friction between members existed. This is not isolated to an institutional setting and is a normal part of group dynamics. However, the close contact forced by the lack of individual privacy within the jail accentuates these dynamics. The variety of circumstances that the women are incarcerated for adds stress in this environment. Those who are awaiting bail and/or trial have a much higher stress and tension level than those who have already been sentenced. These factors add to relationship dynamics within the women's dorm. Some

inmates form supportive relationships, others have antagonistic interactions. Resultant situations can and do replicate psychological, emotional and verbally abusive relationship dynamics. These dynamics become part of the group atmosphere and attitude. Participants seldom spoken of or eluded to these dynamics.

Concepts of violence and abuse

There was a need to expand the participants definition of abuse which focussed primarily on the elements of physical and sexual abuse. Exploring emotional, verbal, and in particular, economic and isolational abuse was essential. Body language and verbal comments regarding the subject of economic abuse indicated that, for many, this was a new concept. The reaction to the inclusion of isolation as a form of abuse was similar, but not as dramatic.

Cultural Considerations

When discussion was initiated by the facilitator with the program coordinator of the Kenora District Jail, it was identified that the participants would predominately be Aboriginal. It was agreed that while the program could not focus exclusively on traditional Aboriginal content, it would be important to honour that culture.

1. Culturally appropriate process

- 1.1 Participants were always given a choice regarding the cultural ceremony of smudging and the use of the sacred medicines. Objection to this practice was never voiced by any participants. Some participants openly expressed joy at the opportunity to smudge and others demonstrated through body language their eagerness to engage in this activity. A concern did arise on one occasion regarding the appropriate handling of the sacred

medicines. It was insisted that the cultural value of these herbs be honoured and respected.

- 1.2 Discussion occurred in a circle format throughout the program. The morning session consistently followed a talking circle model. Watching the video required that the structure be altered; however when discussions resumed, we reengaged in a circle. Explaining the concepts incorporated within the circle was unnecessary until one participant, through ignorance, spoke in a manner which contradicted the accepted speaking norms for a circle. At this juncture, it was necessary to create guidelines for appropriate speaking behavior. For example: (a) speaking only for oneself and not on behalf of others; (b) speaking of your own experience; and (c) speaking to the issue, especially in expressing contradictory thoughts, as opposed to making comments directed at the person. It should be noted that the circle remained at level one as identified by Antoine & Hill (1990 in Hart, 1995). A parallel exists with Lang's (1983) literature regarding groups and collectivities. The dynamics within the jail setting prevented the circle from developing beyond to further depths of sharing.
- 1.3 It was conducive to interaction for the facilitator to take a non-hierarchical physical position. I sat on the floor the majority of the time. Sometimes members sat on the stools and/or chairs but usually they sat on the floor as well. These women are accustomed to power and authority dynamics. The physical stance of a non-power position was conducive to discussion and to being allowed to interact as a participant. On occasion it was necessary to stand to write on the flip chart. I drew attention to and apologized for my physical position and

offered to have a participant fill that role. These moments were used as opportunities used to recognize, discuss, and demonstrate physical power positions. A non-hierarchical physical position helped to create the atmosphere of a non-hierarchical professional attitude. This is consistent with traditional Aboriginal cultural beliefs and values. The professional acts as a guide through the process.

2) Cultural content

- 2.1 It is important to recognize that while participants were predominately Aboriginal, it did not necessarily mean that they adhered to their traditional Native cultural ceremonies, beliefs, and/or values. After at least one hundred years of active state and church repression, fear and reluctance to engage in spiritual and cultural traditions still affects many Native people. Others practise Christianity. It was essential to acknowledge and respect all belief systems and/or the lack of same. Therefore, traditional healing practices such as smudging were included but always balanced with discussion of other methodologies that facilitated the same basic purposes. For example, options to deal with past issues of abuse included reference to therapists/counsellors, self-help activities such as the steps in AA/NA, journalling, and the sweat lodge.
- 2.2 Racism in its various forms, the Indian Act, and residential schools as perpetrators of generational abuse and violence, were frequently topics of discussion. These were opportunities to provide a context for acknowledging the legacy of abusive power and control experienced first hand by most of these

women.

Inter-relation of issues

The interconnectedness of the multitude of issues that the participants bring is important. As identified above alcohol and drug use are predominant themes as is poverty. The incorporation of holistic dynamics is essential. It is important to listen for these inter-connections and to honour all of the experiences and circumstances that are brought to the group.

Facilitator Issues

Institutional rules

It is essential within a penal institution to observe the rules at all times. If there is concern with actions by the personnel, it has to be taken to the proper authorities. At first glance this appears simple, but it is not necessarily so. When information has not been communicated and the guard does not have an understanding of some element that has previously been negotiated and okayed, it is incumbent that they will deny the activity unless they are otherwise informed by persons of authority. On occasion this is rectified immediately as personnel with authority are available. On other occasions resolving a situation is not as expedient, and the only choice is to proceed as best as possible. Most frequently, these circumstances will occur while the participants are present. As a facilitator and counsellor is a role model, it is absolutely imperative to demonstrate appropriate skills.

Facilitator perspectives

It is necessary to constantly evaluate personal attitudes. While it is essential to maintain an open perspective, it is extremely easy to become

overly sympathetic to these woman and their situations. Just as a holistic approach is critical to the intervention model, a holistic attitude to the concerns of all the elements of the jail environment is important. The behaviours that women display during group sessions are not those that resulted in their incarceration. (As a volunteer in a remand centre in Calgary, during a orientation tour we were exposed to the weaponry that was created within that institution and cautioned that the inmates tend to represent only one side of the picture.) Ongoing critical evaluation and monitoring of “conceptual baggage” as an element of the research design is a very useful tool.

Participant-observer role

Using the participant-observer technique as a counselling skill was important. I used personal experience to create an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding. I tried as best as circumstances allowed to take a participants role. On some occasions, when it was necessary for me to change my role from participant to interact as the facilitator, I verbally identified this shift in to the participants.

Participant support

Protesting issues within the institution requires a deliberate approach. It must be remembered at all times that the participants of the group reside in that environment on a twenty-four hour basis. They cannot leave the situation. They have no position of power. It is absolutely necessary that they be involved in any action that might be taken on their behalf. For instance, it was advocated that the sacred herbs are equal to religious items and that the participants be allowed to have them. This was done *on their behalf and at their request* and were discussed with the participants in advance. It is equally as important to understand and clarify all of the possible

procedures and consequences that might arise, and appraised the participants of those eventualities.

A further example involved a Christmas party where the participants were allowed to have special foods and a Christmas tree. Unknown to us ahead of time, participants were searched before being returned to their dorm. I am not certain that, had they known they would be searched, they would have wanted the privileges granted.

Spontaneity and flexibility

It is difficult to develop appropriate programming when the number of participants is unknown previous to the beginning of the session. Spontaneity and a willingness on the facilitator's part to be flexible and inventive is a definite asset.

Session attendance

The transitory nature of the group made it difficult to choose program content and almost impossible to develop a program which had any continuity. This was especially difficult for the women who attended regularly over time. Material of a more introductory nature was sometimes repeated to accommodate new members, but was repetitious for those who had previously attended.

The depth of conversation was also affected by the fluctuation of group members attendance. There was a three week period when predominantly the same women participated. A rapport and atmosphere of trust was beginning to develop. The introduction of new members changed those dynamics. It was also difficult for newcomers to initiate discussion at the same level as participants who had previously attended.

CONCLUSION

This modest body of information is precisely that. It documents only the experience and knowledge gained by one person in the delivery of a program to a small group of incarcerated women in a small provincial institution. From this perspective the following paragraphs discuss how this project can contribute to the field of social work.

Further, this document offers insight and experience related to the development and delivery of programs for Aboriginal women. As well, this practicum speaks to particular concerns that can arise in delivering programs in a correctional facility in a more isolate region, where many functions are carried out under one small roof. Studies and programs focussing on women in the field of corrections are to date scarce and sketchy. In the absence of a significant body of knowledge to draw from, this paper can be used as a guide for activists, correctional personnel, social workers and service providers working with women in provincial institutions to develop much needed support.

Experiencing the practicum within the institution, feeling the lack of control and power at many levels of decision making as well as the restrictions of movement and timing are important consideration for other facilitators and social workers functioning within similar environments. Understanding the need for spontaneity in the institutional milieu is vital to effective services. Making allowances for the lack of opportunity for emotional expression within the jail atmosphere is central to program development and design. Kendal (1994) spoke of circumstances in institutions that are “crazy making” in that women are expected to demonstrate “personal initiative and responsibility...despite the lack of real possibilities for taking self-determined actions (Kendal, 1994, 12). Dynamics within the practicum experience demonstrate and document similar concerns that many professionals and service providers will encounter in the corrections system.

Delivery of programs or services which could provoke painful emotions

without any real opportunity to express those emotions raised concern for the welfare of all parties; program and institution personnel as well as the inmates. This is especially so in that often it is hours after an activity when persons respond; the wee small hours of the morning can be tortuous. The writer hopes that calling these dynamics to the attention of penal authorities might encourage better facilities, more physical activities for inmates, and training for personnel to handle emotional issues with sensitivity.

This body of work may also assist the personnel of correctional facilities to understand the impact of their job performance on the implementation of programs and the necessity of those programs. Perhaps, having the benefit of a different perception would lead to identifying ways and means that safety, movement, and other objectives can be assured with less intervention. In addition, institutional personnel might have more informed impact in the design and establishment of schedules so that there are fewer interruptions and better time organization.

This practicum report again and again refers to the issues generated by the lack of personnel. Information was volunteered by a guard, that previous to the cutbacks by the Harris government, there was a recreation officer who facilitated inmate use of the yard, the weight room and the gymnasium. These facilities are currently unused with the exception of the Young Offenders housed in that facility. The use of the gym as an exercise facility by members of this practicum experience is a rarity. It is clear that the needs of the inmates of this institution are neglected, not by the personnel, but through government funding issues which literally dictate the functioning of the institution. This practicum report also services as a protest against the lack of funding to that facility, and to the continuing neglect of the marginalized members of our society.

On a macro level, the perspective offered in this paper can add to the existing awareness that incarcerated women are not necessarily 'bad' women. Rather they are women who have been 'marginalized', women who often have not been afforded the opportunity to develop appropriate life skills and for many other reasons may be

caught in a downward spiral of poverty often marked by violence and abuse. Readers might further recognize that the present system of imprisonment does little to alter the conditions which contributed to incarceration. In fact, the imbalance of power in the institutional system can add to feelings of devastation, loss of control, low self-esteem and the suppression of emotion. A quote from the video You're Hurting Us Too (1997) predicts that children who observe violence without intervention are doomed to repeat it. Women in jail, without interventions to assist them to recognize and deal with the factors that lead them there might well be doomed to repeat those activities.

Further, this writing adds to the body of knowledge that supports the concepts espoused in Twice Condemned (1994) , When Woman Kill (1994), and by McIvor that the experiences of incarcerated woman are very close to all women. It could happen to **YOU**. This is in contrast to the prevalent attitude in Canadian society which lends a blind eye ignoring and denying the dynamics affecting incarcerated women. This is partly demonstrated by the lack of information and activity generated concerning the welfare of women in jails. The Prison for Women in Kingston, for example, has continued to function while condemned in at least two studies and the subject of widespread media reports.. The furore over the treatment of women in segregation in that institution in April of 1994 (Faith, 1995, 91 - 99) brought some public attention to incarcerated women; however, the focus was on a specific set of actions taken by prison personnel rather than on the overall examination women in prison. While an inquiry was commissioned, little else has manifested from the investigation. The public in general, it seems, would prefer not to know the reality of women's existence in penal institutions or to dismiss them as degenerates of society. This report outlines one small example of how incarcerated women are being supported. There are probably many other similar small-scale efforts across the country and a few major initiatives that allow us to see how things could be done differently.

Perhaps readers will pause to evaluate the judicial system in it's entirety, to question its purpose and methods. Discussion in the video When Women Kill (1994)

eludes to the belief that a woman who killed her spouse was not charged with any offence because it would have been a trial of how the system had failed her. Our current legal system is so incapable of envisioning women as having the right to physically defend themselves that a mental malady, the Battered Women's Syndrome, has been created to explain that phenomenon. This belief was reinforced in Hostages At Home (1994) when women displayed cards numbering in the teens to show how many times they had reported abuse to the local police force. The justice system's responses failed to provide the women with adequate protection. This practicum project can never have the impact of these videos, however, it does add to information that documents how the system continues to fail abused women while incarcerated. If the purpose of the system is, as expressed by the woman in the video, Twice Condemned (1994), to protect society then perhaps we need only think of abused and incarcerated women as part of society in order to find ways to protect them as well.

Karlene Faith in her article "Aboriginal Women's Healing Lodge" discusses a facility "designed for First Nations women" (Faith, 1995, 99) that was built in August, 1995 in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. Six principles postulated in the mission statement of that facility: (a) a safe place, (b) a caring attitude toward all persons, (c) individualized client-specific planning, (d) understanding transitory lifestyles, (e) appreciation of the healing role of children, and (f) fostering pride in surviving difficult backgrounds and personal experiences are appropriate for the women participants of the Walking A New Path program in the Kenora District Jail and for other institutions as well.

This practicum experience is a minuscule project in the overall picture of the judicial system and incarcerated women, which does however point to a multitude of areas in which additional research would be beneficial. One primary area would be the exploration of the interrelationship of childhood abuse and/or adult domestic violence and abuse and the commission of violent crimes. Creating a body of knowledge in this area could lead to the adoption and implementation of methodologies that would focus

on healing as opposed to punitive action. There is a great need for research particular to women, as most studies within penal institutions fail to acknowledge women as a separate entity. Perhaps, on a long term, macro basis, information specific to women could influence the dispensation of justice.

A further need in reducing violence is the development and implementation of programming to include abused and abusive men. Another area of significance to pursue is in creating dialogue with the Solicitor General and correctional facilities furthering an understanding of the importance of abuse and violence education and prevention programs, with a view to improving the implementation of such programming. These are circular issues. Research, dialogue, funding, development of policies of programs and delivery, and evaluation of services all must build upon each other to bring an end to the current cycles of generational violence and abuse.

To bring this paper to a conclusion I would like to highlight the more important learnings that were gained in the process of this practicum experience.

1. Know your target group and the environment. The participants and the context in which programs are delivered are instrumental in program content and design.
2. "Be Prepared" is totally apropos in an institutional environment. The ability to be spontaneous and to 'go with the flow' is critical. Develop the ability to be multifocused. Adopting the separate roles of participant, observer, and facilitator was most challenging.
3. Be aware of your strengths and your weaknesses. Maintain the practice of evaluating your conceptual baggage. Humour and personal self-confidence are musts.
4. Acknowledge and deal with the dualities. Respect and honour all perspectives. Be inclusive as opposed to exclusive.

Writing this practicum report has required that I live in two worlds creating a

bridge between them. Fulfilling the requirements of acquiring a Masters degree in Social Work demanded the usage of appropriate professional academic terminology. Working with the participants of the Walking A New Path program in the practicum experience equally demanded the usage of simple, down-to-earth language. Assessing and defining practice theory and methodology has been a most enlightening experience for me. I have come to realize that this process has been far more than an exercise in achieving a university degree. It has been a labour of love. I have conviction and belief in what I have defined as practise theory and methodology. Most importantly, I have become aware that I have gifts and talents to contribute and that I am an instrument of healing and positive growth.

Abuse and violence are societal issues of monstrous proportions. They affect every woman, man and child in our nation. For some, the impact is a major daily theme, for others it is felt in a myriad of infinitesimal ways. It is always there.

The spiritual message that ends this report has special meaning as it was used during each session as statement of hope and inspiration. The realization of this truth has brought tears to participant's eyes.

" There is nothing that has been done to you or that you
have done to yourself that the Great Mystery and the Earth
Mother cannot heal."

(Jamie Sams, Earth Medicine,
Twelfth Moon, 26th Day)

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