

SUBMISSION - Justice Responses to Sexual Violence

21.5.2024

Introduction

I am writing my submission as a long term survivor who has only in the last 6 years come forward to speak about historical sexual violence in my life. I am 54 years old.

The perpetrator – from a violation of me in 1993 took his own life in 2019. It was 2018 when I first called crime stoppers to speak of the incident in 1993.

After the perpetrator took his own life those of us who had come forward with our evidence were left hanging, wondering what to do next. It was suggested I go through a system for assistance, it was a horrifying end to all the work done to disclose the abuse and then needing to explain everything all over again, when charges had been made.

I am writing this submission with the recommendations that current and evidenced-based measures which include mind, body, and spirit ways of working with embodied memories and trauma be part of systems which are designed to offer solutions for recovery from sexual violence.

My reasoning behind this stems from my personal experience of the rage which rose to the surface of my very being from the moment I contacted Crime Stoppers in 2018. During the time frame of then and now I have done so much of my own investigations of how sexual violence has impacted my life. Being very specific in my approach. What was highlighted for me during this time was the “counselling” traditional sitting face to face in a room was recommended.

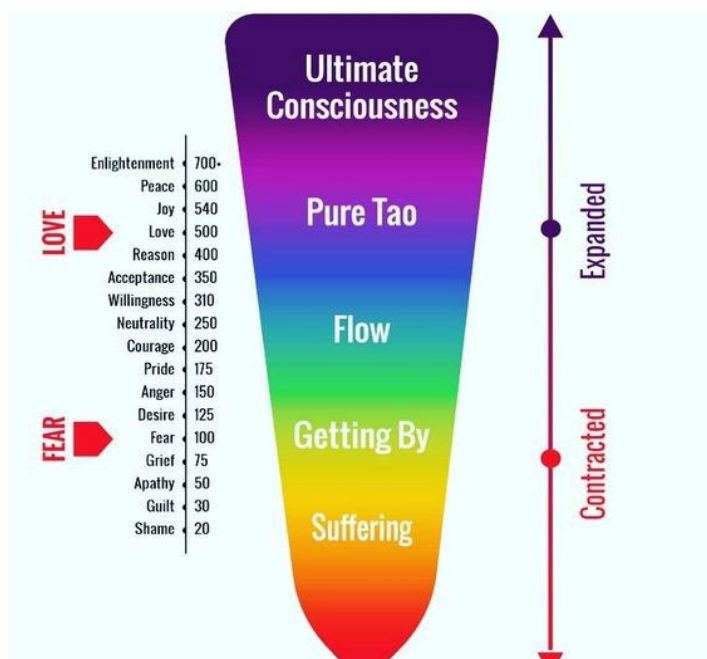
My whole body bristled with the narrow window of “recovery option” So I decided to listen to my body and empower myself through this process rather than be reliant on narratives that further kept me from wanting to identify with being a “healthy survivor” future rather than someone reliant on a script which was not my pace, my decision, my way, my words.

Life did not stop, and my energies fluctuated at times, what didn't stop was my thirst for wellness.

Back to solutions: if I was to pinpoint 5 starting points they would be this.

1. What is known about body frequencies? Where does shame sit – low at the bottom. I wrote about shame all throughout my survivor impact statement, yet there was no solution I could find to assist with getting it out. After looking at David Hawkins frequency chart and recognising different life events, how they felt. I identified the shame of remembering the discarding of myself physically, socially, and emotionally, and finding this chart empowered me to shake off the shame.

To keep on returning to how following my own investigations and feeling the difference of my own wonder versus someone's suggestion was beginning to unravel a tightly wound ball of string. There is so much information available about trauma I wanted to narrow it down to what I felt and noticed working at my pace.



David Hawkins Frequency chart – a very well-researched and recognised chart.

2. I read a lot and listened to a lot of current books relating to trauma and healing. “When the Body Says No” by Dr. Gabor Mate let me think about how all my body development was impacted by trauma and I set small intentions to replace all the body damage with body love, again this was not a straightforward process as life was still complicated. I was specific again.
3. Insight Timer App - 3 people Steve Nobel, Joy Truscott, and Kenneth Soares.
 Steve – had a lot of tracks involving frequencies, and my body followed along with some very expansive tracks, his offerings worked for me.
 Joy – had a beautiful tinkly way of talking and delivering her tracks, I felt very nurtured by her voice and way of talking.
 Kenneth -had very easy to follow affirmations, I felt his tracks were very practical and well delivered.
4. I exercised with intention and purpose. Initially relating everything back to when my body was saying no and letting that rage out through deliberate physical action. In incremental steps, I was replacing body damage with BODY LOVE. Talking about this was combined with thinking, emotionally embracing feelings, and visualising how my effort would help me in the future, feeling the change no matter how small.
5. Express creatively however this works for a person, for me poetry, collage, sculpture, and most recently painting worked. I was specific with my creativity as with my exercise.

These first five steps I identify as self-educating, self-empowering, self-paced, and all directed towards freedom from what all the suppression did to me. I kept believing in my actions. At no time in my life have I self-harmed. I have not treated myself as lovingly at times as I could have, integration takes time and is a very personal experience.

Knowledge is power I have heard time and time again – so with all the knowledge available I wanted to gather the gold dust scattered to replace all the horror of separation from life that experiencing sexual violence from such a young age had embedded in me.

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