

Underserved 2023 Virtual Institute Day 2 Session III

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MISSION MIRRORING

Do as I Say, Not as I DO

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**GRANTS FOR OUTREACH
AND SERVICES TO
UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS**
THROUGH THE OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



What is “mission mirroring?”



MISSION MIRRORING DEFINITION

The phenomenon that occurs when an organization becomes enmeshed *internally* in the same conflicts it was founded to deal with externally.

Mission Mirroring: Understanding Conflict in Nonprofit Organizations. David Allyn. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. 2010.

DAVID ALLYN'S CASE STUDIES OF MISSION MIRRORING

Case Study #1

A conflict-resolution program plagued with conflict

Case Study #2

An education organization founded to simultaneously increase diversity at elite universities and access to elite universities for historically marginalized students has problems internally with elitism and promotions based on favoritism, not merit

Case Study #3

An organization dedicated to fighting inaccurate portrayals of LGBTQ people in media watchdog is elitist and does not represent the broader LGBTQ community



MISSION MIRRORING IN OUR ANTI-VIOLENCE WORK



STORY OF “THE MOVEMENT”

- The simplest, surface-level story is the anti-violence against women and/or battered women’s movement was founded under white feminist principles and held a central goal of challenging patriarchal structures that contributed to men’s ability to abuse without reproach.
- Survivors were part of this founding process, not “clients” as we mostly see them today.
- Some agency founders decided not to run their organizations as a traditional hierarchy. They believed this structure mirrored the patriarchal structures they wanted to challenge.



SHIFTS IN “THE MOVEMENT”

- Institutional efforts began to:
 - Criminalize domestic violence
 - Fund services
 - Hold institutions accountable
- Shifting toward, partnering, and aligning with other institutions and players with these efforts most often meant moving back to traditional hierarchical organizational structures and thinking.



UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

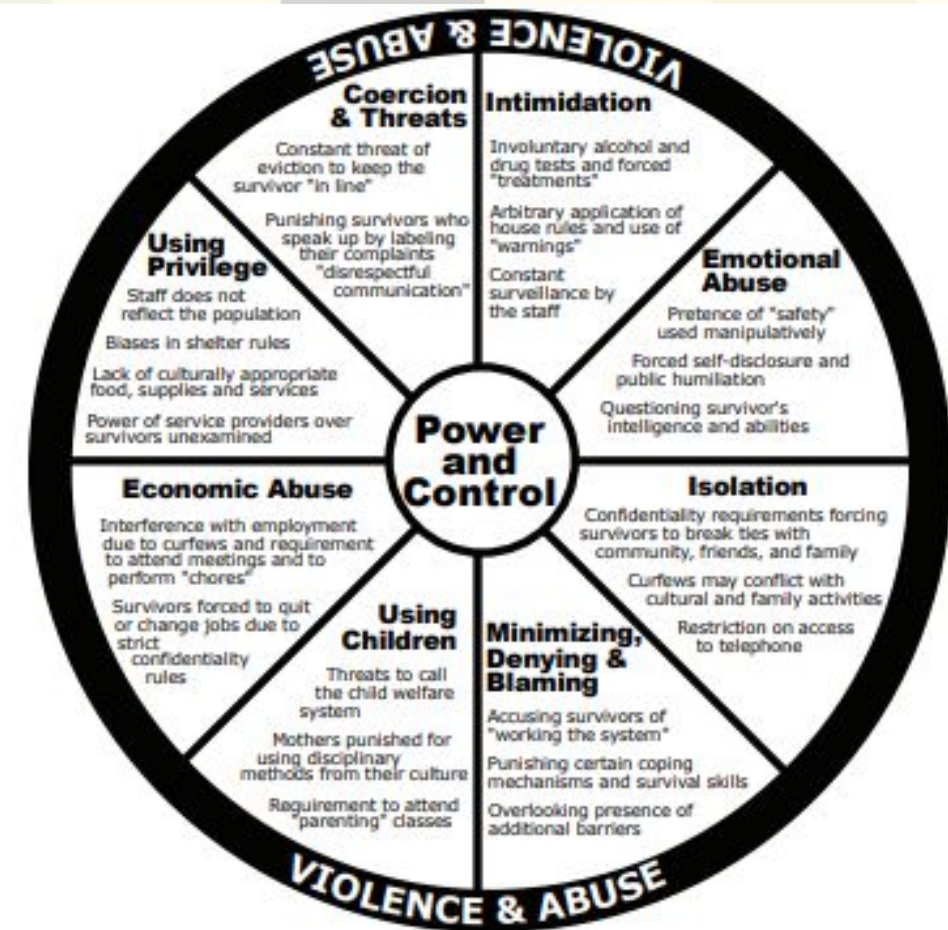
- Power concentrates to a few, but it is unnamed and difficult to hold accountable
- Formalized structures become a necessity
- Non-activist professionals become involved
 - *professionalization*
- Survivors begin to be left out of decision making
- Policies and procedures are created
 - *Funders' power*
 - *Maintain control, i.e., shelter rules*

SOME FOUNDATIONS OF ANTI-VIOLENCE WORK AT RISK OF MISSION MIRRORING

- Self-determination
- Power and control
- Anti-oppression
- Safety
- Person-centered/survivor-centered
- Confidentiality
- Recognizing potential abusive impacts of hierarchies
- Trauma

POWER & CONTROL WITHIN A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION

- Toward Survivors
 - See Wheel
- Toward staff members
 - Bullying
 - Yelling/screaming
 - Cussing
 - Pitting staff against
 - each other
- Threats of termination
- Ignoring needs and
 - requests
- No access to information



ANTIDOTES TO MISSION MIRRORING & ANTI-OPPRESSION EFFORTS

1. Nonprofit employees should be paid a livable wage, sufficient to afford adequate shelter, food, and the other necessities of life.
2. Executive compensation should be reasonable and proportionate within the organization's structure.
3. Nonprofits should consider capping their pay and publishing their pay ratios.
4. ***The civic voice of a nonprofit organization should be applied broadly to advance the organization's mission and the people it serves, not narrowly used to protect its parochial interests in its own program and revenues.***
5. ***Governance responsibilities should be broadly shared, not closely held, by recruiting board members who represent the organization's constituents.***
6. Each organization should assess the ethnic and racial diversity in its leadership as well as elsewhere inside the organization.
7. ***Each organization should assess its own equality footprint to examine whether the net effect of its actions increases, decreases, or has no effect on the equality of conditions.***

Not Adding to the Problem: Seven Ways Your Can Avoid Mirroring Practices that Perpetuate Inequality. Jon Pratt and Ruth McCambridge. Nonprofit Quarterly. March 21, 2015.

ANTIDOTES TO MISSION MIRRORING & THE USE OF POWER

1. Clearly define the mission
2. Develop a strategic plan
3. Engage the board & leadership
4. Regularly revisit & evaluate the mission
5. Align programs & activities
6. Monitor & measure outcomes
7. *Foster a mission-driven culture*
8. Engage stakeholders
9. Stay adaptable & responsive
10. Practice effective governance



Thank You!

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